

**The Quest for Eternity:
Attempts Towards an Integrative Treatment of
Moral and Metaphysical Considerations of
Existence, Ideas and Truth**

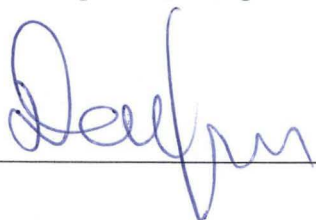
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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts**

University of Tasmania

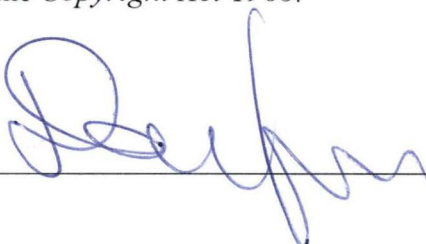
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David Speer

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Abstract

This thesis represents a study into some central aspects of the notion of eternity. It proposes to explore ways in which the notion, rather than being dismissed as merely fictional or abstract, warrants an investigation into how the human being may be able to realize its reality. The thesis argues in favour of a constructive cognitive access to the notion of eternity such that it can be seen to have reality through the active unification and perfection of our reason and of our moral being.

The basic strategic approach, reflected in the thesis' structure, comprises the discussion of three main ideas or themes fundamental to metaphysics, which are central to the discussed means to render the notion of eternity real: A thesis about the inseparability of theoretical reason and a self-understanding of the human being as a moral being, a re-investigation of the notion of ideas in relation to the substantiality of things and an exploration of ways in which eternity is implied in existence. These three areas and perspectives are investigated independently and contain distinct arguments which are grounded in an attempt to render the concept of the eternality of truth intelligible.

At the same time, each of the three thematic areas rests upon a bundle of arguments which can be organized around a systematic core.

The thesis of the integrated approach to the theoretical/moral distinction argues (1) that thought forms the ground of the notion of the good and is the source of principles, (2) that thinking and the emotions are inseparable such that the emotions also reflect a person's ethical situation and (3) that there is no non-ethical stance to a philosophical position.

The re-evaluation of the notion of ideas comprises (1) a general refutation of materialism and (2) a discussion of the ways in which ideas positively capture and constitute what is real.

The third theme explores the relation between some conditions of existence and eternity through (1) a discussion of movement, (2) an analysis of the form of perception and order, (3) an investigation of the idea of the un-self-supporting reality of the world of becoming and (4) a speculative approach regarding an intelligence in all things.

The thesis seeks to connect the three streams in loose and implicit ways and cautions against a forced philosophical systematization that would only artificially converge them. However, a final chapter provides a more synthetic and synoptic outlook without propounding a simplified or systematically foundational conclusion through an attempt to revisit the notions of Form, Will and Idea

*Dedicated to she who inspires the essence
of these thoughts*

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1. Introduction – On the Nature and Fundamentality of Philosophy

It appears natural that any work of philosophy should either implicitly or explicitly discuss, or have an understanding of, philosophy itself. This way, by reflecting on what philosophy is or is proposed to be, the assumed philosophical work can be more appropriately understood as a whole, and thus brought closer to its genuine philosophical meaning, either favourably or unfavourably

For these reasons and, especially, as it concerns the subject-matter, scope and structure of this thesis, an introduction on the nature of philosophy seems in order. Its aim is to establish the way in which the form and content of this thesis is situated in relation to philosophy

1.1 A Note on the Vocation of Philosophy and the Structure of this Thesis

If there are fundamental principles to philosophy, one of them is that the ‘whole is greater than the sum of its parts.’

The sense of this whole, but not necessarily a concrete perception and understanding of it, is Form. Everything is first perceived as a form, and this form is the whole of that which is perceived, of all of that which exists in the perceived thing, though, usually, only dimly.

Because this whole, by nature, is infinite, what philosophy is faced with is a hierarchy and expanse of forms, of an infinity of forms within each other and ordered according to the One, the highest form, whose most appropriate name is God, and/or according to the Two, which is the ever-present form of an I and Thou¹. Any third form, ultimately speaking, as it concerns the highest mode of existence, is always a mediation of the two, a mediation which it seems can’t really exist on the highest level. Thus, the task and development of philosophy

¹ Martin Buber, *I and Thou: A New Translation with a Prologue “I and You” and Notes by Walter Kaufman*, trans. Walter Kaufman (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1970). In this book Martin Buber holds that there are two basic relations: that of an I–It and that of an I–You.

is one of realizing greater and greater wholes and/or of realizing their actual and proper relationship.

Any philosophy which concerns itself – as it, in principle, only can – with what is most important and most real must deal with Eternity, the Absolute, the Infinite, Being, God, etc. and their relation to the world, to living human beings. In short, it is metaphysics in the most proper sense of the term, for, another of the principles of philosophy is that that which is more real or the most real is really what exists prior to anything else, and being prior necessarily means that it exists in relationship with all that is posterior to it, or, that they form an order, since priority and posteriority can't exist without each other. And concerning ourselves with the idea alone we can see that Eternity, the Absolute, God, Being, and so forth, is what is most real.

This, of course, raises many questions: what is the status of ideas?, their relation to their referents?, and, among others, more particularly, does the idea of that which is greater than the idea, at least insofar as it exists as a concept within a particular mind, thus determine that that which it refers to is necessarily real? To the latter question, we will, along with Anslem, answer in the affirmative; but these and other such questions are not addressed as such, or in a direct sense, in this work. They are dealt with in more negative than positive terms, and for the most part implicitly, that is to say, for instance, by giving certain arguments for the implied existence of Eternity through this or that concept or phenomenon, Eternity being the only way that they are, or can be, really explained or understood.

Accordingly, the one form and/or the two forms that constitutes the subject-matter of this thesis is, ultimately, Eternity or Eternity and Time, or, in a somewhat different sense, the form of the mind, or internal forms, and the forms of the world, or external forms. For Eternity and Time, the mind and the world, are definitely two basic forms through which all things exist, even if the latter, namely, Time and the world are but modifications of Eternity and the mind, and, therefore, in essence, one.

The relationship of these two kinds of form form a harmony and a tension, and, while this may not be accurate enough, insofar as there is a harmony of the two basic forms do they remain two, and may even form one, and insofar as there is a tension a third form must be introduced, namely, the living individual

himself or existence itself, which itself also involves many forms. This is not to say that the individual or existence doesn't exist when Eternity and Time are in harmony, but that they are not perceived and do not exist as different from the two. As such, the individual himself or existence itself is the harmony, something which happens spontaneously.

As it concerns their tension, this third form leads to the whole multiplicity of forms, involving the individual himself, as this tension, to work out in the best possible way their relationship, and requiring effort for the two basic forms to first be discerned and, then, to be put in their proper relationship, or, where this is appropriate, to be harmonized – an effort as it concerns the latter to put the conditions in place for the spontaneity of the harmony of Eternity and Time, the mind and the world, to emerge.

As the tension between Eternity and Time, the individual or existence itself is the distance between the two. But every moment does Eternity and Time coincide, and it is the task of the individual and philosophy to be situated in this distance, this estranged relationship, towards Eternity, towards the mind, and, ultimately, to bring the two intimately, if not wholly, together, that is, to realize Eternity in the moment and to sustain this realization.

How is the latter done, that is, for those concerned with such matters as the realization of Eternity?

Firstly, as it concerns the whole of life, what generally seems required is the living, mutually self-perfecting and constituting unity of reason and our moral being, and this unity is one of the forms that belong to the form of the mind, which must be worked out both intellectually (at least for the philosopher) and existentially, or, in a word, spiritually. If a man hasn't reconciled and worked out in a living relationship his mind and moral being, then, no realization of Eternity for him is possible, at least, not in a substantial sense.

Secondly, as it concerns the lived moment, the realization of Eternity is possible by a non-identified attention on and cognition of that which is utterly present, on what exists here and now – immediately and unfabricated – which, at the same time, seems to necessitate a likewise non-reactive, pure, immediate

and unconditional sensitivity of body and emotion to that which is fully present.²

The unity of reason and our moral being is, then, one of the three main ideas discussed in this thesis, one which, again, is a form of one side of the basic pairs of forms, namely, the form of the mind

As mentioned, these two basic forms are the *ultimate* concern of any philosophy and, in fact, any endeavour for knowledge. They are only mentioned here in light of the purpose of philosophy, and these forms are only dealt with here, where they are dealt with, very implicitly. In a more explicit sense, a certain groundwork is given for the three main ideas in the idea that if truth exists it must be eternal. Otherwise, the three ideas themselves have no systematic idea tying them together, but rather, from their centres unfold in various directions, each one of which is a different argument for its respective idea. In other words, the three main ideas are forms whose content only – for the most part at least – is discussed without relating it back to the form in order to determine the order of the content in it. This is to say that the form of each of the main ideas is itself not really defined, but rather forms a *theme* with many variations. Accordingly, each argument within each of the themes is, more or less, a self-contained one. It should be evident, though, especially, in the various arguments of the second theme, that there is a commonality to them, but this remains implicit. In the conclusion, which is an attempt at a very general synthesis of all that will be discussed, the relationship of three forms that is more specific to existence and the life of individuals is discussed to some extent.

Essentially a part of the reason for this structure of the thesis has to do with the nature and difficulty of philosophy itself, with, namely, a systematization that is very elusive, if not, in a final sense, impossible. To some of the reasons for this we will now turn our attention

² This is as it concerns a cognitively conscious realization of Eternity, but it seems there can – or must be – a subconscious or even unconscious apprehension of Eternity, and for it the latter – the sensitivity of body and emotion – would be the condition for its realization.

1.2 Sense, Essence, Concepts, Language, the Intelligence and Desire: A Note on the Difficulty of Philosophy

Philosophy is, ultimately, the task of knowledge of Eternity, or of knowledge having access to Eternity, for if Eternity exists, then, Time is not in essence antithetical to it. But as this necessarily and in a primary sense involves concepts and language, for these are principal ways in which the mind develops, refines itself, realizes and comes to greater knowledge of things, philosophy comes upon a great, seemingly insurmountable, difficulty. This difficulty of philosophy, its seemingly impossible task to grasp the eternal nature of things and arrive at a unified *conception* of truth, in one important sense may be summed up thus: as Wittgenstein pointed out, there are no fixed concepts, or the essence of things does not lie in concepts, and, further, there can be, if not, always are, multiple senses to any given concept or word, senses, moreover, that while referring to the same word or concept can have most distinct meanings, or, even ones that are contradictory, and so on. Concepts and words neither possess essence, nor an exclusively singular sense, and for this reason – among others – is a thoroughly systematic philosophy, that is, one free from contradiction and possessing a singularly consistent meaning, very difficult, if not, impossible. In this thesis, accordingly, we will encounter multiple and distinct senses to one and the same concept, such as, change, becoming, time, form and idea, senses which often depend upon the way one is looking at the concepts, and, again, which make any one systematic argument very difficult to pin down in order to explain and preserve the *complexity* of the reality of the thing being investigated. For these reasons as well, it may be that a system is, to some extent at least, inappropriate to philosophy.

While Wittgenstein may have gone too far in his assertions of the primacy of language, the significance of this assertion is that it is legitimate to define anything in any which way, to give whatever name we want to it, *so long as we convey the sense of what we wish to define*. Names do not define anything; nor more significantly do the *words* and *concepts* we use; it is always the *sense* or *senses* of the thing that determines its meaning and defines it; the meaning and much less the name, as something pre-given, does not determine its sense, i.e. in

what way it is to be understood.³ And whether or not, or to what extent, we believe we can essentially know the meaning of and define things, this refers us to the nature of our mind and intelligence; it is here – not in empirical phenomena, language and even our conceptual apparatus – that the sense and meaning of things is to be found – where in its essence it has always been.

The difficulty of philosophy, then, is very much the difficulty of the mind's inherent task of knowledge, possibly due, as Hegel asserts, to the Mind or Spirit working itself out philosophically. This is also to say that it is nonetheless the task of the mind to determine that singular sense of a thing, if it indeed is present, or, to get as close to the simple, precise and proper meaning of a thing as is possible, for, nonetheless, does the mind and the phenomena of the world tend toward a determined and determinable meaning, towards truth; but, again, this meaning is only truly and properly found in the mind and not in concepts and language and much less in phenomena empirically determined.

What do we mean by the sense of things? We mean that which is posited in itself and is given to itself or to another, just as a sensation is to the body, the feeling and sense of which, in our right mind, we never doubt. The mind determines the sense of things because the mind is that form that can directly see, bring to conscious awareness, what something is in itself, as it were, it reflects to itself the sense of things; or, in other words, the mind necessarily possesses – as integral to its reason for being and constitution – the sense for truth. If it didn't, then we could not even be certain that we were uncertain about something. And being a form in the world able to cognize things, it knows the essence of things by their precise relations; the essence of things is not an abstract conceptual fact attached to things, or, in a logical sense, the subject or predicate of the predicate or subject; essence is the precise or necessary relations of things, and since the mind is the central form in the world, that is, which mediates everything, able to see things for what they are, or even

³ This is not to say that it is *practical* to use any name or concept for something that we sense or wish to define. For it isn't, and we should be prudent in our use of proper names and concepts for what we wish to understand and explain, using those that best express what we mean, since so much of our language, for the sake of greater understanding and communication between men (something highly important), revolves around convention. At the same time, there definitely seems to be an intimate connection between words (particularly their sound), concepts and meaning, something which the study of philology would show. But, again, this is not a necessarily essential connection, as if a word or concept grounded once and for all its relation to what it refers to.

notwithstanding this capacity, interpenetrated as the form of all forms of things, by observing, gazing into, reflecting on and above all intuiting the relations of things, it can determine their essence

A possibly more appropriate concept for 'sense' and 'essence' would be 'centre', for it is at the centre where all things meet and emanate from; everything depends on the nature and quality of its centre; the centre is where certainty lies. The central meaning of something will, then, always be its sense and, more fully, essence

Also, the sense and meaning of things is ultimately determined by its ideality, and the actuality of something, which is the sense and meaning we seek, is always a tending towards its ideality. Therefore, if we conceive something in its ideality, we are on the right track; it is a good indicator and measure of the proper meaning we seek; and the more we relate it to its actuality, seeking to conceive it as a whole (the 'senses' for which are more immediately ambiguous and opaque), the closer we will get to the intuition of the thing itself we seek. The ideal is the potential perfection of the actual thing; and the ideal is nothing static, but is dynamic as the standard by which the thing can be judged, ordered and put in its proper movement.

In light of this, concepts serve as signposts for the way ahead, for the direction and path we must take and for the continual articulation of the relations of things, bringing us closer and closer to their intuitive ratio that is their moving meaning.

Therefore, a presupposition of all that has been and will be discussed – indeed, it seems, a presupposition of philosophy itself – is that at the deepest level the mind is in touch with reality. It moves with it in some kind of intellectual sympathy and empathy. At the same time, it is in touch with possibility, which is the very stuff of its being (something we will touch upon in the following section), or, in more concrete terms, following the thought of Rene Guenon, the mind in essence dwells in, and all its thoughts, concepts, ideas, language, etc. arise from, silence, silence being analogous to the realm of the non-manifest.⁴ Thus if the mind is aware and knowledgeable enough of certain principles of reality, it can create or generate new realities, but always in

⁴ Rene Guenon, *The Multiple States of the Being*, (New York: Sophia Perennis, 2001), p. 20-25

light and in harmony with what is real and true in itself, that is, with the ultimate principles, whatever they may be.

But concerning ourself only with the former – with the mind's intellectual sympathy with reality – we see that there is no intelligence which is constructed or which we make up in any sense. Intelligence already exists, it is the very stuff of reality and it comes to light through sensitivity. That is to say that, in essence, *sensitivity is intelligence*⁵; the more refined or perfect sensitivity becomes the more does the intelligence inherent in all things become self-transparent; or, in some other words, the more does the mind, which is a profound intelligence⁶, dwell in its innate activity of seeing and feeling things as they are. Or, in yet other words, the more aware one is of, or, rather places their attention on, a phenomenon, however internal or external it is, the more does that phenomenon simply reveal itself to be what it is. In essence the mind is an unobscured 'vision' – the true ideas of things not apparent to it because of obscurations or superimpositions that the mind has placed before itself, mainly due to wrong ideas and negative emotions.

* * * * *

Before the difficulty of philosophy is a problem of concepts, it is, again, in one sense, essentially a problem of language, or rather, of the way in which we use language, or are seduced by it, for language and, especially, speech are naturally the outward movement of the mind, and, at the same time, consciously, the mind's inward movement towards itself. But, as it goes, in the perennial struggle of man between his reason and his appetites, his thought and passion, or between the spirit and the animal, his higher and lower self, in which, as Spinoza saw, desire or the passions always win out, the temptation of the empirical, of that which exists externally and is more passively than actively sense-given – in however rarefied a form it may be, as in concepts – seems to be, literally, a way out. As it concerns language, this is particularly tempting for the mind, for, in essence, language is the, or is one of the, sexual aspects of the mind.

⁵ Christo Sotirov, Annotation to a book entitled *Daoist Inner-Alchemy – Basic Concepts, Phases and Aspects of Development, Formation of Practice* (2005), which has been published in Bulgarian and Russian.

⁶ Christo Sotirov, Unpublished letter exchange.

The reason and the driving force behind the difficulty of philosophy and the mind's heavy reliance on the empirical, on that which is externally given or pre-given, is fused with the very lifeblood of philosophy itself, and it may be formulated as follows: Sense can only be present where there is desire. The full determination of a sense – all the relations that posit the sense at a given time – is the Idea, and, ultimately, these relations arise from an infinite and eternal source. In the world of Nature, a necessary condition for such a determination is a surplus of desire, and insofar as such desire is naturally given it is given to man in his sexual nature.⁷ That which brings about such a determination – the Idea – is thought, for the desire for determination is the power of thought. Therefore, philosophy, being the fullest, most fundamentally possible determination of things, is the passion of Ideas

1.3 The Domain of Philosophy: Possibility and Metaphysics

So long as there remain fundamental questions to existence – questions which have no finally conclusive answer, or, at least, not one as of yet – philosophy remains the most fundamental endeavour of man. If so, such questions are not just intellectual, but necessarily involve our emotional and existential life. Such questions as why does God exist?, who or what is God?; if God is perfect why did he create the world?; what is God's relation to the world and man in particular?; is the being of God one of self-identity?; why is there something rather than nothing?; what is Being?; what is the meaning of existence?, what is the nature of the mind?, and so forth – if such questions are not vain and presuming they haven't a finally conclusive answer, then, they belong to the domain of philosophy.

They belong to philosophy in the first place because they concern the need for knowledge, for the certainty of Truth, and while philosophy is ultimately an intellectual endeavour, let us emphasize, in no wise is it divorced from the emotional and existential side of man. As Hegel points out, the ultimate aim of

⁷ Peter Demionovich Ouspensky, *A New Model of the Universe: Principles of the Psychological Method in its Application to Problems of Science, Religion and Art* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1938), p. 517-8. Ouspensky asserts that the reason there is an excess of sexual energy in man and in no other creature is because man is uniquely capable of self-evolving, and for that reason such energy is given by Nature. The same thought is being used here in a somewhat different sense.

philosophy is Absolute Knowledge or Truth,⁸ and this naturally proceeds from its' title – the love of knowledge – since love is nothing less than total absorption and consummating perfection in its' beloved.

In the second place, the fundamental 'unanswered' questions belong to philosophy because the realm which philosophy primarily relates to is that of the possible, of possibility itself, and this is the realm of non-manifestation or the unmanifest. In this sense, it is the truly creative opening up of new spheres of thought and being, of knowledge and experience, participating it seems in the very work God himself carries out in the continual manifestation of the possible

We can see this in the 'first days' of human consciousness and intelligence in the Western world. When man was first faced with the existence of Being itself, he was delivered into great wonder and awe, the fruit of which was to ask himself what is Being, or, derivatively, what is it made of? Thus, the immediate response to the face of Being is a Question; its immediate reflection the desire and quest for knowledge revealed as the face of man. We can then say that it is as if Being asks of itself through man, who or what am I?

In such a time what we had – and have – is a possibility inherent in Being manifesting itself – that of questioning and investigating Being and the consciousness of Being and maybe even its consciousness of itself. Through such a time, which requires only one individual, the psyche of men who inherit such a time or come into contact with it is changed, and hence the world following from it.

While it is obvious that the way we think can change the way the world is, what we don't readily see is that thought is the most fundamental component of reality. In the first instance, the reasons for this are precisely because we can think of what is possible; and, what is more, that to think of something is ordinarily, and in most of the rest of intellectual life, to conceive of it in the form of some immediate non-actuality, whether it be non-manifest as possibility itself (this applying to the ontological and metaphysical), as projection in the world in the form of plans, intuitions, aims, purpose, principles, as laws and theories which ground, formulate and test the manifest realm, as reflection and

⁸ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977). The task and way to absolute knowledge is the subject of the preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, a knowledge that Hegel defines as Science.

memory, both being images of empirical and non-empirical realities – and in all these and other such forms, what we mean by the possible is a certain non-equality, or differential proportion, between the thought and what it refers to and within the very thought itself.⁹

In the second instance, thought is the most fundamental component of reality because through it and it alone do we conceive of something beyond thought, beyond what is the possibility *of* something to the realm of possibility, the non-manifest itself. We may and often do have a feeling and sense for what lies beyond thought. But feeling and sensing it are not the same as thinking it. The former do not and cannot give us the fullness of that which lies beyond thought, for to conceive of something is to have a grasp of that thing and to be aware of it considerably more consciously, from which the more fully present, fully determined nature of the thing is possible. But this is true only insofar as we isolate thinking, feeling and sensing from each other. Never are they really separate and any real conception involves the emotion of it and vice versa. Though, at the same time, it may be in the nature of things that thought at some point necessarily extends beyond emotion and sense as part and parcel of the way creation or manifestation works

That which lies beyond thought, which we've called possibility itself or the non-manifest, refers to something that is increate or has created itself and which the human mind is a part of, or the subject of; that is, possibility in itself is the universal object of thought and its ground; it is much more proper to say that It thinks us rather than we think It. And it is both the most fundamental and a reality, for without it nothing else could be possible, and it itself does not arise from some possibility, but it is the actually possible, the actuality or reality of the possible, that is, the possible, by being possible, exists necessarily as the possible – not needing any other possibility to arise from – for the possible-possible is a tautology, only referring to the fact that possibility cannot not exist,

⁹ One case in which thought may not be a form of the possible is in the meanings of things, for here we supposedly directly or indirectly refer to the reality that exists, there not being a remainder of something more to be conceived of it. In simpler terms this may be the definition of a thing. Here thought, it appears, is the very concrete or actual reality of the thing, for, to put it other words, the meaning of something is when thought in the form of knowledge, as it were, permeates and fills the reality which it conceives or refers to and every form in which it does and may manifest. But still it is not certain whether the meaning itself doesn't serve as the unmanifest ground of that which has the meaning, in such a way that the meaning is its perfect reality and expression and, thus, the things embodying the meaning never express or manifest this perfection, but forever approximate it.

and it exists simply because of what it is – the possible, in truth, being the most necessary (exactly contrary to possibilities as they relate to manifestation) Possibility is the most fundamental because, according to our world, everything comes from a possibility, especially as it concerns the future, for otherwise becoming would not be a real process. Also, possibility is the ground for all things for nothing can come from nothing

We can also argue this by considering the fact that we can only know something to be impossible if we know all that is possible, that is, if our mind encompassed Possibility itself. As this is highly unlikely, we cannot say with any certainty that anything is impossible, except that it be impossible for Possibility to not exist, since this would negate all possibility and everything else with it. Otherwise, if there be impossibles (again, a possibility we can't exclude, such as square circles), then, they would exist because there is no necessary reason for them to be possible, that is, no need, purpose, reason, etc. for their existence.

Another reason as it concerns impossibles is that if something is impossible it can only be due to possibilities that don't allow it to be possible, and hence, to possibly exist. It cannot be due to the actualities of things for this is already determined by what is possible, or by the impossible in the sense of possibilities that cannot unite into one and the same possibility of the thing's existence. Insofar as any number of actual things is not an absolute existent, hence, absolutely necessary, as we find in our world (for this, in other words, is to say we only encounter finite things), they cannot be what determines that which is impossible in this world, though, it may be ever so unlikely. For there is always something that exists outside of these finite actualities or relative necessities that could change the way in which they behave, or which could reveal something outside that appeared impossible to it. In yet other words, this is to say that the limitation of what is actual is always determined by what exists outside of it and nothing internal to it as the very actual thing.

For these reasons, a philosophical system is ultimately not possible, either at all, because this would manifest all possibility, wherein, as Sotirov says,

existence would lose its internality or existentiality,¹⁰ or, in other words, all manifestation would cease, since Possibility is its ground, or, such a system would not be possible, that is, realizable, so long as Time exists, but could possibly exist, it seems, in Eternity.

1.3.1 Remark on Hegel and *Spirit*

What we say here concerning the fundamentality of philosophy has been said profoundly by Hegel and other major philosophers. For Hegel, it seems, philosophy is the most fundamental and significant work of the Spirit carried out in the world, the work of which he says is Science in its true form. For Hegel, the prime medium in which this takes place in philosophy is the Notion whose purpose or Reason is to fulfil all of its content – by disclosing, positing and connecting all essences – and come to know itself – as the Absolute transfigured essence. Such knowledge of itself is for Spirit to be both Subject and Substance.¹¹ What this means, putting it simply and generally, is that Intelligence and Will govern the world, rather than mechanical and material, or, at any rate, disintegrated, processes as it seems to be now – the difference of which lies in philosophy, since this would be a manifestation of some unmanifested possibility (at least, in this world).

This may also be shown in the way Hegel, in one sense at least, describes philosophy – as the “conceiving of the spiritual Spiritually”¹². To do so, it seems, is to give birth to higher cognition, the nascent process of which are abstract ideas (that is, ones whose content hasn’t been filled yet), and higher cognition means ultimately a cognition that doesn’t remain separate or different from its object, but either fills out all its content, or, manifests the very objective reality itself. In the former we have illumination and in the latter cognitive creation, both of which are the concept and object and, ultimately, Concept and Reality, becoming one whole and one movement of the spiritual self (the self

¹⁰ Christo Sotirov, Unpublished letter exchange. A very similarly related point is also made in an essay by Christo Sotirov, *Contemporary Civilization – Doomed Civilization: Distorted Form and Deteriorated Content (Including the Post-Modern Insight and its Sham Solution)*, footnotes iii. and iv. of the Epilogue. This essay is pending publication in the Bulgarian journal *Philosophical Forum* (Sofia).

¹¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pgs. 10-15, 20-22 and 31-33. Closely aligned to Science, if not in essence identical, this is also very much the idea of Hegel’s preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

¹² Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, trans. E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1955), p.9

that is a unity of Intelligence and Will). In other words, we can say that this is when intelligence becomes self-luminescent and self-transparent, penetrating itself into the depths where it is will as well as realization of the One; for, the intelligence knows or senses that the power of reality, of manifestation, is the power of cognition, since a *totally* unconscious and blind will power is impossible, for the will is primarily moved by the idea. This latter thought is something that will be discussed to some extent in the conclusion.

As it concerns the possibilities inherent in this world, or this part of the universe in which we live, philosophy as such is metaphysics. Insofar as it concerns Possibility itself, the realm of the non-manifest, philosophy is ontology, that is, if a name can be given to such an endeavour.

One reason that makes such an intelligence possible, which is a condition for the spiritual, metaphysical or ontological nature of philosophy, is the eternity of truth, which, thus, is one of the most basic ideas there is. If truth didn't exist, and if it weren't eternal in one sense or another, then, philosophy in any sense would not be possible. To reasons for the eternity of truth we will now turn our attention, and then, proceed to discuss the three main themes – fundamental to metaphysics – that arise from this basic idea.

2. Groundwork – The Basic Idea that Truth is Eternal

If truth exists, it is eternal and it cannot be otherwise. Three ideas – of course, among many others – follow from this and which looked at ‘inductively’ lead back to this basic idea: The inseparability of our reason from our moral being, or the rational from the moral (which ultimately implies the unity of intelligence and will), that ideas are the substance of things; and that eternity is implied in existence.

As it specifically concerns man, he can only understand and gain access to eternal truth if, firstly, he realizes the absolute inseparability of his moral and intellectual life; secondly, that ideas are powerful energetic substances capable of transforming him and that, because all reality is one of ideas, they can be made use of for his inner-development, and, thirdly, that eternity is before all else implied in existence as the idea, if it can be said to be an idea, that transcends all ideas and existence.

2.1 The Metaphysical Side to this Basic Idea

First we must look at the basic idea, namely, that truth is eternal, which is not itself discussed very much directly, but we will offer some argument in support of it, the present one being the more metaphysical side to this idea, which will be followed by the more existential side to it.

Every truth implies the universal in whatever form; and the universal can only be founded upon, or derived from – indeed, only constituted by (since it cannot constitute itself) – the eternal, or eternity itself. Either truth is temporal or eternal, for it cannot be anything in-between since no in-between really exists – that is to say, this in-between only exists temporarily or mediately, for this is also the difference between life and death.

If truth is temporal then it arises from the conjunction or coincidence of any number of given conditions in which the particular is given. As temporal, truth, then, can only be possibly explained as the particular, though it remains to be seen how the coincidence or conjunction of conditions in and of themselves could come together to give rise to the particular other than accidentally. At any rate, truth cannot exist as some spontaneous instant of time, for this does not

explain anything, nor can the particular give rise to itself, but only – again possibly – through temporal conditions.

Now, if the particular having arisen in this way is truth, then, it cannot be sustained as such for the slightest duration of time without something basing or constituting it. On the analysis of time, the only thing that can constitute or sustain the truth of the particular is he who conceives or perceives it as such. But this perceiver, then, becomes the universal in the form of the objective view from nowhere, a perceiver whose only function would be to passively register particulars, being itself bare and empty of any content – it would be the universal function of bare perception or of bare cognition, if we say this truth of the particular involves concepts.

But this universal, then, presupposes an eternal, for, again, every universal implies or presupposes something eternal since the universal exists prior to the particular, for no series of particulars can determine or give rise to a universal, since, in a certain Hegelian sense, the particular is only particular as the ‘this-ness’ of the thing, something which is a function of a universal feature of perception, namely, abstraction of one content from another. In other words, we never get to the particular directly, but only through abstraction of this or that thing, or feature of it, from an undifferentiated background of perception. And, again, this function of abstraction is a universal feature of any perceiving thing.

The particular we usually think of refers rather to this very concrete thing, which I perceive, experience, etc. But the concrete thing is the manifest product, result or instantiation of the particular and universal, of matter and form, of the combination of the work of forces, laws, conditions and substances, etc. The particular is really the concrete manifestation of the universal particular, but which is always a determination by the universal, for the substance of the concrete thing cannot be separated out from everything else – its existence is necessarily one of an interdependent relation.

The universal existing ontologically prior to the particular already means it is eternal, or arises from the eternal, since the particular in itself only exists temporally, and, again, there is nothing which is neither eternal or temporal, except concrete existing things which are a mixture or the tension of the eternal and temporal, and not of anything other, but, again, whose real substance is the universal.

But the universal is not straightforwardly the eternal, and so must be distinguished from it, though, ultimately they do not really seem different. The universal *in itself* is the bare and empty determination of the form of a series of particulars, and so in itself bears and can produce no content. This is the abstract universal (also, possibly, the fleeting instant of eternity), and it can only afford us the thought of eternity. Content must be given to the universal in itself by ascertaining the way in which the particulars are related to it or by apprehending it concretely.

The eternal, then, is the concrete universal and the universally concrete, being that existence which really roots all phenomena in constituting it for what it is; and so this is ultimately no different than the concrete existing thing. It might be better said that the eternal is the union of the individual – the concrete existent which is a mixture of the eternal and temporal – with his eternal substance, and so when he has transformed, or surrendered, his temporal existence into, or to, his eternal existence.

In itself the universal, being merely abstract, cannot give rise to itself; it is but the barest representation denominated of a class of entities, or of their one common, most embracing feature. It only tells us that a thing belongs to this class or most embracing group, but not what this group is, except as a name and a concept with its own immediate significations. As soon as we proceed to define and try to understand what this group is we are developing its form, which is a movement towards conceiving it as the specific eternal or concrete universal that it is.

As such the universal cannot give rise to itself because it is only a denomination, though, it is one of something real, and not a nominalist label – it is simply a universal denomination of the real. And it is one which is discovered or discerned and not something constructed.

In the same way as for the particular, for the universal to be sustained as such for the slightest moment, it requires a perceiver – but this time an eternal perceiver or conceiver, since there is nothing in itself to constitute or sustain it.

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As remarked, the universal cannot arise from itself because *in itself* it doesn't really exist, though, that which it denominates is necessarily of something real, but only in abstraction – as it were, it is the barest outline of the real thing, the

latter of which *is* universal, but in a concrete sense. The universal is what exists in all times and places, or, throughout the whole spatiotemporal existence of a certain environment. But in itself the universal as universal does not exist at all times and places, always and everywhere. There is no such thing as a homogenous, singular universal in which one and the same universal is universally repeated. Such a universal can only be one and not many. We can say that love and the good, that figure and number, are universally present – existing anywhere and everywhere – but whenever and wherever they are present they do not actually exist as a universal, but as particular or concrete individuals. There is no one thing that is universal love, good, figure or number; that is, something which is this and nothing else. For what exists is always particular, or, better said, a concrete thing, every existing thing being a certain instantiation of the universal. But the universal as simply and immediately universal never instantiates itself, for it doesn't in itself exist, since it has no content and cannot determine anything, much less itself. The universal is only determined in itself universally from some concrete being, one which possesses content and is internally differentiated or concretizes every universal in itself, such as the being of God would do; the universal must always be embodied or exist concretely in some way.

Therefore, for instance, universal love and good exist, but only in and as this individual, in the individual who apperceives love and good in every particular thing, each thing being such an instantiation. Or, it is better said, when the individual realizes universal love and good in himself, as what he is in his very being, but which he only is and can be as this concrete individual and not as some abstract universal (again, the former is the true sense of the universal).¹³

What determines the universal as the concrete and particular instantiation of itself and what grounds the particular as the concrete instantiation of the universal is the eternal, since to be universal and instantiated in differing,

¹³ It could be said, and definitely appears to be, that God is the universal as the universal immediately self-identical to itself, thus, He is universal love, good, number, etc. Whether He is in Himself or not is a question we won't go into here, one which may transcend our ability to adequately answer. He very well may be or very well may not be, and He very well may be both – the pure universal and the pure individual. At any rate, even if God were the Universal – with all its universal modifications – it simply appears that He has not given rise to any pure and simple universal that exists in this world, for all that exists are particulars and individuals; and, indeed, the universal, as we have been asserting, may be present in all of them.

particular ways can only be possible if this universal is concretely eternal, and this can only follow from the necessity of its eternal status. In other words, this is to say that it is its truth, for truth is necessary being, positing itself because of what it is in order to determine what, how and why things are the way they are, namely, it is determining itself as the interplay of form and content.

Furthermore, that the universal posits itself as concrete and irreducible particularity, existing interdependently with everything else (for what is particular and irreducible in the concrete is its own coincidence, or specific manifestation, of all that exists at that moment, and this is its uniqueness) is something that happens, and is happening, every moment and not, strictly speaking, over a period of time; therefore, it must be eternal. This is also to say that all that a thing is, will be and ever was remains so eternally, it always is, is ever-present; for, again, being a concrete instantiation of the universal, since the universal is what exists in all times and places, naturally so does its instantiation (the instantiation or manifestation of the universal following immediately from it).

The eternal perceiver that in one sense grounds the universal and determines it concretely is substance – that which exists in and through itself due to the necessity of its very being. The eternal perceiver is necessary being, which is the eternal substance of the thing, a substance of which all, at least, metaphysically speaking, must be made, and which truth necessarily corresponds to

2.2 The Existential Side to the Basic Idea

Truth is the eternal determination of time. Whether there is a truth in itself purely eternal, that is, not subject to the influences or claims of time, thus unchangeable and potentially accessible at any given time, or whether truth involves Eternity in a dynamic dialectic and some kind of ontological relation with time, the fact remains that truth can only be known, indeed, can only exist, in our very existence. In this sense it necessarily involves time

Therefore, truth is not given to us in any sense, but it is something we must attain. The intellectual apprehension of truth is not truth; it is only the thought *about* it; for it to be truth it must be realized in and with our very being. No truth exists floating about us which we can just reach out and grab; nor is it the

passive acceptance of things and much less whatever we think or wish it to be. The possibility of truth is the tension between Time and Eternity. Yet, the truth is always something determined by Eternity, even when it is the interplay or strife between Eternity and Time; and in this sense, which is the more existential sense, it is the immediate, sincere and authentic presence of existence situated towards transcendence. It is the truth of this very moment, of all that our time, place and existence means, one which is directly determined by eternity, since this moment of time is irreducible (in this sense, eternity exists in time as the forward-moving eternal recollection of time, gathering it up into what becomes this unique, irreducible moment of time). Whereas, a strictly metaphysical view of truth is one eternal and unchanging, yet still realizable in time and in our lived existence, and most likely in the particular way in which it applies here and now.

And for one rooted in eternity, truth becomes the very possession of their being. We could also say that truth is always a certain synthesis of eternity and time, this also being existence itself, for according to Sotirov, “the Truth of existence = the existence of Truth”¹⁴. The synthesis, though, is eternal, whether it remains so in time or for the individual. Truth is necessarily based on the eternal, but nevertheless may still be subject to change and can develop through time.

Therefore, all philosophy and all existence is the seeking to understand and be true to truth, to the tension and general relation between time and eternity. And of course, whether we know it or not, all directed to eternity.

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If truth is eternal (as discussed above, both existentially and metaphysically), then, the first theme of the inseparability of reason from our moral being follows because such truth is necessarily independent of the vagaries and corruption of time, i.e. it cannot be diminished in any way. But this independence of time is not given in any philosophical position, logical method, much less proposition, so long as, whatever its content, it remains intellectual. Independence of time can only come about by the purifying of the reason,

¹⁴ Christo Sotirov, Expose of doctoral dissertation, *Existential Dialectics as Fundamental Anthropology: Axiomatics of Fundamental Anthropology as Existentiality* (University of Sofia, 2004). This expose is a detailed outline of Sotirov’s dissertation, the above concept of which I have taken and interpreted in my own way.

which really comes as a result of the purification of one's will, soul or even emotion, and is the realization of, or attuning to, the impartiality of one's reason. To be independent of the vagaries and corruption of time – an independence that is necessarily one of our mind, body and emotion – is to be a moral being, for the only corruption of time that is for the most part unavoidable is that of the body. But we are not our bodies, and the way in which we respond to this and especially the rest of the apparently inevitable corruption of time – emotional, intellectual and spiritual or existential – depends upon our desire, what we choose, and on our level of knowledge – in short, on the level of our moral being. – And as it concerns the latter kinds of corruption, they are not only the result of a response, or, rather, reaction, but due to the level of our moral being, something we actively determine and perpetuate.

It follows that the purer and more elevated our moral being, the clearer and more impartial, i.e. objective, our reason. What a man can *really* conceive cannot surpass the level of his moral being. One reason is that what a man feels in his heart – the quality, kind and nature of his emotions – will be the way he interprets what exists and what he thinks about; as Ouspensky points out, emotions act as the coloured windows of our soul through which we see the world.¹⁵ At the least they will always be that way of taking and 'understanding' any phenomena or experience which predominates, and, as it concerns the intellect, what it will really believe or not believe.

Again, without purity of heart there can be no true clarity of mind. For in a way, the rational is always the moral as the existential determination and instantiation of its reality or object. The truth of any given thing is always an existential phenomenon, one which, then, can only be known by being sincere in the situation in which one experiences it, that is, by being lucid, true to oneself and authentic. Even as it concerns the simplest truths which we take as given, such as $2+2=4$, this applies. If one knows this equation is true, they should then know why and how it is true, or be able to give some adequate explanation. If one doesn't or can't, then they have to question in all sincerity the issues this raises and get to the root of the problem – and, again, by lucidity,

¹⁵ Peter Demionovich Ouspensky, *Tertium Organum* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1949), p. 198.

self-truthfulness and authenticity. Nor does such questioning presuppose there is an answer.

However corrupt, lacking in virtue and degenerate or desperate one's time is, it never renders existence meaningless in the sense that it doesn't matter what it means or where we are going and thus are free from any responsibility to, or worry over, the situation. For the whole situation is nonetheless a reflection of the truth of existence and by being sincere and responsible to it, we become authentic in it – meaning we cannot be reduced by it and necessarily gain in an eternal situation, which raises us above it and enables us to be a source of good and enlightenment for others. In short, we realize a path of perfecting ourselves where we can develop towards truly attaining eternal, or, at any rate, truly human being.

To begin with this is all possible because of the objective truth of the particular or universal existential situation, or, in a word, the existential – a truth which, somewhat strangely, is concrete but not reducible to the particulars, or a simple concatenation of them; neither is it something strictly rational, irrational, moral, practical, emotional, but is the very irreducible and somehow self-constituting existence of the situation itself. Being neither strictly transcendent or strictly immanent, nor fully spiritual, existential truth may be the transcendent immanence of the formal spiritual determination of the situation. In this way it may be likened to a work of art, though, a most serious one where life and death are ultimately real. Such is the sense of the existential, and, correspondingly, of truth – one which cannot be given any one definition, for it is each man's being which he must work out himself.

3. First Theme – Inseparability of Reason from our Moral Being

At least as it concerns its subject-matter, we will roughly be moving in this section from more abstract considerations and arguments of the theme that our reason and moral being are in no wise separable to more concrete considerations and arguments; that is, from the way in which this applies to man as a thinking being to man as an ethical being. Also, unless otherwise noted, the terms rational and logical are used interchangeably, as with the moral and ethical.

3.1 Intention Implying Mind as the Principle of Things

Mind is the principle of all, or the principal and principled function of all things. This is the whole presupposition of any philosophy which seeks the transcendental ground of things, or is ‘first philosophy’; and this principle, this Mind, is essentially what philosophy is.

At least insofar as the mind is not fully known, or, in its most central and predominant aspects revealed to oneself, and hence remains Mind in its transcendent aspect to our lower mind or intellect, it remains abstract and hard to truly understand. We can only, or are very much inclined, to think of it, then, as antithetical to life or as imposing stern, impersonal categories, principles, functions, etc. which more often than not, make discourse difficult. But all this, again, only arises in the difference between the lower mind, which is also an empirically dependent, practically bound or emotionally driven mind, and the higher mind, and from either of their standpoints. As such, the Mind itself must remain highly abstract and forever ungraspable to the philosopher’s smaller mind hungry (or so we hope) for certainty and concrete truths – those which reveal.

Every philosopher, if he is to be called that, has this intuition, however dimly, of the principled function of the mind or the mind as first principle. This is one reason he can be so dangerous, and, in some ways, even more than the tyrant or evil soul. For, if he is not sincere and not objectively motivated enough, he distorts the principles – that is to say, the mind – of man and the universe;

which is to say, he confuses them, muddles them with his own subjective understanding, abusing and leading others to abuse them for their own selfish and whimsical ends – in all kinds of ways, making crooked, diminishing or even damaging our vision and capacity for seeing things as they are. And this is more dangerous with the cleverer one who wants to be recognized for his ‘great mind’, or wants to say something ‘new’, for each man in his deepest heart thinks he is or wants to be God. And, more often, the philosopher is not even aware of the principles through which he thinks, especially of the Platonic kind, i.e. those that are primarily ethically metaphysical.

To say that Mind is the principal function of man and the universe is not far from saying it *is* the realm of all principles and thus the source of law, order, pattern, rule, etc. in light of which each thing can have clarity, certainty and direction or purpose. And ultimately the Mind itself precedes all laws and orders, for it is not bound by any other law than the freedom of its action and the necessity of its knowledge.

One reason – an argument for the necessity of transcendental philosophy as what philosophy is in its most real and fullest sense – is that it is essential to the very function of the mind to be able to trace everything to its root cause, its function, foundation, or, in short, principle. And it is in the very nature of things for them to be so traceable, for everything, which is interconnected, to contain the traces of that which it has arisen from and the indications of the principles governing it.

For example, starting with something that is evident in the world and to our experience, such as some feature of a thing that can be removed from it without changing what that thing is, as with any *particular* colour of the skin, any *particular* shape of the face, etc. and tracing this to its root meaning or principle, we come upon the concept of contingency, i.e. that which is not necessary for something to be what it is.

What all things have arisen from and the principles governing them is, ultimately, the transcendental ego, which, in essence, is also God, and which we refer to here in certain crucial respects as Mind. What determines, for example, contingency as such is not any evolved or empirical function or feature of the way the world is (which can be seen to be impossible by the concept itself), but the very conditions that enable this world to be the way it is, that is, as the likes

of Plato and Kant sought to elucidate, certain a priori structures that determine the world to be this way and not otherwise. These a priori structures are also transcendental; they exist because they are necessary and irreducible features that would apply to any world similar to ours.

While these arguments for the a priori and transcendental conditions of the world may be quite tautological, that is precisely part of the point. There is no such thing as an argument which exists a priori, and once one recognizes what contingency means, as well as 'necessary and sufficient', 'condition', 'essence', 'substance', 'accident', 'primary and secondary qualities', 'transcendental', 'analytic and synthetic judgements', 'form', 'unity', 'identity', 'difference', and so forth with all philosophical concepts, there is really no getting out of the circle of their irreducible necessity for existing and determining things accordingly. All philosophical concepts are articulations of the roots of things or what they mean in principle, and in fact every concept is implicitly philosophical as it can be traced to its root meaning.¹⁶ Consequently, all genuine, fully worked out philosophical concepts are also metaphysical principles.

But how does the idea that the mind is the principle of things relate more concretely to man's life as he lives it, if we want to understand the mind as much as possible. It is here evident in the principles that govern his life (the ethical) whose immediate and basic function is intention. Man's intention and, all the more so, the intention or intentionality of his life as a whole reveals what his principles are, and by this we mean both intention in what his conscious awareness tells him and how his subconscious moves him, for the latter cannot be denied intentionality if man is ultimately responsible for his actions. And more often than not, to get to the principles a man really abides by, or which move him most, we must look to the subconscious, for, generally speaking, this is where the greater and deeper portion of his mind lies.

Intention is the determining force of our principles because man can only act when he intends (an action in us caused from without is really not our action), and he can only intend what he in fact thinks or believes to be such and such the

¹⁶ Wittgenstein's idea of the family resemblance of concepts in which no essence to one can be found, only applies insofar as language cannot pin it down in any one definitive expression or even concept, but not to the very meaning of the concepts whose essence can be thought and whose *sense* of the essence can be communicated in language, however many words it requires

case, that is, man's intention always follows from his knowledge or belief, and these, in turn, are the principles that consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly, govern a man's life. They may not be correct, but this is only because the principles from what one knows or believes have not been drawn correctly.

In every sense, the principles of what a man thinks, feels and does are always presupposed in them and, in turn, are the principal determinations of our thoughts, feelings and action.

These principles governing and moving our life can be made evident in intention because an intention is always that which I exactly wish to do, and thus does it delineate where my sincerity lies; and sincerity is nothing if it isn't acting according to real and true principles. Therefore, by reflecting on my intentions I cannot but help come upon what it is I *really* believe, think and feel, which is to say the principles informing my action. Intention is where man's potential meaning is formulated and by reflection thoughtfully consolidated – potentially, because that which grounds, or fulfils, man's intention and, hence, meaning is action. But ultimately, as we will discuss to some extent below, there is metaphysically no real difference between principle and action

Moreover, man has a great (though not total) capacity for assuming control over his actions the more he recognizes his intentions and seeks to, as it were, get behind himself in order to direct his actions as best he can; this, also, is simply the function of consciousness. And this is made all the more possible when man is sincere, when he recognizes those bedrock intentions which are his truest principles, or those he deeply believes in, for in them he realizes that his knowledge is his being and his being knowledge. Every individual human being, therefore, is a living philosophy, or, at any rate, exists as a philosophical Idea or Form

From all this, we can then distinguish three aspects of the mind as a whole. Metaphysically or ontologically, Mind is the principled and principal function of all that exists; ethically, it is the principles that govern a man's life; and existentially or phenomenologically, mind is intentionality, the way in which man actually directs his life

In light of this we may conclude, then, that our reason is inseparable from our moral being due to intention, for what I think to be good and intend, again,

has its presupposed principles that ultimately delineate a certain metaphysical structure.

3.1.1 A Note on the Nature of Principles

In line with the above idea, the following is an attempt to argue that principles are identical to the very action or being of things.

The basis or principle of a thing informs what it is at every moment. To say the basis of something and what it is in itself is to say the same thing. Principles are not, truly speaking, something apart from things as some kind of material substrate or foundation, or, as an overarching and fundamentally detached abstraction.

A principle is the single unifying content belonging to a species of particulars, but conceived as providing the form of the thing's perfection. The principle is the very force of the being's existence and not some kind of conceptual abstraction existing who knows where that is applied to the thing, or, which mechanically obeys it. This is much more evident when it concerns the ethical and metaphysical principles of man where we can more easily discern how intimately tied up they are with his being, especially in his rejection of them.

A principle is a durational force of the being's existence; and by durational is meant a force enduring throughout any number or kind of changes the being undergoes. And in this sense it is always constitutive of the being's identity.

The principle of life, for example, is such that everything seeks to preserve its being as much as possible. This principle is identical with everything that the being does; its every movement and action is not only done *for* the preservation of its being, but *is* the very preservation itself to the degree that it actually preserves its being. Along these lines is the principle of the thing the same as its being, or, more specifically, the content of its existence – the latter the various ways the principle is enacted. This is very similar to what form is, but, maybe, a principle is something like the simultaneous form and force of the thing, thus leading to the content that is *seen as* the result of the principle in action. The principle is different from the being itself only insofar as its durational force endures beyond the particular life or existence of the thing, for it applies and works in all beings that by nature fall under it and it necessarily

and eternally is the governing force of beings, for neither can it pass away and never will there be a time in which there aren't beings to which it applies: the principle and the being instantiating it necessarily and eternally cannot exist without each other.

Therefore, we will further add that a principle is the unity of form and force; and this is substantial power – something we attune ourselves to the more we fulfil the principle.

3.2 “Thought as the Condition of the Good”

Simone Weil seems to be implying a similar point to mind being the principle of things when she says: “It is always bad to injure one's power of thought since thought is the condition of all that is good.”¹⁷

Let us look into this.

The good would have no existence if it were momentary and transient; this is pleasure and utility. Rather, *the good is that which endures* and it endures for the sake of eternity – as the very support of eternity in time. All is directed to the good in order to endure as much as it can and ultimately to “enter” eternity, that is, where the good is realized as Truth.

The contrary of this is to be satisfied with time, and this is to be satisfied with and by death, an apparent absurdity and contradiction, since this is to be satisfied with annihilation, with nothing and to become nothing.

Only something which endures in time can apprehend that which endures in time, in this case, the good; and this something is conscious thought and reflection and the things arising from it. And, furthermore, the good is not just given to us, but, whether it be a form of the good that is given, but which must be fulfilled, or the content of the good whose form must be realized, or, that both the form and the content of the good must be attained, all this can only be so if it is determined in such a way by thought.

The only other alternatives of access to the good are that which is given, i.e. the body and material phenomena, miracles or emotional states. But the given, or all matter generally, exists in an irreversible state of entropy, or, is one of impulses and desires, which, in themselves, only have a finite amount of energy,

¹⁷ Simone Weil, *Lectures on Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Price (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p.196

and though they are recurrent they never amass capital (they are viscous cycles) Miracles, or the magical and the supernatural, lie outside time (such as we know it anyway) and therefore nothing we have control over, at least, not if it is conceived independently of thought. And as it concerns emotion it definitely can be, and many times is, a form of endurance in time, but only as it depends on the kind of emotion given to us, which, as it were, takes hold of us and does not let go. It seems rare, though, that an emotion given to us could endure to the point that in connection with it something enduring – a form of the good – can be formed and fulfilled; since for the most part it seems it would have to be nourished and sustained by some conscious activity. (Often if a person is fortunate to be given such an emotion (an emotional experience), if nothing is done to sustain and develop it, it turns against the person, usually, becoming its opposite. And this can be especially true of mystical experiences.)

Again, the only thing that with certainty can procure good in this world, in time – the condition alone which must be present for good to arise – is thought, by which we mean conscious thought and reflection. For thought is the only thing we know and which we have at our disposal that stands outside of time, whilst still existing in time, in the sense that it endures and can determine that which happens or how it happens in time.

In other words, thought is distance from time. All forms of thought – recollection, reflection, contemplation, meditation, thinking pure and simple, analysing, synthesizing, scanning, observation, pondering, etc. – imply a distance from time, from that which is in incessant and irreversible flux and really indistinguishable from it. Herein, my attentive regard is a standing apart from the object, or, necessarily involves the subject-object distinction, through which that which occurs is thrown into relief, posited against a background of nothingness, however dimly, short-lived or extended it is, by which the thing is isolated, if only for a moment, and however much beyond this point of isolation the thing is indistinguishable

If I can think the present and sustain this thinking, it is meditation. Even if something external to this thinking extinguishes it, it is still a form of endurance of time, which is necessarily independent of time; for, it is exactly contrary to the flux of time in itself, wherein, instead of time being an indistinguishable and ever dissipating movement in all and every of its respects, it is a differentiated

one movement of things, i.e. a conscious movement or movement of consciousness. Instead of time as an indistinguishable, ungraspable vanishing into thin air, it is time preserved for all the time that it exists, it is the endurance itself of existence in time, the order of particulars being held together as the one movement of their temporal sequence, or, the very rhythm of time. Meditation thus conceived is distance from time only in the sense that it is qualitatively removed from time in itself, that is, it is of a different category than time in itself. But this category is real time insofar as it can be abstracted from eternity without contradicting the experience of time where eternity is 'absent'. For there is no such thing as time in itself, as time that is purely unreflective, thoughtless and unconscious; this is a reality, but only for thinking beings, and only in the mode of an error in relation to time, that is, when time is thought of as the only reality, or, on the contrary, that Eternity doesn't exist. For that things happen in time is primarily a determination of thought. Even for animals and plants things happen for it or in it, otherwise they wouldn't learn, they wouldn't seek food, safety, in short preserve their existence, nor would they pass through stages in their growth; and that all forms of mineral bodies that we know of go through stages of formation, obviously, means that things are happening to it. In all these cases, that which exists in time exists in a time where things happen, that is, one that necessarily involves distinctions and relations, to say the least, and not one that is ever an indistinguishable moving mass of stuff, even though from a certain bird's eye view time seems to be in such a flux.

Elaborating on this point, at the most basic level of thought, that is, at the very beginning of its becoming conscious, we see a world in which things happen, a world of relations and order. When thought is present, it is always seeing and noticing a time of relations and distinctions; and we have to say that since thought is always present, unless one is in a coma (and still this is not certain), there is always this notice, however faint it may be, of relations in time. We only suppose time to be a mere movement or matter of unconditional change when the impressions we receive from the world, or even from one or a few things, exceed our mental grasp. But that such a time of indistinguishability, of happenings running into each other and melding without distinction, where change is occurring every imaginable instant – that this exists is impossible.

Awareness of time as reflection upon it, upon which we form the concept of time, only arises for beings that by nature think, and this is only the case for humans. In whatever way animals may have a sense of time, it is never one which is reflective on time itself. In meditation the consciousness is isolated and held.

All other forms of thought seem to take place outside of the living present, even if it be of what just happened or of the present situation. In these, the endurance of thought and thus independence of time first takes place by the isolation of the thing in time, either by its being impressed upon the mind as such or by the mind itself – something necessary for all forms of thought, even meditation, though the latter is contrary to it – and then held by the thinking over it, of whatever kind it be. Again, this thinking over is a standing apart from the object, the very objectifying regard itself, which is held together by the desire to determine it in such and such a way, or for thought to be determined by the object – objectively, that is – in such and such a way. And, as we said in the introduction, it is this desire for determination and of determination that is the power of thought; a desire to determine and be determined in thought.

If the power of thought is the desire for and of determination, it can only be a determination of the quality of the good, since it is not possible to desire anything except the good, whatever form it takes, and any determination is always of a quality.

Therefore, thought as that which can endure through time and is the power of determination is the condition of the good because the good, if it is true good, must be determined as that which endures in its good through time. Again, the good is always that which endures in time and can thus continually procure good in it, but such a good is not given to us, but must be determined.

More explicitly, any true good involves a transcending of particular goods by thought which endures in time, can stand apart from it and conceive of the form of these particular goods, and then by its own power or desire determine this as the true good in time, or in the world.

3.3 Distinction between and Unity of the Right and the Good

From a different angle now, the good is, in a certain sense, the thing disclosing itself to an other; that is, what is revealed or disclosed to one is always the Truth in the form of the Good; whereas, Truth is the thing disclosing or revealing itself to itself. Truth is the form *and* the content of self-identity, as form it applies to all things, that is, to their degree of truth; these things, in turn, involving a degree of relativity and inner-differentiation that discloses their identity to be immediately derived from themselves, but only in relations to all things. Hence, as Hegel says, the “True is the whole,”¹⁸ and this whole is the content of self-identity, for only the whole can posit itself as what it immediately is, that is, through itself. The content of self-identity can then only really apply to Truth itself, the ultimate whole or as implying the ultimate whole.

We first see the moral in the rational and in its aim – the Truth – because a man must first see that the Truth is his Good, as well as the Beauty that he loves, and must (and does) make a choice whether to search for it, follow it, or admit it. The Truth will not and cannot be forced upon man without his choice and consent. No matter how much the truth of something is shown to him, if he doesn’t allow it, does not let himself recognize it, he will not accept it; and if he does in a mere intellectual sense, it means that it is either forgotten or ignored sooner or later, and has not any effect on his life.

Implied here as well is the all-important role of Choice and its fruit which is Freedom. It is not possible, so long as we are concerned with truth, to remain neutral to any philosophical position, or between them. Scepticism (which we will look at later) is in truth an ethical position and not, strictly speaking, a philosophical one, its position is precisely one of seeking to find a position which is true for the questioner; it is a means to philosophical belief and knowledge, of whatever sort (and scepticism is the very suspension of these). Any logical philosophical position necessarily requires that one choose it, because any such position is necessarily an ethical one, possessing a promise or vision of a good a man seeks for his life. Therefore, it requires Choice, an existential commitment to the philosophical position, such that it is one that informs his life – ordering, directing and structuring his life accordingly, one

¹⁸ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11

through which his being is developed and embodied. And this saves man from the existence of a mechanical Truth (the most extreme form of dogmatism conceivable) and the total absence of Truth (relativism), wherein, in either case, Truth is nothing but empty abstractions, which can be argued about forever and never get anyone anywhere, and worse, deluding the person about the meaning of his life.

Accordingly, what is rational is always a certain form of the right order of a thing; and as its right order it is what enables what is good for it to be achieved or manifest, and in the best possible way. What is right is the formal nature of the thing, or its internal logical structure that holds it together, and what is good is its content or the movement of the thing. What is right and what is good are so very close to each other that they seem indistinguishable, except, of course, when we consider them, especially the good, relatively, that is, when what is right or good is determined by the pleasure one wants from it, and, also, in abstraction from one another, where we conceive of 'right' as a kind of obligation and 'good' as a kind of desire.

But their distinction may be something like this: the right serves as the principle of the good, the standard to which the good aspires for its highest fulfilment; and the good is the right in action, that is, beings, things, processes, events, etc. doing what is right for their highest good. And the highest good, what has rightfully gained its perfection, is the Truth; thus the pure unity between what is right and good is truth

We can also see this in that what is right isn't identical to the good, for if it were it would in all cases be what is necessarily good, in which what is wrong could never play a role in the achieving of what is good; but what is wrong exactly serves to distinguish what is more right from what is less right, thus playing a fundamental role in the attainment of the highest good; and we know that often we have to be wrong to see what is right, especially when we really need to see it. In the same way, were what is good unconditionally what is right, we'd have no way to measure what is truly good from what is not, but often what is bad is right, or rather, the absence of good is often for the sake of the real or greater good we seek, which comes in the long run. What is good is always what is right and what is right good, but not in a necessarily immediate

way, they are – that is, their truth is – often mediated by what seems wrong and feels bad.

As an aside, it seems that the right is a determinate notion of truth as the just is a determinate notion of the good, that the right is always an abstraction from the form of the truth and its content, as is the just when the form of the good is abstracted from its content. The right and the just are then intermediate notions, or forms, whereas, Truth, Beauty and Goodness are basic. And this abstraction results from a problem and conflict in desire, where it opposes itself to duty, or where, more fundamentally, emotion is opposed to thought

3.4 No such Existent as the Rational in and by Itself

Here we will be making a certain distinction between the rational and the logical. The rational is a certain determination of the ratio of the thing, that is, generally speaking, the precise order of something. And the logical, it seems, is the makeup of the internal consistency of a thing, or those steps or the process involved itself by which the order of something can be determined

There is no such thing as the rational in and by itself. As we've outlined above, there is no categorical difference between the right and the good, such that they would be different beings. Again, the right is the form of the order of the thing, and the good its content ordered by the former and which it aspires to as its highest perfection, which is its highest good. The right then is always a standard of the perfection of the thing and the good the way in which it exists and works insofar as it is attaining or maintaining this perfection; and so where this perfection actually exists there is no difference between the right and the good.

As closely linked to the right – as the right order – therefore, the rational in and by itself cannot be amoral, and it's only a spurious reasoning which is, which fails to see the moral in itself, its imperatives, nature, the pronouncement of its ethical task, etc., or simply the good which its ratiocination implies.

If we abstract the rational from the intelligence as a whole we see that the rational only draws conclusions and makes decisions according to some kind of logical principle or standard, which being merely logical is amoral, that is to say, it may be of whatever kind of logic – emotional, passionate, intuitive, procedural, fanciful, preferential, etc. – so long as there is the appearance of logical

consistency, and which further means any presupposition may begin it and it may exist for whatever capricious ends it so desires. Such is the case every time we try to make a decision in a solely rational way. But as we will remark shortly, there is no such thing as a purely logical principle or standard, at least, in the sense that we may begin with it and proceed to rationally work everything out from it. Hence any purely rational attempt at defining or deciding on something will fail, or, have adverse consequences to some degree

This amoral logic – the supposed rational in itself – only admits of a minimum of logical coherence, at times, even semblance, that is, a limited necessary relation of cause and effect. And to be more accurate, we can say that *the logical in itself is indifference*, the movement indifferent to its beginning and its end, only serving as a mechanism to get what one desires

But the truly logical – that which is logical in a total sense and which is genuinely rational – is where logical content and its cause and effect formulation derives from sound premises and aims at sound conclusions, in other words, sound in the sense that there isn't a discrepancy between the premises or presuppositions and the logical formulation and conclusion, which is to say that what we seek to affirm in various ways is the truth of the whole argument. Again, "the True is the whole" and this is where an argument, proposition, philosophical position, etc. only seeks to conceive of itself in as much self-evident fullness as possible, not leaving out, much less in separative conflict with all that is relevant to it, but, on the contrary, in proportionate harmony with all that the concept or view implies. To fine tune what we mean to say and resign ourselves to its particularity can be very good, but it is not truth – at best only a minute particle of it – and it may not even be logical

Ultimately, the reason for the self-insufficiency of the rational in and by itself is that it does not seem possible to have a premise, presupposition, subject or conclusion that is in itself logical; its logic is part and parcel of the logical structure it entails as a whole argument, statement, proposition, view, etc. There is no purely logical beginning to an argument, for any argument begins with an intuition, which is alogical in the sense that its sense and meaning doesn't depend on logical articulation. Nor does the end of an argument have anything purely logical about it in the sense that the end is a concept or idea which is supralogical in that it's only purpose is to lead to higher cognition,

understanding, etc. or the ultimate self-fulfilment of a thing – the latter being some kind of intuition that cognizes itself, some sort of immediate cognition where our thoughts and concepts are a direct apprehension of Reality, Truth, etc. In short, an argument, if it is rational, always begins with some intuition or some unanalysable assumption and ends with some concept or idea that transcends the logical content of the argument.

Now, these – the beginning and end of a logical argument – necessarily involve the moral because they essentially relate to man's lived life, and man's life is, in the very sense of the Platonic eros, moved by the desire for the highest good. And they necessarily relate to man's life because thoughts never emerge in and by themselves. They always arise out of, or in connection with, the whole network of relations that we exist in and are in many ways constituted by, or out of Reality or the Universe itself that is some transcendent whole. Abstractions are always, however distant, abstractions from our experiences and there is no such thing as an idea isolated from any kind of lived, felt and conscious relation. And what we conceive or what comes to us as intuitions, higher ideas, grand speculation, or, a vision of the whole, etc. which often appear in the utmost abstract, are not ghostly abstractions but the seeds or the sense of some greater, much more or even all-encompassing experience that is possible in this world.

In the same vein, given that logic ultimately concerns itself with the Truth (for it can only be the truth of a proposition that enables its internal consistency, and not that by doing something logically we construct the truth of it), the ethical in the proposition is implied and makes itself known as the closer or more distant approximation of the Truth. Rationally, the ethical is the ratio, the precise relation between concept and truth, the closer it comes to the truth, not only is it the better argument in a logical sense, but is the better understanding or attempt-at-understanding in an ontological sense, that is, as it concerns Reality, and as such has the greater capacity to assist, to say the least, the person holding the concept or view for his and everyone else's highest good; and, on the contrary, that which is less logical hinders the person's capacity for happiness.

3.5 Role of Power in Man's Reason

Truth is necessarily ethical, though not reducible to it, because it reveals the essence of something, and this essence is a power given for the good of the being revealed or revealed-to. Also, to really know something necessarily means to be able to act morally in light of that which is known. If I really have knowledge of something there is no possibility from this knowledge alone for me to act immorally. True and genuine knowledge necessarily situates me ethically and gives moral direction.

“Man is a rational animal.” This logical statement is also an ethical one because it defines man to a certain extent or reveals a part of his essence. Being thus defined or revealed, man is then made aware of his responsibility, of his power or nature that he must respond to, since what is revealed is done so for a purpose – or, on the contrary, what is hidden isn’t done so arbitrarily or out of malice, since hiding or concealing is a form of protection and of preservation. The purpose of definition or of revealing things for what they are is precisely to be given power or the capacity for it by thus knowing what the thing is. The purpose of man being a rational animal is simply that he use his reasoning for what is good, or to maintain and increase the general harmony of Nature, for no animal transgresses the harmony and order of Nature.

And power is inseparable from responsible use of it, since power is by nature the affirmation of being, of what seeks by such affirmation its perfection. Otherwise, power would be by nature destructible, or evil, and would ultimately extinguish itself (thus being the contradictory form of powerful impotence or impotent power). Or power would be indifferent, whereby there’d be no necessary reason for either affirmation or negation or to do anything, which we can at best conceive as a mere possibility of potential power – something able to be used for good or bad or for the continuance of a stasis – which would be the power of accident or caprice. As such, this power of indifference would either be solipsistic – a power remaining irremediably private and unknown (begging the question why it was disclosed in the first place) – or, the power of chaos, in which either nothing happens (and power contradicts itself in being futile), or everything individually and in the greatest affirmative way happens, which is the absence of order and which in the same way is unproductive, or, is

destructive, which, again, is a contradiction of what power, or being-affirmation, is.

The revealing of the essence of something is also a power essentially seeking its good (and, ultimately, truth), which the bearer of the power is responsible for, because the essence revealed is revealed so that what it is revealed to may come closer to it, may form a fruitful relationship with it, and by thus achieving what is good come to reveal itself for a higher good.

For nothing can be revealed out of stupidity or in ignorance; it is only man which 'reveals' the 'essence' of things in such a way, and obviously out of a prior misuse or abuse of his reasoning powers. But even here, as, say, in the Atom bomb, it doesn't seem we can properly speak of an essence being revealed

Also, power doesn't, properly speaking, give itself brutishly. Brute power takes power to feed itself, or, as in the case of man, only gives it insofar as he will be mediately fed by it, that is, use others' desire for power to increase his own.

If power is given by Nature or by the proper use of mind, then, again it can't be given out of stupidity, ignorance, or destructively or indifferently, for such power is only a masked and deformed form of impotence. Power is essentially affirmation of the thing's being as much as possible, and the thing's being is its level of perfection; if not, it is only power in a state of degradation – power cut off from its true source, and is either immediately or mediately impotence.

Man in understanding himself, thus, gives himself power, for knowledge is power in that the defining, understanding or revealing of something is to disclose its essence, and thus the thing can be affirmed in its being to the same degree that its essence is grasped, and so the more it is understood the greater the power of its affirmation. This is obvious. The more we understand something the more it can be made use of.

But because there is nothing truly between power and impotence, but the process of change from one to the other, either man uses – in this case, his reasoning – power for good, in which his reasoning is part of the disclosure of Truth, or, he uses it for ill, whereby he only falsifies himself, and he can't use them indifferently, for this would mean either there'd be no ethical consequences to what he makes of, or from, his reason (the Atom bomb would

then be neither essentially good or bad), or, that he could indifferently arrive at Truth through some series of logical formulations, thus not requiring any change of his inner-being (wherein the Truth would've been most likely disclosed long ago and for all time and all men, which means the Truth would not change the inner-man in return, except in a mechanical, lifeless way, as a pulley and lever lifts bricks), or, yet again, the Truth would be an impossible, meaningless or non-existent task.

3.6 The Relation between Thought and Emotion

Furthermore still, we can see that the ethical is integral to the logical, or, more fully put, the metaphysical exists (for it appears that where the logical and the ethical coincide we have the metaphysical) because we cannot rightly conceive things in the absence of how we feel about them.

To begin with there is no such thing as a thought without any sort of corresponding or inherent feeling, if only as the very sense of the thought which is a certain, quite subtle feeling for what the thought means and from which we often, if not always, proceed to articulate and understand the meaning of the thought.

Generalizing from this we can say that for any thought to exist it must have a certain energy, which is its emotion, and that the quality of the emotion or energy is its thought. Emotion is the energy provided for thought to carry its work of qualitatively determining an impression or sense of things, an experience, idea or whatever it is which moves one in some way, or, that one has been affected by. The more one feels that which they feel, think, do, say, etc. the more capable are they – provided they so direct their thought – of positing its determinations that define its qualitative nature, essence or, in general, that which internally moves or constitutes the thing. But what more usually happens when one feels something more is that one is more able to determine the course of that which they are feeling, as opposed to being given to inertia, even if such a determination or expression is wrong, or misguided.

Hopefully without sounding redundant, emotion is the nature of a thing being felt, which includes feeling the mental and physical nature of the thing, and thought the nature of a thing being consciously determined.

Emotion as energy and thought as quality always come together in any given impression, experience, etc. Never are they separate, regardless of how much this applies to an objective reality, which, as we attune to reveals to us its thoughtful, moving and being sense, or to what is simply given in the sense that “what we see is what we get.” In one sense this can be understood as information being an energetic thing, or as energy always containing information.

And this is true simply because energy (emotion) and quality (thought) cannot exist separately. What would an energy without some quality, i.e. a determination to it, be? Apparently it would be either some kind of chaotic energy (being possessed of any and every determination, for to have some kind of determination that determined it in some way would be its quality of energy), or, it would be an energy absolutely homogeneous and inert (that is, not having any determination to it), which is inconceivable, but would be something like universal fuel – yet, no such kind of energy exists, since, for energy to become something, or, to be fuel for another, implies a change of quality and, therefore, a specific determination of it, either as the form it is becoming or as the kind of fuel suited for the thing’s machinery (that is to say, energy must always be converted in order to be used).

And what would quality without energy or the capacity for energy be? It would simply be a static existent, neither able to do or be moved by anything.

Naturally, then, thought without emotion is inert and sterile; and emotion without thought is useless, that is, wasteful, or, destructive

A pure conceiving – even, let us say, as what Kant held to be ‘pure reason’ – would be to determine or understand something by thought alone. But this isn’t possible, for to fully think something is to grasp its inner-sense, to have an intuition into it, and this is where the very sense or being of the thing is seen *and felt* by the mind. It would be the mentated counterpart, as it were, to feeling and moving with the very movement of a piece of music. The mind must be fully present to its idea or object to the same degree that the idea or object is present to the mind.

If thought and emotion always form a certain unity, but nonetheless still preserve their respective functions, it raises the question of the status of impartial thought and irrational emotion, to which we will briefly turn now.

As was said, there is no such thing as emotionless conception. But what about impartial thought, which we conceive to be not feeling this way or that way towards that which we think, or do? Does not this mean an absence of or detachment from emotion? It does not, but is rather a thinking and conceiving that is not dependant on a certain emotion actually present and felt in order to be conceived, as well as independence from any emotion that would interfere with thinking, and so is a process of thinking held together by will and attention alone. It might be that impartial thinking is one where all one's emotion is directed to thought alone, that is, involves a certain purity of the emotion, which, as we said, is also the energy of thought. In fact, in this sense, emotion as energy would be most evident where emotion was totally subservient to thought, or, where one's emotional function served as the calm and receptive field of sensing or being in which the determinations (qualities) of things could arise as they are in themselves. Accordingly, impartial thought would be subject to whatever is the emotion of a given objective situation, or thought, experience, act, etc. That is, a being subject in a non-preferential way *at the same time* that one is objectively cognisant of all that is occurring. If while thinking impartially on something some objective emotion or movement connected with it were to arise, that is, arise in and of itself, then one would have to feel and be moved by it. Impartiality in general – whether through mind, emotion or body or all of these – involves a radical openness and is a means to objective or pure apprehension of something.

Now, as it concerns irrational emotion, does this not mean that there is no thinking or thought present? It does not. Let us see why

An absolutely irrational emotion would either be one which had no reason to it whatsoever, and was therefore meaningless or senseless or accidental, or, one which was simply a matter of insanity. But an emotion does not arise from nowhere or nothing, but is always a response to something. Nor can it be a response that is meaningless or senseless for this is really to respond to meaninglessness or senselessness, which is impossible, for there is nothing there to respond to. We do not mean here the meaninglessness of existence as addressed in existential philosophy, which is a meaninglessness because of a hope or need for meaning that is denied or not provided and thus has its appropriate responses of anxiety, fear, courage, etc., but what we mean here is

simply a total void of any meaning whatsoever. Emotion is always an immediate or responsive moving with, or feeling of, something given, and what is given, by definition, has its own sense and meaning to it.

Nor can there be an absolutely irrational emotion which is nothing more than a matter of insanity, by which we mean a total non-correspondence with a person's behaviour and the reality of that which they and others are situated in. However irrational and apparently inexplicable an emotion is, it is either one which arises from a most severe (and clever) subconscious or unconscious distortion of the reasons for some negative emotion, experience or recognition in order to suppress them, or, to justify or portray in a falsely positive light the negative experience; or, it arises from some recognition, sense or emotion of something highly complex and which it can only adequately respond to irrationally, since the rationale which one currently possesses is not sufficient. As it were, the latter would involve a logic that escapes us, but whose enactment 'resolves' this complexity, or which situates it in its right order. Or the latter would similarly involve some kind of crises or breakdown that is really the breaking down of old thought- and emotion-patterns in order to reorganize itself at a higher level in light of this higher recognition, sense or feeling for something. What appears quite irrational to us might be very rational for something unknown to us.

But if emotion is indeed never separable from thought, how does this relate to man's moral being? In one sense, it is simply that man's emotion, how he *truly* feels, *reflects* his ethical situation. What a man feels, that is, what his heart tells him to be such and such, or, what moves him in this or that way, indicates to him his ethical situation much more prior to thought, for our moral being is part and parcel of our emotional state; specifically, it is a matter of the cultivation of our emotions – the more cultivated they are the more man is a moral being (and, again, this is nothing that happens independently of thought)

One reason is that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as cultivation of a negative emotion, such as anger or lust, without it becoming something else. By 'cultivating' it, it is really only able to become something different, some strange hybrid of our emotions – a kind of eccentricity – (but this isn't really a matter of cultivation); or, which seems to be more true to the matter, is only able to become its opposite, that is, a virtue (for to cultivate anger, for example,

would be able to use it for good, as indignation or a reprimanding that is exercised at the right time and place). We cannot perfect our anger, lust, envy, etc., in order to free ourselves from moral responsibility, much less become moral beings by them, for there is strictly speaking nothing positive in them, nothing having their own independent essence or nature that we could, as it were, tap into. Negative emotions always arise from ignorance, confusion, projection of one's unhappiness, misconceived or misconnected ideas and so on. They are always privations of the very essence of our being and in all ways always result from a lack of knowledge. This is also to say a negative emotion is not even an emotion proper, for emotions by their nature, as Spinoza would say, are meant to increase and help our power of being and not decrease and hinder it, which is what negative emotions always do.

And, in light of what we've been discussing, the fundamental role of thought in our emotion that reflects our ethical situation is simply to determine what this ethical situation is as accurately as possible, and, thereby, be free from error as much as we can.

Man, moreover, is primarily ethically situated in existence, and so his emotion and its qualitative state will reflect his particular take on the ethical situation he *already* exists in. From this – from his ethical situation, which every man exists in, and the way in which he understands or conceives it, which will inform and be informed by other kinds of knowledge he is interested in, does man derive the kind of philosophy he believes in. In short, from the way in which a man understands his emotions – meaning, also his experiences – does he form his philosophy of what exists.

Lastly, we remarked at the start of this section that we cannot properly conceive of something in the absence of its proper emotion. This is to say that every thought has its corresponding emotion. But since thoughts are necessarily more objective and emotions more subjective (and, let us remark, the subjective can include the objective), except in a very general sense, the proper emotion of a thought is particular to that individual. It is certain that an emotion must be felt by someone or something, for emotions are a matter of sensing and being, and it is necessarily the case that anything that is an individual has sensing and being, an individual in one sense determined by a sensing and being that belongs to the thing alone. – Whereas it does not seem so sure that *every*

thought must be thought by an individual, that is, one which belongs to him and much less arises in him. They may still be thoughts in some other individual, as it were, transmitted to another. But the point here is that this is not certain. It is part of the nature of thought that it can have some nebulosity to it. Emotions which are vague, indeterminate, dimly sensed are not strictly speaking emotions, but may be something like thoughts or sensations tending towards or verging on becoming emotion.

My emotion must be mine and be in harmony with all that I am, that is, according to my life, dispositions, strengths and weaknesses, etc for thereby do I, or am I able to, constitute myself as a sincere and authentic being. It is also possible to be sincere and authentic through thought (and to be so through both according to their proper degrees is absolutely crucial), but it is much more difficult, for it requires a very strong mind to be aware of and think through all that his thoughts mean, what is their syntactic and semantic structure, where they come from, where and how they are situated and to what end, and so forth. Nonetheless, though, every thought has its proper emotion which I determine in myself in order that I may be sincere and authentic.

3.7 The Relation between Intellectuality and Morality and a Look at the Inherently Moral Implications of Three Basic Philosophical Positions: Scepticism, Materialism and Idealism

When we assent to the logic or intuition of a philosophical position we are at the same time intellectually ethically situated in it. For just as thinking and emotion come together and are inseparable so are the metaphysical, or even what is just logical, and the ethical. – As remarked above, where the logical and the ethical form a unity we have the metaphysical.

3.7.1 The Metaphysical Side

It is in the nature of things that they always be moral in some form. For there is nothing that is purely mechanical, since everything has a function, and to have a function is to have a purpose and for a thing to have a purpose is, generally speaking, for it to exist for the good of its being, to preserve it and fulfil its role in the whole order of things as best as it can. Also, since

everything in the finite world is interdependent, if, in the metaphysical sense, purpose is to exist for the good of ones being then it must also be good for every other's being, for if it didn't then it would contradict this interdependency, either as something that could exist independently for its own good, or, as something that sought to dominate others for its own good, or, for some good it imposed on them and which, insofar as it wasn't good for them, would be antithetical, or unnatural to their good. Simply put, for things to be preserved through their interdependence they must do what is mutually good for each other.

All this is manifestly evident in Nature, where all her creatures exist interdependently in an order and harmony that is always preserved – Nature, in one sense, being moved by a 'sympathetic resonance' and, as Gurdjieff says, continually maintained by a "reciprocal feeding."¹⁹ As it concerns man, ultimately, this interdependent purposefulness of the good applies just as much, for man is never not a part of Nature, but with him the way this works is immensely more complex; and if there is any breach of the moral order here it is in one and the same man doing evil unto himself.

Nor can there be an evil demon that governs things. Any kind of pure evil is totally self-negating, for a being of pure evil could not do any good for itself, which we conceive it to do by increasing its power by manipulating and destroying things for its own ends, if not by also delighting in such evil acts. Any such being of pure evil could only exist to destroy itself, since above all it is evil to destroy the very being that one is.

We can also see that everything in some sense is moral in that neither the amoral or immoral overstep the bounds of the moral, but indeed remain morally determined, that is, morality is that which they are measured by, if only in the most basic sense of a need to be moral which they necessarily imply and even exist for. For amorality is to be crippled morally – to be unable to be moral in crucial respects, and, therefore, a poor and failing moral being. Or, in a slightly different sense, it is to be indifferent; but indifference – as being neither moved to do good or evil – cannot but be conceived as something that is good

¹⁹ George Ivianovich Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1950), p.136-37

for one, and so as a certain moral position; but, really, such a position is one of seeking to evade moral responsibility and, therefore, is immoral.

And, on the other hand, immorality is to be morally wounded or poisoned, which implies the normal, even healthy, capacity to be moral, for only that which is in its normal or healthy state can be wounded or poisoned. This is to say, firstly, that there is no pristine state of being immoral, no simple being immoral; but to be immoral is to have become immoral, which only a moral being can become. And secondly, that, in one sense, immorality arises due to a repressed moral suffering – a moral suffering due either to an entrenched egoism caught in an ambivalence towards being moral, or, due to one's life experiences that have taught one to be selfish or have caused an embittered suffering, many times in those who have been very innocent or had high, though naive, moral ideals. Immorality as such is a certain inverted morality, for the immoral act and even nature that follows from it is one seeking to compensate for a moral being apparently denied one, or to balance a certain injustice one perceives has been done to one; it is the attempt to *create* a moral being through the immoral, for no man can truly think that what he is doing is bad or evil and still desire to do it. Or, once more, it is a negative morality, one which seeks to burn away the immoral impulses in order to be free from them and thus be incontrovertibly opened to one's moral being, or, as it concerns more particular instances of negative morality, to experience what is bad and evil so that one knows what it is in order that one's knowledge of what is right and good be that much more solid and even of a higher order.

Therefore, philosophical or logical positions, being propositions or statements about the nature of things, at the same time are moral propositions or statements about such things

3.7.2 The Ethical Side

Looking into the ethical position the intellectual exists in here, if one intellectually assents to or believes something but doesn't choose to follow and fulfil the ethical task – assuming it is truly ethical – then one becomes increasingly insincere and at some point one's beliefs and convictions harden, lose their intellectual efficacy, or, one changes his beliefs to something that involves, apparently, more ethical comfort. For as mentioned to begin with, the

logic of a position predisposes us intellectually towards our ethical responsibility in it. In fact, insofar as what is ethical is being determined by philosophy, the logic and, ultimately, metaphysics of a position is the dawning of one's ethical responsibility. We become aware of what we believe, wish to know, our place in the world and how we feel we should exist in it.

Furthermore, the ethical requirement one is predisposed to in intellectual assent is also a rudimentary belief in the corresponding ethical nature of things, which, the more conscious it becomes, the more does the position make sense and is connected with a greater number of things and thus becomes a working belief, a conviction and, ultimately, knowledge.

But being predisposed to the ethical by an intellectual claim, is only to be so predisposed in thought, and, possibly, in word, but not at all in action, and to some degree, or only negatively, in emotion. (And the ethical, when it is properly operative, is in its basic sense to be predisposed in all three or four.) This means that the individual is negatively responsible for the ethical claims he, if only rudimentarily, believes in, for in this way the corresponding moral law begins to slowly and subtly work on him, which means that the individual's conscience will make known to him, in however small and seemingly insignificant ways, how he truly feels and what he thinks of himself in relation to this moral law, if only, in the final analysis, in the way in which his body responds.

(But that the rational nature of something necessarily predisposes us ethically in it is not to say, on the other hand, that the irrational is immoral or amoral. This is far from true. Reason does not create what is moral – it discovers it and is one of the ways of doing so. The irrational may very well be ethical, working according to some very different kind of logic, such as the logic of suffering.)

Maybe this is why many men – and especially philosophers – wish to remain unattached to any position or view, or, put forward a position that is not one, why they wish not to agree but only disagree and question, analyse, criticize without ever drawing conclusions and seeing the logic of their argument, or the implications thereof. But in this, what they cannot prevent themselves from doing is arguing, and arguing expresses a dissatisfaction, and dissatisfaction, principally, a lack of ethical fulfilment, of the good a man seeks.

3.7.3 The Moral Nature of Scepticism

Scepticism, it appears, is *the* amoral position of the intellect; but it isn't, though, it is the closest one gets to it. If we can show that scepticism is not inherently amoral, then, it should follow that no other philosophical position is, for it would be the basic amoral position if there were one, and that, therefore, there is no philosophical position that is not at the same time a moral position.

Scepticism, as we will attempt to show, is the intellectually intellectual ethical position, being intellectually removed one step from all intellectual positions, all of which are by nature *immediately* ethical ones as well.

Ethically speaking, scepticism implies one doubts themselves to be an ethical being. But to doubt one is an ethical being – that is, one necessarily situated in the ethical – is the first step towards being an ethical being, to fulfilling one's ethical task, or towards not being one, which means being immoral, since humans are a priori ethical beings, for, again, we do not choose to be, by nature, ethical beings. Properly, such doubt leads one to recognize he is a moral being, since to doubt you are an ethical being is really to *worry* over your ethical constitution, what value you have as a human being, and to worry implies ethical concern. (Worry, moreover, is definitely one state that is intellectually emotional, where the emotion of worry needs and seeks to be satisfied by the mind, by knowledge or certainty. Worry is emotional doubt.) This is to say that one does not, properly speaking, in a purely intellectual sense, doubt whether or not one is an ethical being by nature; one cannot doubt such a thing in logical arguments, for doubting thus is, however vaguely, to consult oneself ethically, how one feels about his life; and, then, *soon*, a choice is made on what relation one stands to the ethical, and this is necessarily – either positively or negatively – an ethical stance. One cannot remain in ethical doubt as it appears one can intellectually (but which one really can't either). One can argue that one is not an ethical being, but obviously this is not a state of doubt. In other words, one does not doubt that one *is* an ethical being, but doubts *as* an ethical being. To state that one doubts they are an ethical being is really to seek an argument affirming they aren't. This is also to say that *scepticism* is also an argument.

Intellectually, scepticism is an ethical position because it places man, through uncertainty, in the need or demand for knowledge and certainty as

much as such knowledge or certainty is possible. Man in this way is ethically situated towards knowledge (and knowledge is ultimately that which liberates man from suffering) and so the purpose of doubt is this – to turn man towards a certainty that only comes from himself. This is also to say that scepticism doesn't help as a *philosophical position*, that is, one which is universal, for it too should be doubted, and, either one would be stuck in an infinite regress of doubting his doubts or of the value of doubting, or, he'd see this absurdity and either not use it, or use it only as a *means* to what he may know with certainty. And, ultimately, this certainty can't be that *everything* is uncertain, for this would require a principle of uncertainty that is itself uncertain, which is a contradiction in terms, since principles are certain because they are founded on certainty, whereas, all we would have here is uncertainty. In other words, uncertainty, unless we speak of faith, cannot be self-derived; it cannot be a ground of knowledge, since the knowledge, and even the possibility of knowledge, presuppose that which is certain and self-evident. If there be such a principle, it can only, again, be a practical one, for there would always be some series of appearances left over serving as the 'support' of the argument that *can be* doubted; or, we should be able to see, or already have seen, all possible series of appearances (which is highly unlikely) and then doubted them all, in which case we come back to the self-contradictory, un-self-supporting 'principle of uncertainty.'

Scepticism is that intellectually ethical position with a negative mark turned towards the intellectual (and if disposed amorally is, thereby, crippled), while all other intellectually ethical positions are positively marked towards the ethical, even if it is one with immoral implications.

The moral nature of scepticism, then, is indifference. But the only positive purpose of indifference is suspension of one's judgement so as to appropriately determine something, in this case, one's ethical status and one's relation to the search for knowledge, or, for as much certainty as possible.

3.7.4 The Moral Nature of Materialism

Strictly speaking there cannot be an ethics to materialism, i.e. to the belief that only material things exist based on the idea of a material substance of which everything is made. How can an ethics be derived from, much less inherently exist in, a world that is purely material? The only morality to be got from a materialism actually comes from something that transcends it and has imbued it with its moral purpose.

Probably one of the best pictures of a purely material universe is that of Democritus', in which, to begin with, the eternal motion of atoms – being minute indivisible particles of physical stuff – is inexplicably posited, and these atoms possessing hooks move around each other, some banging and bouncing off each other, and others clinging to each other forming the chunks of matter that we see in the world. Matter, on this view, is chunky and hard and everything accidentally forms itself into the physical world we see and touch.

One of the few basic laws of something purely material, of this kind of universe, is that its original state is inertia and thus can only move by being moved by another, and will only stop moving when it meets resistance, and, therefore, whatever things become they become so by consumption of one another, or, by happening to cling to each other and aggregate into material bodies (though on the purely material model, even consumption – bodies eating one another – does not seem to be possible). And, lastly, by only having a finite amount of and capacity for energy, matter is entropic, it must tend towards dissolution. From these four attributes of purely material things – inertia, passive resistance, aggregation and entropy – no ethics is at all possible and is hardly conceivable.

For in a one and most important sense, morality is about giving, to give for the good of another. But on this strictly material model nothing gives, but only takes, or, gives itself as that which cannot give, that is, is passively given to utter passivity, which would be something like an irreversible, unstoppable spilling of itself, without anything doing the spilling or there existing any force that attracts the spilling, for all these imply an activity.

Matter as such is purely selfish, although, in a pathetic and absurd way, for it really only selfishly seeks its original, apparently, pristine state of inertia, where

it doesn't have to do anything (and hence it cannot gain anything just as it cannot give anything; it is indifferent). Yet, such a state is not really possible, for inertia means to be able to be passively moved, or simply passivity, and doesn't mean to be static. That is to say, there can only be passivity in a universe which already moves or is active; or, in other words, to be passive means to be constantly subject to an activity or motion acting upon one, since a passivity that is total absence of motion is really a static-ness and such a static universe in which no movement – not even of inert things – would take place, is really one of utter annihilation. On this model there is no conserving or transferring of energy, but only disintegrating and amassing of physical stuff – it being totally inexplicable how the material world continues to exist at all – and for no other reason than that this is what matter analytically does.

Again, the only thinkable morality we could get from this is this supposed original state of the total inertia of matter, which would be one of total indifference, a doing of neither good or bad. But this is hardly morality, and, as we've discussed, is a state impossible to begin with.

As mentioned, such a material universe is totally accidental. There is no reason it is or should be one way or another, and no kind of intelligence is possible to it. Any such morality, if in some way it were consistently thinkable in such a universe, would be nothing but relative and imposed upon the inherently indeterminable reality of things. But this is no kind of morality, but rather each one's fancied idea of what is good and bad, and one person who thinks it right to destroy everything would be just as unjustifiably correct as another who sought to preserve everything, or, for that matter, for one who didn't care either way.

In a similar way, no morality can be derived because such material would be purely extended, and therefore, no nature of the thing would be possible to know of it, that is, if it had a nature. And we can only be moral to beings whose nature we know or have a genuine sense of. Otherwise, such morality would exist in a vacuum – some kind of generic morality – which is neither one because morality is about responding in the right way to another, which requires having an adequate idea of what that being is.

But there is talk of material value or a materialist ethics, one which, other than money itself and the value it is supposed to have, Western culture has

become largely based on. One of these so-called values is consumerism, whose driving forces are production and consumption, supply and demand. But there is a great fallacy here, which is the belief that if something is produced it will necessarily be consumed, or, in some other words, that if there is a demand for something it can or should be supplied, or, even in some perverse way, due to a prior manipulation, that if it is supplied there will be a demand for it. This is not even an animal, but a bestial logic, that really only seeks to consume and annihilate itself.

Matter is definitely in one sense usefulness; it is there to be used. But there is no such thing as usefulness or practicality in and of itself, for we can't separate how and for what end something is used and the consequences of that use, and the relation between action and consequence is necessarily a moral one; in a word, it abides by the law of karma. Nothing can be used indiscriminately or even indifferently without some kind of adverse consequence. And the same applies with full force to money, which has no value in and of itself, but is to be used for something else.

Practicality is always moral and primarily determined by the moral as the moral, because what is useful is always limited by what conserves; as soon as the use of something transgresses the conservation of that which it is involved in, it becomes useless or destructive, and what is useless is immoral because it is wasteful, that is, it is the shunning of its responsibility. The relation between action and consequence is necessarily moral in this most basic sense of being a relation that always acts according to the conservation of energy, of the self-maintenance of that thing, or things, involved in energy exchange. And this is moral because it means the normal and healthy functioning of the thing, and, therefore, its purpose of enabling that thing to preserve or flourish in its being as much as it can. In the most basic sense, practicality is moral as *enabling* – providing the conditions for – the perfection of a thing to be maintained or increased. And as it concerns human beings the primary purpose of the practical is to help enable the ethical to be fully pursued and embodied; for man to flourish in his moral being. If something doesn't thus serve the good of itself or another it is both impractical and acts immorally.

In terms of action and consequence, if an action doesn't abide by the law of conservation of energy then the consequence will sooner or later limit the action

of the thing, thus, forcing it to conserve its energy or make up for energy it lost or that it en-burdened on another. Impractical and, of course, immoral action is then an indirect self-limitation through the consequences naturally seeking to make up for these inadequacies or failings; and this limitation is ultimately one of the thing's freedom, for therein lies the power to act.

Hence, the all too obvious problem of the pollution and destruction of our environment and the great burden on our earth due to the dominance of industry and technology arising from the scientific materialism of Western culture.

The moral nature of materialism, both intellectually and in practice, thus, lies, in principle, in its practicality, in its ability to preserve and conserve.

3.7.5 The Moral Nature of Idealism

Here we come upon a vast and inexhaustible philosophical territory where the impulse of morality can be driven to infinite and most noble heights and, only as it concerns it most generally, to the lowest and most base depths. But we will only concern ourselves with the former, and only make a few remarks that in the latter, in those ideologists and fanatics of all kinds, which have plagued history, there is a great confusion, or, a cunning manipulation of hypocrisy that has debased the genuine import of ideality, which is the fundamental impulse of the spirit. Such men (and, let us emphasize, it is the fault of men and not the fault of the desire for the ideal itself) have sought in one way or another to make the ideal into the material, to make it the given, to enforce its universality, as if it could be mechanically applied, to make it a solid, impenetrable and fixed fact of the nature of things; whereas, it is the other way around – the material is to be made into the ideal, but which by nature it never fully can. The central misunderstanding of the fanatic or dogmatic idealist is in thinking the ideal exists or can be embodied in the particular. In this lies a horrible and dangerous conflation of idealism and materialism, a clashing, as it were, of two positive charges, namely, the positive charge of the ideal as that which is perfect and the positive charge of the material as that which is always given.

As just remarked, one of the reasons why this is a problem is that the ideal cannot be fully embodied and realized in the particular, in the actual world, if by that we mean the world of finitude and becoming. The ideal cannot be fully

realized in this world because it serves as the measure of it and as the source of aspiration, inspiration and, in general, as the source for the strive for perfection. Moreover, no one ideal as one that is fully articulated and defined is the ideal that can fully perfect us or our world. Such an ideal would be God, but God cannot be fully defined, since He is infinite. The highest ideal thus means a constant and infinite perfecting of oneself or the world.

This is also to say that every ideal which we strive for in this world is interconnected with every other possible ideal, the realization or fulfilment of one requiring the realization or fulfilment of every other – something which could very well involve a hierarchy of ideals or a certain order or proportion in which they exist, whereby, one is fulfilled up to some point (i.e. it need not be most perfectly, in every detail, realized) in which one moves to the next, in an overall harmony of perfections that one embodies and at the same time further perfects

One reason that all ideals are interconnected is that contrary to there being particular ideals provided for man, and much less ones able to become true solely because it is what a man thinks or desires to be so, the ideal by nature is universal, or, is only characterized by a certain form that provides the conditions, which no ideal, if it is to be true, can transgress, that enables a genuine ideal to be possible to any specific time, place, situation, individual, and, indeed, for the ideal to be moulded for the needs of the occasion. This is simply to say that ideality is an eternal condition of existence, which enables any particular existent and process to improve upon itself, and the question is really only one of being able to conceive what is truly ideal and whether it is more or less ideal. For instance, the conditions of ideality are such that there can be no genuine ideal to evil; any such conceived ideal is self-negating and impossible to achieve. Existence is necessarily situated in the mode of seeking to perfect itself, even if this perfection is of something intrinsically negative, in which the ideal is really one of seeking to see something for what it is, to overcome a delusion.

Thus the first inherently moral attribute to idealism is that it offers an infinite flexibility for the ideal to be a possible realization for any and every existing and occurring thing and situation

Furthermore, consequent upon this flexibility is the fact that no two genuine ideals can be in conflict with one another, or, relate to each other indifferently and in separation from one another; but rather, they may form a greater unity containing diverse elements each realizing its respective perfection in its own way, or, may be coordinated as to be in harmony with each other

Therefore, the second inherently moral attribute of idealism is the naturally, though, ideally, interconnected harmony of all ideals.

Now, it was also mentioned that the ideal is infinite. Closely aligned to the reason for the interconnection of all ideals, one of the reasons for this is that the ideal is primarily and necessarily characterized by the Good in its true form – to truly conceive an ideal is to conceive what is good eternally and infinitely, that is, for oneself or for everyone at all times and places. Following Plato, this is to say that the Good is one of the most fundamental principles of existence, to the extent that there is no circumventing, avoiding or detaching oneself from it. To this principal, eternal and infinite nature of the Good we will now turn our attention

If what is good only existed temporarily, or, only at a certain time and place, it is to begin with mixed with elements that are not good, i.e. a corruptibility, transience, or constrained specificity, that is, one dominated by the particular.

In all these cases, we have a good that is dependent on time, and this is not good because it diminishes the good available to those particular individuals or situations, its appropriation, development and proliferation, but not because it eliminates anything good in itself.²⁰

For something is good not because of a good that is or can be applied to a given experience or situation, as it were from outside, but because the given experience or situation has its good within itself, but which must be drawn out or realized and sustained.

²⁰ As it concerns the individual's existence in this diminished good and his response to it, the situation gets considerably more complex, and has given rise to evil in its worst, most despicable forms. Some of these are hypocrisy, complacency and a banality that stultifies and deforms the good in one and his ability to respond with and act from the good. In such cases, the good in one and the good that governs the society putrefies and slowly and cunningly poisons the individual and society, leading to misery, mediocrity and a sterile absurdity, in which we would be much better off – so long as nothing were to change – succumbing to a destructive form of evil, for at least here one knows what is happening and can actually experience and learn what is the good through the evil, either by experiencing evil and fighting it or by simply being horrified by it and thrown into oneself. As it concerns this banality, only God knows what kind of individual and society this is and what becomes of him and it

Furthermore, such drawing out or realizing of a good and sustaining it is not done with an effort determined by time, but with an effort determined by eternity, which requires a certain change of our usual perspective and response, or, rather, reaction to things. Briefly and very generally, this change of perspective and response is one of apprehending the qualitative and formal instantiation of things, rather than being determined by their appearance only and their quantitative connection or force, which, in one sense, is their weight.. For example, this is the difference between apprehending or sensing what a person really means to say or what is driving what they say (often in light of the emotion or even syntax of what they say, their gestures, expressions and so forth), and what they actually say.

Addressing more specifically these elements of time – namely, corruptibility, transience and constrained specificity – that hinder our ability to apprehend the good, it is obvious that if something is corruptible it isn't purely good to begin with, for, in the physical or practical sense, it means that it has been made poorly, that it is unable to endure *enough* the wear and tear of time for its good to be fully realized, and this is due to a certain carelessness or ignorance in its making. It is good, but due to this and this has certain drawbacks or defects that restrict its good and make it, in essence, mediocre; or, in other words, has limitations that indicate it cannot transcend a certain poverty and misery of being, and hence, has no force with which to extend and perfect its good – to actually do good – but remains a banal good, which is to say is more or less sterile and hardly good, but, rather, likely to succumb to evil. In fact, it is only one small step removed from evil.

In the moral sense, something's corruptibility means it has also been made poorly or simply not good enough such that it is susceptible to being selfish, evil or destructive and, likewise due to a carelessness, but which is moral and which leads to weakness, or, due to a cunning that wants to subvert the good for selfish purposes.

As Spinoza says, "what is quickly made quickly perishes"²¹ And this is when the quantitative aspects of a thing's construction outweighs its qualitative

²¹ Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics and On the Improvement of the Understandings*, trans William Hale White, revised by Amelia Hutchinson Stirling, ed. with an introduction by James Gutmann (New York: Hafner Publishing Co. Inc , 1949), p. 188

aspects. Therefore, corruptibility always lies in the domination of the quantitative over the qualitative.

If the good is transient, then, in a sense it contradicts itself because it arises to pass away, or is made to perish. And arising in order to pass away cannot be good, either because it means the thing wasn't good to begin with and so needed to pass away, or, that it is good to begin with but is mixed with bad elements that it can't withstand for too long without then serving some bad, and so exists as something useful or instrumental for another good to be fully realized; or, that if it is sustained will become toxic, for it has transgressed its limit of good

In general, nothing arises if it isn't purely good in some form, either directly or indirectly, for something arises because it is good, because it is a source of nourishment, and, as discussed in the previous section, not due to some evil or indifference, the latter of which is mechanicality that can only render any good null and void. But this is really only speaking in principle, for in actuality often what is good is mixed with a bad or potential evil. Pure and constant good can only be a reality for one who is wise, temperate, just, sincere, responsible and so on, in short, for one who is virtuous and thus abides by the laws of the Good.

And, concerning the third aspect of time given here, if the good is restricted to something specific in itself, or, in other words, something particularly specific (as opposed to universally specific), it can neither be really good to begin with, for this is to stifle the genuine motivation of the good that is to be spread and shared as much as is possible in all possible ways, without of course becoming evil by being fixed to only one mode or a few modes of its possible expression, or exhausting itself, which is the problem of the fanatic or dogmatist.

But going a step further, we see that there is no such thing as a good that is merely particular, one which only applies to this particular situation, in this particular way, at this particular time and place, to those particular people, etc., for this would be to relativise the good. As merely particular, the good would be solely determined by the particular context or the particular feelings, motivations or thoughts, none of which could be good to begin with since their good is determined by what they are in particular, and as all of these are constantly subject to change, so would the good that arose from them, that is to say, it would always be a changing good, where one good may be contradicted or superseded by some totally different or opposed good. And of course evil

would be just as relative, where one and the same thing may be good for one man and evil for another, or for the same man himself.

But, as discussed in a somewhat different light in the section on the groundwork, the particular is a determination of the universal. Therefore, it is the nature of the particular to extend beyond itself, to be subsumed by the context in which it exists where, in fact, it is being more universally or less particularly determined; or, simply, to grasp it as what is universally specific. Required here is a recognition of the relation to all other particulars in a context, in which the particular serves as the moment we can hold onto and follow in its connection with all other relevant particulars to determine their cause, reason, nature or kind and end.

In short, without some absolute form of the good, there is no measure of what is truly good or not good, more good or less good, in the plethora of particularities that exist in the world. And someone that doesn't really believe that, for instance, it is truly better to learn to play a musical instrument than to play video games, or that it is better to eat healthy food than to eat junk food, only deludes himself.

Also, to be reliant on the particular for the good is to be limited and determined by its finitude and, thus, since it will always come to an end, is to never be satisfied with any good, but to continually suffer.

This is further to say that the good cannot be exhausted by the particular, by any single thing, or any number of things, in the world, for then, if the good is infinite, everything would be perfect, and there would be no need to realize or work for the good, and if it were finite, only something that arose and passed away, then, as discussed above, it would not truly be good to begin with.

This is not to say we cannot be satisfied by a good. To be satisfied is not to exhaust some good (as it is in pleasure), but to be in possession of the *form* of a certain good, in which, so long as the conditions and material or content for its fulfilment are present, one is always actually or potentially satisfied. – As it concerns the latter, this potential satisfaction is a form of satisfaction, for it means that all one has to do is to bring the conditions together for the satisfaction of some good to arise, which, in one sense, is what defines play, instead of having to attain them, i.e. become situated in them, and then bring them together, which, in one sense, is what defines work. To elaborate,

potential satisfaction as outlined is a form of satisfaction because there is no condition of pain or suffering, i.e. lack, to that good, since one of the first conditions of any pain is the absence of the conditions present for that good to be an ever-present joy.

Very generally speaking, this is also to say that we have to work, in one sense at least, because we are only potentially potentially satisfied.

On the other hand, because the universe is in one sense fundamentally characterized by the Good, to be situated in the conditions for the arising of a good, which we all are in some way or another, means that those conditions will also bring themselves together and give rise to the good in the individual, that is, spontaneously. This may also be the objective working of play in the world.

We have discussed three basic aspects of time seeking to show that if the good is determined by them it cannot be truly good. But in general, we may say that time itself exists because it is good, but this good is not due to time, but due to eternity, since, as we will discuss in the third theme, time is mediation and thus cannot and does not determine itself to be anything. Time exists because it is the mediation of eternity, and this is good, as well as necessary, so that eternity may extend into and appropriate all possible realms and levels of existence.

Therefore, the third moral attribute inherent in idealism is that it is fundamentally characterized by the Good.

As it concerns the subject, the existing individual, idealism possesses a most important moral attribute for him, namely, freedom. As Günter Zoller says in an expository essay on Fichte, for Fichte “the idealist has the deep conviction of the reality of human freedom, and is determined to preserve this reality in all his practical and philosophical endeavours.”²² For Fichte, this freedom lies in the human mind as the nonempirical, a priori and transcendental “ground for the representation of the objective world.”

While this is not immediately an ethical position, but a metaphysical one, we mention it here in order to indicate the transcendental depth of the idealist standpoint.

²² Günter Zöller, *An Eye for I: Fichte's Transcendental Experiment*, p. 73-95 in *Figuring the Self: Subject, Absolute and Others in Classical German Philosophy*, ed David E. Klemm and Gunter Zöller (Albany, State University Press, 1997), p.77

As it were, parallel to it, the ethical position of human freedom for the idealist is the same. The idealist has the incorruptible sense, if not conviction, of his freedom as a moral being, namely, that he is the ground for his actions and determines, or, if not, is irrefutably responsible for, all that he thinks and does. Even if his freedom is itself an ideal, as it most likely is, he deeply believes in it and holds to it no matter what, for it is *the* ethical position of the subject, since if we are not free then no morality is possible (a man may be compelled to act morally, but it is not really an action but a reaction, and it is not moral in the most important sense of an act issuing from love, i.e. selflessness, and a desire for the Good) A moral action is one that must be freely willed; otherwise it remains, at best, a practical action.

For the idealist there is nothing that in principle limits one's actions insofar as one has, and to the extent that one has, the power to act. Otherwise we would just be machines. But however limited my power of action is, there is always an essential qualitative space to it that enables me to see and know what I am doing, and thus allows for the always present possibility to act more freely. This qualitative space is essentially consciousness. There is nothing that says man is determined to action by external influences alone, and, further, that determines him to act in this way or that way against his own will. No matter what happens to me, because in the most fundamental sense I am free, I decide which way to take that which happens to me, I always decide *how* I am to take my experiences, how I respond to them and what I *make* of them. For how I am to take an experience is not given in the experience itself, nor is what I make of it. On the other hand, the response to it is in a sense given in the experience as that which the experience or occurrence calls forth for its good; but for this to occur – to respond appropriately to every situation – one must have pure attention, and attention is a mind which is free.

Furthermore, the idealist recognizes that the power of his will may always be increased, and that, in principle, this power is infinite and eternal. However small his will power is, because he knows he is fundamentally free, by employing the strength of his will he makes it stronger, especially at the limits of his will, and indeed can thereby transcend certain limitations. For the use of our strength, especially at the limits, and with due care, only makes us stronger

Therefore, in light of his knowledge or belief that the ideal is infinite and eternal, that it is the Good, and allows for the possibility of an ever-transcending and -encompassing harmony and unity to his life and world, he knows that his freedom is to exist for this ideal, and wills it as much as he can in his everyday life. He knows that there is nothing which restricts him from not acting in every thing that he does for the attainment and realization of this ideal, or, more positively speaking, that there is any and every reason to so act; and indeed he knows that that is his only desire.

Human freedom as the ground and determination of one's being is for the idealist, and indeed, as he conceives it, for every man, the grain of the soul that protects it from defilement, and is the source of the attainment of real, true and authentic being, or, in more ethical terms, purity of moral being, which, in one sense, is eternal absorption in the Good.

Therefore, the fourth and last inherent moral attribute to idealism discussed here is that it is characterized by the fundamental and irrevocable reality of human freedom.

Taking these senses together, we can conclude that the moral nature of idealism is that its object is the eternal Good infinitely applicable to the individual and the world as an unlimited unifying and harmonizing force grounded in and determined by the necessity of freedom.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

Only the ethical in the final analysis determines the truth of a logical, intellectual or philosophical position. And the ethical, for good or for bad, is in the final analysis a man's lived life; and so it is the man's life which determines his philosophy. For the presuppositions and in some sense premises of an intellectual position are assumed, they are not deduced, for deduction always implies assumptions which are immediately so, meaning, they are not logically derived. (We can't stand in a position from nowhere to determine how we should begin.) Every assumption is either given as an intuition or it is a choice (and maybe they are not separate at all, for it may be that intuitions cannot go beyond the way we choose to see things or live our life, at least, if one hasn't seen the reason for what it is). And both intuition and choice are implicitly

ethical – intuition being a certain grasp of the reality of something or its truth, is implicitly ethical because truth exists for the sake of the good, what can maximize spiritual gain, and choice is ethical because it makes one responsible for his choices, this responsibility implying an ethical order he has chosen.

The criteria for truth, then, is whether one's views help them be a better human being or not. And one cannot be ethically indifferent, for if one's views are indifferent or one becomes indifferent, this is immoral, since it is extreme irresponsibility, for, at base, responsibility is to care and one cannot be responsibly irresponsible. Indifference taken to the extreme can only lead to solipsism and cynicism, and these are ethical positions, for they imply a way of life and must be seen as good by he who holds them, for it is impossible that one do something because he sees it is bad for him. But they cannot be sustained without grave contradiction and hypocrisy. The most conceivable non-ethical position would be absolute relativistic hypocrisy, or, in a word, absolute escapism – to neither have principles and contradict oneself in everything, which is impossible.

The purpose of reason and knowledge in general is to enlighten us, and this is to liberate us from suffering. The perfection of our moral being is the enlightenment of reason, which is the light that shines on and nourishes the spirit in order that it may grow.

Knowledge is the highest value in life, being both, in its purest sense, moral and metaphysical (and the metaphysical always includes the moral in it), and something that is not only intellectual but also has emotional, physical and spiritual form; faith as well is a form of knowledge. For knowledge is that which alone is its own sufficient reason for existing, and hence is self-constituting and self-satisfying. As such, to really be in the possession of a certain knowledge is to be in the possession or possessed by a form of self-movement, of that idea which moves itself in one and one moves oneself in it. Knowledge attained becomes the very part of one's being, and so one's being moves in this knowledge, as this knowledge, for and because of this knowledge, in which it is always given spontaneously, for one doesn't have to do in order to know or know in order to do, but is what knows.

Therefore, to have knowledge of one's moral being is to be and move as a moral being. But such knowledge cannot only be intellectual, but must be

emotional and physical as well; and for this is required an effort of being, of doing in order to know. But all that is instrumental for realization of moral being is the becoming of a moral being. Knowledge of moral being is to spontaneously act always for the sake of the good; it is, of course, then, knowledge of the Good. Ultimately, reason and our moral being coincide in this knowledge, one which fulfils our moral being and leads us to the fulfilment of reason, which is the attainment of metaphysical or spiritual being.

4. Second Theme: Ideas as the Substance of Things

This second theme, namely, ideas as the substance of things, follows from the basic idea that truth is eternal because all existence is constituted by internal relations. These relations are most manifestly evident in and as ideas and emotional states, both requiring a feeling conception of them, since the two are not really different, as we spoke about to some extent in the first theme.

4.1 On the Idea and the Reason for the Use of it

Ideas are emphasized here as the substance of things because we can determine the sense of something to an infinitely possible degree, and that sense is the one sense or the one connection of multiple senses of what exists, which is to say it is specific, or, at the least, determinate to a sufficient degree such that we can adequately apprehend or reflect the existence of something. This sense involves every conceivable sense and mode of existing – intellectual, emotional, physical, metaphysical, ethical, aesthetic and so on. And one of the most significant of these senses is that the Idea has intensiveness and extensiveness, an intensity and extensity, which is to say it has spatiotemporal dimension, involving the relation between the individual and the world in a contraction and expansion that, among other kinds of movement, thus form the spatial and temporal character of our life and the world. In a word, Ideas form space and time. And one reason for this would be that sensation and Idea are not essentially different modes of perception, but that from sensation through perception to conception and ideation there is a continuity of one's perception, or, of the apprehension and response of the mind to phenomena, being expanded – the Idea here in relation to the other modes of perception being the broadest possible perception.

Every existing thing and its relation to other things is formed of an ideational content such that it can always be articulated by the mind, conceived without misguided emotional identification, and brought to conscious light *adequately* enough so that we know with as much certainty as possible what it is we are dealing with. Each thing and its relations are so constituted as to form an identity that is necessary and sufficient to be a proper object of impartial reason,

or reason which is not reduced to, or limited by, any emotional state, nor any reason which coldly alleges to ‘transcend’ all emotion, as if it could exist without it. In short, each thing, most evident as idea, is objective in its own right. This is what enables any reflection on existing things and, hence, philosophy as whole. And, more importantly, which forms the real basis for choice, for without greater or lesser degrees of certainty concerning existing things, I would not have to choose or be able to choose; and thus I would not be able to be free, for it is through choice that I become free. Both reflection and choice are only possible because of the overall more-objective-than-subjective relation with things that I find myself in – the irreducible existential situation addressed above – that is also determined by and as its idea, in the way in which we’ve indicated here.

Making a similar point, while the existence of something and its idea are really the same, this is not necessarily the case for the experience of the unreflective person. The existence of something reflected on, be it with mind, emotion or even body, is an idea and it becomes a matter or the very matter of consciousness, which, in essence, is also being. As an idea, it then becomes more and more an immediate presence and possible possession of one’s being, for the more the thing is grasped and understood, the more do its internal relations stand out and can naturally correspond or cohere with our being – our being also an internal relation and constitution. As such, our mind and being may be in natural sympathetic resonance with existence and realize its internal unity with it, where no thing and especially no person is separated out or isolated from anything or anyone else, but is the single and variegated extension of my mind and being.

Ideas are, at the least, or in their most concrete sense, distinguished from the straightforward, unreflected existence of things as their pinnacle, their highest point beyond which it is no longer a particularly particular thing. Therefore, the idea of a thing is both its limit that constitutes the very thing as a particular thing and that which suggests the possibility and direction of its transcendence in and as the concrete and not abstract universal which it really is.

As remarked in the section on the groundwork, we can’t really conceive what surpasses our moral being. Now, we can definitely form concepts of things which our moral being hasn’t embodied, that is, is not in the proper moral

relation to, but these concepts will prove empty and barren – they will not be able to really do anything, that is, give us the realization of which we seek that can transform our being.

For, as we've indicated, the idea is the internal state and movement of the thing bearing – both in the sense of holding and being pregnant with – all its relations to itself and others, and these relations are ultimately infinite. To conceive of something is very much the same as a woman conceiving a child in her womb. In fact, an idea really conceived bears all the relations of things that it refers to, which can grow, develop and unfold in and as our mind and being. What is conceived, in all its detail and ramification, exists objectively, but not necessarily subjectively, which is its purpose to – subjectively in the sense that, again, it becomes the form and matter of our being, mind and lived experience. Ideas are the seeds of objective reality the mind plants in our being

This is why in the first instance ideas form the substance of things as what is not reducible to empirical data, properties and the way in which of themselves they determine the mind, or, that is, the empirical mind, which is the mind being ultimately determined by the senses.

4.2 Dependency on External Relations

From the other side, this means that by apprehending things as ideas we become less and less dependent on external things and ideas for the constitution, nourishment and maintenance of our mind and being, a dependency which naturally makes us slaves to existence, for it is in our nature to be internally self-constituted and to be all that follows from this. We see this as it concerns the body, for the body is so constructed as to be the internally constituted organism that regulates, nourishes and healthily maintains itself through the substances it takes in for the preservation of its being; one which, moreover, has arisen from the *internal* workings of Nature.

Apart from being slaves to the world, the problem of dependency on external relations to think, feel and act the way we do is a problem of mediation. External relations are always a form of mediation, and the more extensive and elaborate it is the further away are we taken from the phenomena, experience or object at hand. Or, in a sense, the more it recedes away from these relations, whereby we never reach it. And if the mediation is of a bad quality, as it often

is in the absence of knowledge of what is *really* being mediated, it distorts or taints what is or is seeking to be mediated – something which is ultimately always good – and thereby one is deluded and is only dealing with fantasized things – hence, insincerity, inauthenticity and the general falsification of our being.

We can see this problem of mediation in social relations. To begin with they are often already predicated on a mediation whose object is gratification of ego, self-forgetfulness, or, at best, the burning away of coarse energies which suppress us. People often don't meet to really meet each other and interact and engage with the very being and mind before them. Therefore, no real learning, growth and nourishing enjoyment takes place; everyone involved compliantly using each other for their own ends. And this is so because so many of us are not genuinely capable of going beyond ourselves, of 'external consideration' to use Gurdjieff's terminology.²³

One example which shows this very much is the way in which conversations between people take place, specifically, the way their bodies act and react. Often, either the person's expressions and gestures of what they are talking about is placid and depressed, or too cool, which corresponds in a diminishing way with what they are saying and renders it less effective. Or, their bodily expressions are jerky and over-excited, apparently trying to make up for what is not being said or communicated with the proper emotion; or it is an exaggeration of what they are saying, betraying that what they are saying is too emotional, too imaginative, or lacking in truth or authenticity. In both cases, there is a lack of proper correspondence of man's mind and emotion with his body, in the former, one which shows a lack of vitality and conviction to what the person says, and the latter an excess of imagination and emotion.

But as far as determining whether a conversation is normal or not, the body's expressions are not always reliable. What really must be attended to is the content of what is said and the quality of its emotion.

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We depend upon external relations because of a lack or inherent disproportion of our mind and being; that is, of a functioning and awakened

²³ Peter Demionovich Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous: Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1950), pp. 153-54

internal relations and their capacities. We are unable to think, feel and act according to our internal constitution. In more explicit terms, we are unable to generate the energy we need for any given situation or action; we cannot experience those things we wish and desire, and cannot realize – or if we do, attain – those goals that truly fulfil us; and instead we make all sorts of never-satisfying concessions, compromises and substitutions for the things we need and truly want. Often, we are simply ignorant of what we really want, but even so, we still have a sense of what we think, feel and wish to act like, and our needs tell us, though indirectly, of the condition of our internal state. All in all, this is largely due to a lack of development of our inner and internally determined capacities.

4.3 No such Thing as Pure Extension

All this of course is a problem if, in fact, everything is a matter of internal relations as we mentioned at the outset. To this we will give the following (metaphysical) argument, which is more negative than positive: Extension is not an independent or primary attribute of Being. This argument is in essence very similar to one we will be making in the next section on the impossibility of a material substance, but it is different insofar as it is possible that ideas can have extension as do material things, which I believe they do, however much extension is one of the most basic defining attributes of matter we can think of. The whole point which will explicitly and implicitly be discussed in the next few sections is that ideas and matter, thought and extension, are not ultimately different substances. This, of course, is also the central idea in Spinoza's philosophy, God being that being who ultimately embodies the oneness of thought and extension.

Extension, properly speaking, is never of an already extended thing; there is no in-itself, independent of all else, extended being. An extended being cannot exist on its own due to its own nature. Rather, extension is always of an intension, that is, of an internal state or being, and it is the latter which is primary, constitutes and determines the extended being

For example, if we take an extended line and further extend it, let's say by doubling it, we have not thereby really extended the line. This is not a matter of extension, but of addition or repetition – they really being the same – or of

enlargement Externally it appears to be an extension of an extension, but it isn't for to extend the line further means it arises from a point, as the line to begin with did; and the point in relation to the line is an intended being, or an internal state, constitution, etc Therefore, if we extend a line, it is always from a point in the line and not from the line itself.

Addition is a matter of multiplying extended things; but no extension takes place; this is a matter of, as it were, spreading about the same thing on an already extended plane; to extend an extension is only to repeat it and nothing gets extended into anything.

Similarly, enlargement is not an extension, but the expansion of an extension, and the expansion only goes so far as the thing's capacity for extension does, which means that the thing that can be enlarged is simply not a fully extended thing, and therefore, there has not been an original extension which is extended That is, no new extension takes place, but the thing is no more and no less the same extended thing, the difference only being quantitative – the thing only being either more, or most, or less, or least extended, where nothing other of the thing or in the thing is extended.

Insofar as things remain on the same surface, or are of the same stuff as the surface, there cannot be any proper extension which takes place. All that happens with addition is that things are flatly spread about on one and the same surface, so that if we were to be at eye-level with it nothing would have appeared to change. With enlargement, one and the same surface only gets smaller or larger, which is expansion and contraction, but not extension.

In short, there can only be extension of an unextended thing, or, of a qualitatively different kind of extension, i.e. where a greater dimension is realized. And really, the second is derivative of the first, since there is no such thing as an original, purely or absolutely extended thing or attribute; it always arises from or with the non-extended; in Spinoza's terms, with the attribute of thought. For Spinoza, again, ultimately, thought and extension are one and the same attribute of God; in and for Him they are the same, which is similar to His intellect and will being one and the same, for us, they manifest in opposite ways.

Extension is always a result, the manifestation, projection, unravelling or unfolding of a purely internal state, or, which is more consistent with Spinoza, it

is the outward form, or the outward reflection, of an existing internality, which when reflected on illuminates this internality.

Extension is always the arising of another or new dimension. It appears that extended things are characterized by their occupation of space, which gives space fullness and yields the different sides of a thing which can be viewed and circumscribed. But there is no space (and no time) apart from its dimensions and, hence, from the things existing in it. Extension is one and the same as any dimension of space; and so space, dimension and extension are all the same thing, whatever that may be.

But this identity of extension, dimension and space may well be nothing but existing things themselves, that is to say, of whatever exists outside or is other to some one thing. For no two extended things can interact via another extended thing. Extended things can only interact via internal relations, since an extended thing is nothing but the outward form of its internal relations; that is to say, it is its limit and where the thing must stop so that it may reflect on itself, or be reflectable in order to be constituted as a self, or as this thing, and no other. Extension is what demarcates the individuality of a thing as far as its capability of individuality will allow.²⁴ (This is reminiscent of Leibniz's notion of monads only having internal relations.)

Two extended things cannot relate via another extended thing, for this is to say two things relate through external relations alone, which is impossible, for what would thus relate are relations external to the things to begin with, and so on and so on, such that the things are only related to external things external to each other; and so, rather than coming closer and, as it were, touching, they are only taken further away from each other. In other words, there is no such thing as a purely external medium. A medium is always an extension of an internal state, of some immediacy seeking to extend itself or create itself through it in order to commune with an other or with itself in greater form.

Nor is there any pure *form* of externality, which would be the same as some independent substance of extension. For we only know the external in relation to an internal thing, in the difference between the two that says this external is

²⁴ Transcendence is, then, to enter or realize a higher dimension. Immanence, though, is – at least in one sense – not to enter a lower dimension, but to enter the depths of the dimension in which one exists and thus to realize its internal relations.

other. Externality is recognized internally as what it *immediately* is not, and, again, this is determined by limitation, not by substance or essence or any kind of ontological difference, in the sense of difference being an ontological category. A pure externality, at any rate, would totally exist outside one, and so how should it be able to be perceived in the first place?

Two or more things are always related internally, either immediately, since an internal sense has immediate grasp of its respective objects, or mediately, via a medium which extends or prolongs the immediacy either naturally, which means the sense and capacity of this medium is internal and common to both (such as with language), which can be made use of; or, it is artificial, which means the one thing or the things involved use external things amenable or adaptable to the immediate and internal sense they wish to communicate, and which only remains external because the capacity for this medium hasn't been realized internally or as an immediate sense; and where it simply can't, as is often the case, the proper intention and use of it is for it to be an immediate extension of oneself, which makes it more an instrument that one naturally seeks to perfect the use of, than a tool or some arbitrary artifice.²⁵

4.4 A Brief Note on the Perennial Conflict between Idealism and Materialism and their Necessary Inequality

That ideas are the substance of things, or, that all existence – life, the world, the universe and all things living and so-called non-living in it – is made from the substance of Reality or Truth (for all three – ideas, reality and truth – mutually imply each other as one of internal relations which constitute things), forms one of the most fundamental tenets of metaphysics or philosophy as a whole. (In a later section we will discuss in what way the real and the true constitute or are the very existence of things.)

All classical metaphysics, which is the working out of a vision of true Reality, a unified conception of Truth – including Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and all the Neoplatonists, Leibniz, Spinoza, Hegel and, among others, Husserl –

²⁵ An instrument has more of an essential relation to oneself than does a tool or some general material medium that may or may not be useable for this or that end. An instrument is designed for the more internal being (such as mind and emotion), a tool for the more external being (such as the body) and materiality itself, possibly, one of signs, both natural and artificial.

either implicitly or explicitly holds this as a presupposition, or, is an intuition informing all their work.

It is the exact reverse of what mankind, either implicitly or explicitly, has more and more come to hold as constituting the substance of things, i.e. as the truth, especially in the West and its philosophical tradition: namely, material bodies.

Herein lies a great tension and conflict between idealism and materialism that has been with us since Plato (and which in the *Sophist* he brought to light as one of the perennial struggles of philosophy²⁶) and which also has its roots in Ancient Indian philosophy

The situation may appear quite simple. It may seem that the absolute existence of one excludes the existence of the other; namely, if ideas are all that exist as some absolute internal and non-extended thing, then, all that appears is an illusion, and there is only this internal reality; and if matter is all that exists as some absolutely extended physicality, then, all that appears to be an idea and an internal phenomenon is really only the traces of the impressions of material things, whose faintness and subtlety we mistake for something immaterial. But really this situation is only simple in one way, namely, as it concerns an absolute existence of matter. If such pure matter existed then indeed ideas would not be anything real in themselves or in their own right. But, rightly conceived, the existence of pure ideas or something purely internal does not exclude material phenomena as it indeed exists; on the contrary, matter can only exist as it does and be understood in the right or best way if ideas, or internal relations, form the substance of all things.

In the following sections we will be arguing for a refutation of materialism, specifically, of any such thing as a material substance independent of something not material – in light of what materialists conceive matter to be – or, indeed, as the only kind of existence, and of other ideas indirectly linked with the materialist standpoint.

²⁶ Plato, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge: The Theatetus and the Sophist of Plato translated with a running commentary by F.M. Cornford* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Turner & Co., Ltd., 1935), pp. 228-31

4.5 Impossibility of a Material Substance

The following discussion will be based on Berkeley's idea of a material substance that he sought to reject in defence of his standpoint on idealism. It appears that he accurately hit upon the way in which we in fact do conceive or suppose there to be a material substance of which all is made, based on our straightforward sense-given experience, and, as we will discuss, what science has presupposed its whole edifice on. The purpose here in seeking to refute the existence of a material substance is to establish that everything that exists is a sensing, feeling, perceiving and even thinking or conscious thing, to whatever degree, and the basis for this given here is a description, or the attempt thereof, of the way in which the most material thing would exist.

The idea of substance is that which exists or is conceived in and through itself, that is, not dependent upon another in order to exist or be conceived.

4.5.1 No Impression of a Material Substance is Given

Basically, the idea of a material substance, which Berkeley realized, is some kind of substance independent of perception, which exists unperceived.

We will go into this further, but, first of all, it should be said that no matter how abstract or mathematically determined our science is or becomes, this remains its assumption, namely that there is some material thing out there independent of us that what we can fully understand in a physical way. The idea is that what we perceive and feel and sense exists in the object and more or less simply describes what that object is. And furthermore that matter exists indifferent to me and me to it; it is simply there, to be used – a productive machinery of material things.

Or this can be seen as the idea that there is an underlying material substance. But this really comes down to the same thing as an omnipresent material substance, for this, obviously, is to explain what it is basically and so everything that is built upon it is nothing that transcends that material substance or becomes something essentially different from it; in one way or another it remains an expression of that basic substance.

In light of these preliminary remarks, it therefore seems that if such a substance existed, it should make an impression upon us, in the sense that we

are simply passively affected by it and would have the sense, either directly or indirectly, of this substance.

But in light of the so-called progress of science, no material substance has been found, and it seems that it never will, for we only get to smaller and smaller particles or waves of matter, to strange and, which is stranger, many times inferred material entities that go against the scientific model in quite significant ways, as quantum physics has shown in that certain phenomena cannot be measured, or, at least, not in any sufficiently scientific way.

4.5.2 Matter is an Abstraction

Secondly – and this is the first main point – such a material substance is really only an abstraction. It is just as much an idea as anything else. For what occurs is that the materialist takes what is common to all material things, namely its sense-given properties, such as physical form, exhibition of force, tangibility, visibility, shape, colour, and conceives it as the form of matter. As with any form, the form of matter is supposed to capture the common, or primary attributes of things and thus determine what kind of thing it really is, these attributes existing prior to the particular things or that which constitutes them as such. But which attribute, or attributes, of matter is supposed to be the form that captures it as something existing in and of itself. Is it solidity or impenetrability? But we see that not all matter is solid or impenetrable, but that even empty space (or so it appears) exists between subatomic particles. Is it extension or physical form, which appears to be its most basic? But physicists have come upon such things as dark matter or neutrinos that have no apparent extension, not to mention the analysis above of there being no such thing as pure extension. More basic than these would be such properties as energy, force, or, more so, resistance. But if so, there is no reason to suppose that this only applies to physical things.

We can also see that matter is an abstraction in that no definition of a material substance can be given by simply determining its empirical properties, for these go on ad infinitum. For the materialist matter is neither wood, iron or stone but is supposed to be the substance common to all these, and if pressed to show that this substance exists, he can only say, “look and feel this that I touch with my hands and hold before you, it is everywhere blatantly obvious.” But

this is only to refer to the data of our senses, to empirical properties that, neither form one material substance that we perceive to exist in all material things, nor possessing one such property that defines what matter is. Nor has physics come upon any such definition.

And, more importantly, none of the properties of material things are given in any absolute sense, but always by degrees

It is also interesting to note that, as Berkeley saw, at the same time that matter is an abstraction and, hence, an idea, it is one that seeks to establish or conceive of something that is nothing like an idea, and even opposed to it.

So far we have only established that matter is an abstraction – that it is an idea, and nothing more, even if it be a contradictory idea. But an abstraction can still refer to something real or true – there is no sense that says if something is an abstraction it is not real – as well as refer to something unreal or false. Similarly, a contradiction can still be a true contradiction, that is to say, a contradiction that doesn't negate and render non-existent the object, but affirms it in its contradictory nature. The *idea* of God, for instance, might be such a contradiction

4.5.3 The Idea of a Material Substance and Perceptibility

So now we will look further into what a material substance would be.

As remarked, a material substance is one that exists independent of perception, for it is simply supposed to exist in some brute physical sense, as physical stuff that is just there, whether it has arisen in some way or is by itself eternally existent.

But, according to Berkeley, a material substance independent of perception cannot be perceived, in the same way that if it is independent of conception, it is inconceivable. How could we perceive something if it exists independent of perception, or conceive of it if it existed independent of conception, for this is to say such a substance would have no perceptual or conceptual properties, nothing of its own nature that allowed it to be perceived and conceived? Thus is it a contradictory perception and concept, as it negates the very thing it seeks to posit.

Accordingly, the assumption that this material substance exists ultimately means that it is lifeless, soulless, inanimate, not governed by any intelligence,

random and mechanical, purely extended or a web of purely external relations, inherently inert and so forth. In short, it has no capacity for sensing or perceiving, but is just brute physical stuff which, again, exists totally indifferently to me and I totally indifferently to it. (It is worth noting that language struggles to precisely define what is purely material, and never quite gets at it. And this seems to be because all that happens and exists is always characterized by being sensed – something we will discuss further)

But this bears looking into what it means to be perceived, namely, to have the capacity to be perceived, for this is the most rudimentary sense in which we can imagine a material substance to exist, though, it doesn't seem that something can exist independent of perception and still have a capacity to be perceived, for we can only perceive those things that have a capacity to be perceived.

This rudimentary sense of a material substance that is still perceived says that it is a totally passive thing, possessing only the capacity to be perceived. But this can give us no account for why perception, which in this case would be the only activity that gave us the sensed properties of things, perceives some aspects of a thing and not others, and, therefore, why the need for instruments to extend our perceptual capacity? If matter is totally passive and can be perceived, there is no real reason for the limitations of the senses other than the limitations inherent in the senses themselves. For that which is passive yields to the sort of action acting upon it, and so, by the greater uses of our natural senses, the object should then yield more of its properties. But this isn't the case, and so we devise instruments.

The difference between the surface of a thing whose insides or what lies behind I can't see, and my view of the horizon of some landscape that tells me that that is where my vision is limited to, is obviously that in the one there is an obstruction of my vision and in the latter there isn't, but is simply where my vision ends. And this obstruction is due to the nature of the object, or how and what it is made of, which means that because of this it renders our senses passive, actively or refractively determining it to be only perceived in such and such a way. That is to say, there is a given-ness of the phenomena, which, to some extent, determines how it is perceived; and thus having the capacity to be perceived doesn't mean that it is some absolutely passive stuff, but by being

constructed in the way it acts as a limitation upon the senses, by which, in this case, the senses are rendered more passive and the object more active – the senses being both passive to the structure of the object and to the limitation of its own sense-capacity, which is the case with all empirical senses.

Now, what is the nature of the given-ness of phenomena, which indicates that it is not something merely passive. Its given-ness is the capacity to be perceived and this capacity is its sensibility or perceptibility, or its being as sensible object of sensibility, for *what is given is always given with its sense* (nothing is given senselessly or inanimately or inertly as we conceive ‘purely’ material things are given).

So to be a sensible object is a kind of sensing, if only, as we might say of the most material things, a strictly outward sensing, having such sense-given properties of form, shape, colour, position, tangibility, visible movement, etc. that only move outwardly or are outwardly held together by forces. That is, to be sensible, to have the capacity to be perceived, is to be given, to yield or give the senses of oneself, in this case, the empirical properties of material things.

The very material thing is the outward sensing of all its empirical properties, as it were, constantly emanating them, or, due to a sheer tendency to extensiveness, yielding to sensibility all its, to some degree, animate (as outward sensing) manifest qualities. This emanation may be explained by the energy that every thing emits which carries information about it, i.e. its nature is to some extent, at least, given in its presence. It seems, then, that the capacity to be perceived or sensed, that something is sensible, is the same as the thing being animate as outward sensing of itself and its environment, a sensing of the outward towards the outward, which is further identical to its empirical or manifest qualities. In short, it appears that given-ness and outward sensing are one and the same.

The equation here, then, is given-ness = outward sensing = capacity to be perceived.

Looking further into this, to be able to be perceived (again, at the most rudimentary levels) is to be disposed to be an appearance, to present itself. But is a disposition or capacity anything in itself? It seems not, but that they are minimal activities always taking place, however slight, subtle, hidden or submerged they may be. It seems that what is latent or potential doesn’t exist

simply as such, as it were, as a static latency or potency. Otherwise we'd have to imagine creating what something is disposed to appear as. But this contradicts the prior disposition, for the thing is already supposed to be disposed to appear or act as such and is not something simply created by being perceived. There is always something that exists in the object and in the perceiver that forms the perception.

But in a sense an object or activity may be 'materialized' if those conditions for it are already present and they only need to come together to form the thing. And in this sense, the thing exists ideally as those conditions necessary for the presence of the thing and even as a certain force that brings them together. And maybe such an ideality only appears ideal, or a priori insubstantial, according to our reality, which is full of limitations, but is real, material, substantial in its own realm – our world and that world being certain inversions of each other.

Furthermore, if a material thing's sensibility is described as the outward sensing of itself then it must also respond to what it senses outwardly of itself and its environment. To try and put it in physical terms, this outward sensing of the material thing may also be its entropy, its tendency to dissolution, and at the same time its responsive side, the way in which it is involved in energy exchange with other things and its environment.

As it concerns what we regard as strictly material things, this giving of its sense it does only to some extent, and never directly, for, again, the perception that arises of the thing is a combination or offspring of the empirical qualities of the object and the constitution of the subject's sense-perception. But the more intrinsically active the object the more of its sense does it or can it give, which is to say the more objective it is. Therefore, strictly material things such as wood, metal, stone, and whatever sub-atomic particles are supposed to be, are really more passive to perception, and especially thought, than are chemical reactions, cells, organisms, plants, animals and especially humans. The latter, having vital and life-force, give the senses of their being much more, become much more active to our senses and mind, that is, they stimulate our senses to be more active, and so the higher we go up, because things become more alive, the more are they the proper object of perception and thought, and this is especially true as it concerns humans and that which transcends humankind. If our senses are meant to be more active than passive, as it seems they are so

meant to be, then, in other words, those beings with greater inner-being are really the proper objects of perception. One of the problems of the materialistic endeavour, then, is that it tends to render our senses and thinking inert and dull, and, worse, externalizes ourselves to ourselves (and each other), where we lose touch with the real and fundamental impulse of our life and being.

That material things may be characterized as outward sensing may also explain the elusiveness of quantum phenomena, and in general, that in the first instance we seem to know matter by its resistance, a resistance which poses an outward tension to our internal states, and which is really indicating to us that its substance, nature, function, etc. is not to be sought in the thing as simply external and indifferent to us.

The situation is not at all dissimilar to a case where a man wanting to know what this beautiful living human body is made of and how it works goes up to someone and, with a most curious penetrating look, proceeds to stab and cut this person open; and then at the resistance and pain of the person becomes deaf, or justifies himself, due to the strictly objective, impersonal scientific task at hand. Any action met with resistance, or even elusiveness, which is a form of resistance, as with cries of pain and suffering, indicate that there is something wrong or misguided in the action.

In conclusion, matter is nothing merely passive, neither as some insensible, inanimate stuff nor as something that senses and is animate. And its capacity to be perceived, again, is the giving of its sense, to whatever extent, to perception.

None of this is to say or imply material things don't exist, but that there is no material substance independent of perception, which means it doesn't have the capacity to be perceived, and is some kind of existence that has no kind of sensing to it at all.

4.5.4 The Idea of Material Form

Now, a (more refined) materialist may seek something like the material form of things, rather than its substance. Nonetheless, this cannot be something material as we conceive it, for the formal nature of anything already implies a certain transcending of the thing in its particularity – its particular manifestation or its particulars which are evanescent and contingent – and which determines

the common qualities or its common qualitative state that enables the particulars to be embodied in the same thing or to refer to it. In short, the material form refers to its qualitative state and constitution, and therefore it is not something quantifiable, something whose nature can be determined by empirical measurement, i.e. what extension it has, its velocity, what it weighs, what is empirically seen to constitute the thing – in short, tangible, visible and audible qualities.

If a material form exists, we may speculate, it is simply the extension of qualitative substance in or as time and space, and in this sense is a sensitive receptacle for qualities and motion, the blank screen, as it were, that reflects and embodies all quality (the internal nature) and movement of the thing, thus constituting its appearance; or, yet again, material form is simply formal and primal ‘clay’, that which has the capacity to take any shape, form and movement. Maybe material form is simply space, though, dynamically conceived.

4.6 The Quantitative not Real in Itself

In fact, materiality in any sense can only be conceived as a certain kind of quality. The quantitative is nothing real in itself; and it only appears to be real-in-itself because of the verifiable results one gets from quantitative equations and patterns, but not due to anything intrinsic to the quantitative determinant (something we can also see in that to get such results necessitates experiments – trial and error – and nothing immediately derived from intuition into ‘quanta’).

The quantitative is always a string of qualities, an order or pattern of sensates or their mathematical inductions, either seen to be static or to be in motion – and if in motion either the same quality repeating itself with slight variations, or different qualities moving in or as the medium of some invariable quality, such as sound, temperature, velocity, position, etc. Quantity is itself a quality – the *quality* of qualities, features, aspects, in short, any kind of predication, being *numerically contiguous* in space and/or time, and this never, in principle, independent of the perceptive apparatus determining what kind of relation it is.

The quantitative relation is false if it thinks it can grasp the permanent features, much less, nature of an object *as it is in itself*, which is ultimately what mathematics tries to do. But this is not possible. For instance, the mathematical

formula of Newtonian gravity was superseded by Einstein's. But there is nothing but relative permanence applying to objects under the law of gravitation, and relative permanence is an ambiguous, if not contradictory, term, however necessary. Newton's gravity applies only at the level of the mechanical, but the objects existing at that level also exist at the level of ('purer') forces (electromagnetic, weak, strong, etc.) and at the quantum level – in short, the same objects still exist in one and the same universe. Therefore, the laws at any given level cannot be truly speaking absolute or even permanent; if they were then there'd have to be different objects and, in essence, different laws at each scale of reality.

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The quantitative is not a primary quality of the empirical, for any primary quality is an essence or an essential characteristic of the thing. The quantitative is not anything in itself; it has no immediate existence and cannot really be said to be anything more than an abstraction, whereas the empirical has an immediate existence and can be said to exist in a much more substantial way. The empirical may be that which lies between the qualitative and quantitative and is, as it were, the phenomenal accretion of both their qualitative kinds. Accordingly, the quantitative serves as the never-ending limitation of the finite, its openness to infinity, the barest relation between particulars possible.

We have no immediate sense of the quantitative. If we did, counting, for instance, would not be necessary. We would apprehend two as two immediately, by which I mean apprehend two as a succession immediately, which is a contradiction – to *immediately* apprehend one thing separate from another *immediately* as two things is impossible. It doesn't seem we have an intuition into the numbers 2,3,4, etc. considered separately, for this would imply an infinitesimal for which we'd have an intuition, but, firstly, an infinitesimal is a contradiction in terms and, secondly, we don't have an intuition into one. But if there is an intuition into each number it is one that conceives of the number as *one* number, which, in truth it is, for the number two is not two numbers but one, and so on for an infinitely greater number.

Any equation necessarily involves an intuition in which we see that, for instance, $1+1=2$, for where else lies the difference between $1+1=2$ and saying there are two ones? Addition in its immediate sense is simply the *additional*,

and a sum in the strictest sense is always indeterminate, for any sum presupposes whole numbers, the only way a whole number can be added up to, for otherwise we would have to include in our addition all intermediate fractional numbers and never arrive at the sum of any equation, a sum, that is, is the number of things determined as such in the first place because numbers are whole or units, each imbued with the primary unity or quality that is the number one, for it is the only number immediately equal to itself – 1:1 – and hence the basis for all equation.

The quantitative is nothing more than the numerical relation of particulars, hence, it is counting which is applied to different things that can be counted (quantitatively measured). And in this lies the tempting air of science with its so-called promise of solving everything. But the predominantly quantitative dimension of science, its whole criterion of measurement, is nothing but different kinds or classes of counting and sense-given accounting of how much this weighs, how fast, how hot, how far away, at what position (where an account is given of its numerical relation to ‘empty’ space) and all the intricate and complicated combinations of these quantities. And it seems the same applies to its theory, which is how we can calculate something and even to the attempt to determine what the physical substance of things are, how they are composed, created and will be destroyed.

The problem with science as we know it is that it seeks explanation in the external, where it can never be found or even sufficiently approximated; that is, it always seeks the mechanism for things and a material substance for which there isn’t any. But we will have more to say on this.

4.7 Insufficiency of Contingent Causation

Even if a materialist were to concede that a material substance is impossible or a highly improbable thing, he could still argue for the primacy of material by saying that, nonetheless, everything can be explained by material causes and processes. Indeed this alerts us to Kant’s First Antinomy, the antithesis which, in essence, argues that the natural order of causes is sufficient to explain things.²⁷ To this we’d have to offer the following argument for the

²⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* – a revised and expanded translation based on Meiklejohn, ed. Vasilis Politis (London: The Guernsey Press Co. Ltd., 1993), pp. 317-19.

insufficiency of contingent causation, a causation which any materialistic framework is undoubtedly confined to.

To give a chain of cause and effect in order to determine the functioning or nature of something, or what led up to its existence, only tells us what the thing is doing, or what happened to it and how it is doing it and how it happened. Such causes and reasons involve an infinite regress and do not of themselves help explain the thing, for while it appears the thing can be explained by giving its antecedent cause, this never-ending 'what' never *ultimately* tells us 'how', which, then, becomes a question of 'why,' and so we are left questioning and wondering how it all began and how it is *really* working. In other words, the 'what happens of a thing' is always its contingency and contingencies, by definition, can never be reasons or sufficiently explanatory causes, they can never give us the function and purpose of the thing *as a whole*, and if they can't give it as a whole then the explanations for the parts can never be certain, and may even be very off track.

Why? For one, to determine the order of a series of causes and effects, the relations that constitute the thing – of the genesis of the cosmos, of the workings of the digestive system, the growth of the embryo, etc. – is to presuppose we know the functions of the signs we are dealing with to explain the thing, just as to know that $1+1=2$ presupposes we know the functions of the plus and equal sign and what the numbers themselves represent. Otherwise, all we have is one thing following another in a strictly linear and irreversibly fixed succession where we'd have to ask following the 'equal to 2' "and then what?" But what we perceive in the equation is the proper order itself because we know the signs and variables to begin with that we are working with and seeking to apply, or, to determine in greater orders.

What, then, are the signs and variables when it comes to actually existing, concrete phenomena? They are the things themselves. They serve as their own signs, something which is determined by seeing how they are related to other things and by an apprehension of their form and essence.

Also, a series, as a series, of causes and effects can never be more than the conditions for the thing's existence, be it for its function, purpose, nature, reason for being, etc. But in all these and in especially the latter two – its nature and reason for being – conditions, by definition, are contingent and of

themselves can provide no necessity, for it is plain that in a list or catalogue of conditions alone no order is, or can be, given; but, rather, its order must always be determined by a mind. Only if we understand the necessary relation between one cause and another, i.e. its order, can we determine what the thing is and why it exists, as well as what its function and purpose are. Otherwise we can give no reason why something should be why and what it is and not otherwise, and if we can't give this then we have no certainty, for there may be another appearance – appearances and their empirical predicates really being the only criterion – that contradicts all that we know up till now. Of what use, then, is such 'knowledge' other than a practical one, and even the latter may be very tenuous in light of its possible negative effects?

Obviously when we are seeking to understand something we are trying to determine what this thing is before us, how it works, what it is, why it is, or whatever it is we wish to know about it. That is to say we are trying to apprehend it objectively. What then is the difference between this ordinary and basic function of knowledge, i.e. objective cognition, and the criterion of a necessary and sufficient cause or reason for the thing? There really is none. One may say, "well, I only seek to know what and how this thing is before me now, and whether or not it changes in the future, or whether I know necessarily why and how this thing is is not really relevant, for I need only attend to what it is now." But one can't help but ascribe necessary and sufficient reasons for the thing, whatever the scope and range is their wish for knowing. For to determine what and how this thing is now is obviously to try and determine the one way and the one thing it is now, since it is impossible to give two reasons or two explanations for one and the same thing, unless they remain possibilities, or, we ascribe some kind of weird dual world to the thing – but in the one there is no necessity to determine which is the right or the better explanation, and in the other nothing in this world of which we speak and exist in that is determining it to be the way it is.

The only difference between any ordinary, or for that matter, any kind of investigation into a thing and seeking to establish its necessary and sufficient conditions, i.e. reasons, lies in the scope of what we wish to understand of the thing, or on what level. However much we want to know the thing, or in what

way it is understood – practically, ethically, metaphysically, etc – we always seek their sufficient reasons.

The sufficient reasons then for the modern sciences – be it physics, astronomy, biology, etc. – is, at best (presuming they are on the right track), inconclusive and incomplete. But where they go wrong is in thinking that by determining the series of causes and effects, all of which are supposed to be apprehended empirically, they will one day arrive at a full, or the fullest, possible explanation of the things they deal with.

In every case, knowledge is a matter of knowing the order of something. But if this order is always determined by something antecedent to it, then, we really don't know the order to begin with, for an order is always an internally constitutive thing, and to establish it as such requires providing the necessary and sufficient reasons why it is this way and not another, which is ultimately given in an insight into this order.

For instance, biology is very sophisticated in its knowledge of, say, how the eyes work. All or many of the mechanisms and minute relations and parts and their functions is all very well laid out and as physical functions understood. But there are a few crucial items of knowledge missing here, which no series, as a series, of causes and effects can answer. They are the questions of why do we have two eyes and not one, or three or more, why do we have eyes at all, or, what is the reason for seeing in the first place, why do they have the specific limitations they do and so forth? For if it could be otherwise, then, maybe the eye would've been constructed differently, and seeing would be essentially different than what it is now, and so what assures us that the way we see now is essentially connected to and explained by the mechanical functions we've discovered in the eye's construction? It is natural to assume that the mechanisms of the eye are essentially connected to the act of seeing, and we are probably right, but the point is that this remains probable and there is no certainty, no ground, for their essential connection. It is not *known*, then, in what way and for what reason the way we see things is connected to how the eye functions. And there are other things in what is known about how the eye functions that remain totally without an explanation, such as the inversion of the image of the world that then gets turned round again in order to be perceived correctly. Without explaining this it should be considered a great anomaly.

Without answering these fundamental questions of vision – namely, why man has two eyes and not less or more and why they are directed forward, which is a question of how man sees, and why does man see in the first place – biology cannot and does not understand or explain seeing, and, at best, only provides some mechanisms that are *associated* with the act of seeing. And these questions are of utmost importance to the phenomenon of seeing, for seeing is not essential to man's life – he can live without it and so a simple positing of the fact that man sees because he must, because he is man, or whatever, does not explain a thing.

Secondly, the act of seeing and that we have two eyes is one that is specifically limited to a certain range of objects. If man could see everything, then, we could establish that the purpose of seeing is simply to generally see. This may be the general purpose of seeing, but because man can only see certain things, such things must be necessarily tied to the reason why he sees what he does and not other things. That is to say, the sense of seeing, being limited, means it has a specific function and purpose, and is not something only general. Therefore, this means that a certain kind of world comes with the sense of seeing and its reason for being as such as it is.

Let us also remember that the experience of seeing is not at all the same as the physical act of seeing, whatever it may be, for it is not really known. If it were, then, the determination of its physical causes and effects should illuminate how it is that we see. But to start out with the assumption that seeing is only physical is to severely take it out of its context, in which nothing but contingent causes can be given. And this is of utmost importance, for only when the proper context of a thing is given are we able to ascertain the necessary and sufficient reasons or conditions for a thing; the context, as it were, serves as the orientation for them. As far as seeing goes, the proper context is the experience of seeing, the specific construction of the body and its energetic interconnections and the range and limitation of seeing. The proper context determines that what is under investigation is not otherwise, within which the necessary and sufficient conditions can be found.

Again, what is necessary in determining what and how something is, and especially why it is, is the grasping of its proper – that is, internal – order of the series of causes and effects; and this seems most of the time, or all the time, to

mean an intuition of its order, for all the parts must be grasped at once in their proper interconnection. But at the same time, we can approximate this order; but for that it is necessary that we keep in mind the context of the thing we wish to explain, for this will provide the necessary limits, checks and balances, of our hypothesizing, logical articulations, speculations and so forth. The more we do this, the closer we can get to an insight into its order, no matter what are the reasons or causes given in the first place.

This is in more positive ways to say that it is the function, purpose and reason-for-being of a thing that determines its mechanisms. Neither can exist without the other, but their interdependence is not one that makes them necessarily equal. It is absolutely true that without the function and purpose of a thing its mechanisms could not exist, but it is not true that the mechanisms are absolutely necessary for the things' function and purpose, otherwise in the absence or malfunction of one or a few, the organism would not be able to adapt and still possess the same functions, if only to a certain extent.

Of course, it is true that at some point of missing or defective mechanisms the thing will not be able to function and serve its purpose, but this indicates a certain hierarchical order of the mechanisms, which could only be one determined by its function and purpose; and it may, furthermore, indicate a certain striving for perfection in the organism in the tending towards a unity or fusion of mechanism, function and purpose, something which may already exist in the instinctive order of the organism and which, at a higher level, occurs in the spontaneity of a conscious being.

Mechanisms are in every case the material conditions for the most part necessary for the intended function and purpose of a thing to operate, and not its reason(s) for being, or, explanation of being. We can also see this in that if the mechanisms of a thing are taken away, its function and purpose is not, for if these are reinstated the thing can continue with its functioning. Lastly, the instinctive workings of mechanisms are essentially different from the mechanisms themselves, i.e. the former is not reducible to the latter.

We will have more to say about function and mechanism in the following section.

4.8 Some Criticisms of Mechanistic Evolutionary Theory

The way and the extent to which the materialistic outlook has pervaded, at the least, Western culture and thinking is very much seen in Darwin's theory of evolution, or, maybe we should say, of those Darwinians that seek to defend it at all costs.

One of the worse outcomes of this is that it has convinced so many that there is no inherent intelligence to Nature, that it is all chance events and accidental mutations.

As we see in the fractal geometry scenario, everything from the largest to the smallest exhibits a design, the same pattern with variations repeating itself. This is totally inexplicable on a mechanistic evolutionary theory, that is, on Darwin's idea of evolution which occurs through survival of the fittest and chance mutations; in a word, where everything happens by accident.

All of evolution and Nature herself indicates and even tends towards the idea that the existence of things is due to an intelligence, or, to the need and necessity of pattern and design for things to appropriately, or, in any sense, to function and be what they are. And nothing, except certain isolated incidents perhaps, indicates that this is due to chance, to some kind of absolute accident.

When something happens by accident, there is no cause intrinsically tied to it; it is a haphazard coincidence, the accident being the result of *previously* disconnected things or events whose paths, as it were, blindly collide, from which we can't derive any inherent, internal or natural meaning, but only externally, artificially attach one; in a word, we cannot give a reason. This is to say that there is nothing in the event to explain it and, so, however good or useful, or bad or useless, such an explanation is, it is totally arbitrary and cannot be considered an explanation, but just imagination.

Furthermore, if accident were enough, if it satisfied in and of itself our desire to know, understand and even to function at the most basic levels, then we should not feel the need or care for explanations, to search the causes and reasons for things. And to seek the cause of something is to attribute it to its origin and source; to seek the reason is to disclose the way it is internally related with itself and/or others with whom it is connected. Obviously, then, to explain causes and reasons as accidents, or as accidental, is a total confusion, for an

accident cannot be an origin or source, since it is the meeting point of things disconnected and necessarily unrelated to each other; and it is not a reason for the same reason that it is a chance coincidence, which can never explain the internal relations of things, their constitution, and only very superficially possibly pass as an explanation of external relations

Also, because we do not see the cause or reason for something doesn't mean it's not there, that there isn't a necessity for it. Therefore, such ideas as random mutations, especially when passing as theories, are really nothing but professions of ignorance.

But this can't be helped, for, as remarked above, it is in our nature as beings who seek to know to give as a reason or cause the way something *appears* to work or be. If something is of any significance to us, we always give some kind of reason or cause for it, or it is apparently given to our mind in some way from the thing itself, since things are ordered in such a way that their appearance is one of their nature.

If something is of no significance, then it is totally ignored, and this is to respond with the feeling that no cause or reason for the things is relevant to me, or interests me, but not that it has no cause or reason.

When something happens to us or when we do something that is good, we, respectively, delight in knowing the cause or reason for it and that we were the singular or participatory agents of this good. This is what makes us truly and fully appreciate and be inspired by the good, which is not to say that knowledge of it makes it good, but that the good is felt and known to be such because of the knowledge it gives or yields. In a world of accidents, such knowledge and its elevating feeling is empty and valueless.

In the same way, when we notice the construction of something and are amazed or very curious at it, we delight in finding out and knowing how it was constructed, and however satisfying such knowledge may be, it should never tire us. If it does then we haven't looked deep enough, or properly drawn out its implications with other things. This is a delightful knowledge because the thing is necessarily so constructed. We love knowledge because of the certainty it gives, which is a knowledge of necessity, and necessity is, in the deepest sense, intimacy and freedom, that which expands – ultimately effortlessly – our being

in uniting us with what is other. Again, in a world of accidents or one devoid of necessity this is plainly impossible.

Of course, evolutionists will say that we are not just talking about accidents, but that there are such laws as natural selection or survival of the fittest that necessitate the survival of certain species. Of course a law works necessarily. But, for one thing, there is no ground for saying why those laws should exist, and hence it is just by accident that these happen to be the laws. Secondly and derivatively – and this is the case with all laws whose explanation remains physical – there really is no necessity given in the laws themselves, or, in the phenomena to which they apply, which tells us that this is necessarily the way this particular world, or area of it, works. At most we have mathematics, which to all appearances gives us the necessity of the workings of phenomena. But it doesn't seem we can really mathematicize the domain of biology (at least not in the same way as we can in physics) since this concerns things which are alive and whose nature is to some extent determined by outside influences; that is to say, it is in the process of emerging as it interacts with things and its environment and, therefore, cannot be quantitatively measured, since the latter is only possible as it concerns things which already are, but here the creature is always being created. (Another reason might be that because in biology we enter a greatly different field than that of physics, we must take into account hidden dimensions.) At any rate, even if there were a mathematics of biology, the necessity of mathematics is not given in itself.

For these reasons, the laws of evolution cannot overcome the problem of the accidental or contingent, which will always make them suspect; and which, as we've discussed, really renders their explanations null and void.

Another reason for the untenability of mechanistic evolutionary theory is that the functions, much less the purposes of things, cannot be reduced to mechanisms. A function always precedes its mechanism, for there is no such thing as a functionless mechanism. Whether it arises before or at the same time, for it cannot arise after, the function always determines the mechanism – otherwise how is it to function in the way it does in the first place?

Again, evolutionary theory will say that the mechanism that works is due to random mutations that just so happened to fit in with and survive the environment. But this is quite inexplicable. Even if organisms randomly went

through different mechanisms and finally hit upon the one that works, and hence is a function, this presupposes a natural fit of that particular environment with that particular organism – what are called niches – that is to say, a necessity at work that enables the two to fit, for are we to say that this just *happens* to work, that that a suiting is realized is also by accident? If so, then, one is only further tightening the inexplicability of how an accident can accidentally assist the organism

For an organism – and in fact all organisms – to have its niche means organisms adapt to Nature and Nature adapts to organisms, something which cannot be so by accident, since adaptation presupposes an underlining harmony or conformability, though, not perfect and definite, that in one sense defines Nature. For nowhere does Nature exhibit a war between organisms, that is, two kinds of organism mutually opposing each other out of animosity and trying to destroy the other, nor, do we obviously see isolated organisms anywhere – organisms, that is, that are separate from all other organisms, each in isolation following its own line of evolution – as this is a manifest contradiction of how Nature is.

In-between these extremes, it is seen that Nature works according to a certain law of harmony or conformability of organisms and its environment, which is what adaptation means. Adaptation only works where there is a fit to be had, and the fact that things can fit is a necessity of Nature's. Adaptation means that things are predisposed to be able to change for the continual preservation of their being, a predisposition which means that they possess the forms and functions that *enable* them to fit in with the environment and be sustained, that is, which tend toward harmony. In other words, organisms are so constructed as to be adaptable, and this is a necessity, for it is concomitant with or follows from a fundamental law of Nature: that each thing seeks to preserve and persevere in its being to the best of its capacity,²⁸ which means that Nature prefers harmony and the peaceful co-existence of creatures over discord and conflict. Anything that exists exists so that it may affirm *and* continue its existence as much as possible.

²⁸ Spinoza, *Ethics*, p 135

Looking further at this argument, if adaptation were accidental, there being no necessity for species adapting to their environments, why then is it a particular environment or particular features or traits that a species must adapt to or develop, otherwise it is, then, selected out, or, on the other hand, why don't species adapt to any environment? Neither do species only fit in this very particular environment nor do they fit in all environments; both ideas negate the function of adaptation in the first place, the one being a pre-determined home for the organism, and so why would adaptation be required to begin with, and the other – Nature as the universal home of the organism, in which, again, adaptation would be immediate, already instantiated anywhere the organism was, which is not the way adaptation works. In-between these is the striving to adapt, certain limits in place beyond which animals will not adapt, which means that harmony, conformability and a certain peace between animals and environment is a need or necessity of Nature's. Striving always means acting from or according to necessity; an impelling or being driven by it to whatever extent.

Also, Nature is self-constituting, i.e. an organic whole, by the general fact that where we have environments we have organisms and where we have organisms environments

Another way of seeing that we cannot have mechanisms without functions – the unselected random mutations of things – is in that there is no such thing as uncharacterized motion, something a mechanism without a function would in fact be

If something just happens to move and doesn't appear to have a function, but then gets used by something else, then, its function was one of predisposition to accommodate other functions, to be able to be used, which, moreover, means it had to have the capacity to move in any number of ways that accorded its usefulness. And to be able to move in any and every way means its function is pure accomodability, or adaptability, assistability, etc. which comes down to the idea of material form. This then is not a mechanism but the function of material form, for forms do not have mechanisms, as they belong to the matter of the form.

Nor can something just move without having a function, there being no such thing as pure motion, since this posits an eternal void, which is a contradiction,

since we cannot conceive something moving without moving in something, and so something cannot move in nothing, or in a nothingness, but something always moves in a greater something or in itself (the latter meaning it must originate in a point of rest in order to be identical to itself and thus move as itself to begin with), for, basically, how can something move in nothing without ceasing to exist? The same argument holds if we say that the void exists between things that move. Nor is a void even conceivable, for who can positively conceive of nothing? A positive nothingness is a contradiction and an absolutely negative nothingness utterly impossible.

If such phenomena as random mutations and non-intelligent mechanisms are impossible, as we've sought to show, then, there is really no other alternative than to say that evolution must involve intelligence at its core; and intelligence means the living movement of ideas.

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Let us remark that we are not at all against the idea that material things exist, for this is a fact and it takes little reflection to see that what our senses immediately tell us, i.e. that there really is a material world out there – *'as far as the eye can see'* – is true. What we are against is the idea of matter as something in itself opposed to or existing without ideas, for matter is nothing if it isn't a form of an idea, of qualities and perceptual capacity; so to speak, matter is imbued with ideas and qualities, both moving and stationary, that accordingly shapes, moves and forms it, or, which moves themselves through it

As remarked at the start of this theme, ultimately idea and matter are not separate in kind, though they paradoxically manifest themselves in such different and even opposed ways. We will only speculate briefly as to what such a substance is, and say that all existing things are vibrations, differing frequency rates, energies, or energetic fields – the higher and quicker having the capacity to sense, think, feel and be conscious of itself and the lower and slower only vibrating outwardly and sensing outwardly and faintly. The former would be a subtler or finer sort of matter, such as an idea, and the latter a grosser or coarser matter, such as a piece of a metal.

But is such a thing as idea and matter existing as one and the same thing evident to us in any way? One way it is – or so appears to be – is in language

and as language. Language is one of the subtlest portions of our being where idea is still matter and matter still idea, that is, insofar as the fusion of the two – that really ultimately exists in everything – is natural and given.

Of course this opens up a vast area of philosophical investigation, but we will have to leave it at that and turn our attention, now, in a more positive vein, to some thoughts on the way in which ideas are substances.

4.9 Ideas as Organic Beings

Ideas are organic beings, just as living beings are. In one way, it is because they are involved in energy exchange – an input and output of energy, this possibly being information – which is metabolized, transferred, checked and balanced, put in relation to – in context – with other ideas and living things, and so forth

We can see this in that ideas use up energy, can give us energy and, more importantly, exhaust us – the latter being important because it means it is active of its own accord, or through another, but in both cases is not that which is being consumed. And it also means that in some way we are teleologically situated towards ideas; they exist as something other, which is fed, nourished, cultivated, developed and responds and acts upon that which is feeding it, and, in turn, as that which also feeds, nourishes, etc. us. They transcend us, either in our more subjective, passive or receptive consciousness (at most, the empty transcendental ‘I’ which Kant elucidated), or, are the cognitive products of the transcendental ego, as Husserl spoke of.

In the more normal course of a human being’s life, the way ideas exhaust us is via a process of refining the psycho-physiological organism or body; that is, all the impressions and experiences we receive throughout the day or during any period of time are formulated or transformed into their proper thought-content and drawn to their appropriate conclusions, or emotional or attitudinal, existential or simply physiological responsiveness and repose (such as in sitting peacefully). It may be a state of silence, of not knowing what further thoughts to add due to a feeling of their necessity no longer being there, or where thoughts have reached their limit of adequation or purposefulness for the time being, or, yet again, just the impulses of thought have been exhausted. One way,

among others, this occurs is through writing; it is also possible by thinking alone, so long as the thinking involves a state of self-remembrance.

In this way the physiological input and output of our life and living in the world is made into an ideational input and output, this is, in other words, the refinement of the body into the mind – the mind understood here as a higher body – which is empirically indicated in the changing of the neural functioning and structure of the brain, central nervous system and, in a deeper sense, the bone marrow itself. In terms of mind alone, this is the synthesis of representations, putting them all into their simplest wholes and ultimately into their simplest unity, which is the integrating of the mind itself.

In the same way as food is assimilated, where all the purer parts of it are taken into the building and maintenance of the body, and the less pure are simply fuel and material that both helps carry toxins out and is itself toxic and which must be discarded, so the purer parts of the ideas go into the building or growth and maintenance of a conscious body, or body of consciousness – the human being.

But there is more to this than consciousness and body – there is spirit, and this means that all sorts of higher beings, bodies, intelligences or dimensions of reality already exist preformed.

Nonetheless, as it relates specifically to the human being – as a being normal and just as much a part of Nature as all other beings – the need for the refinement or transformation of the organism from body to mind is dependent on his level of and capacity for consciousness. For the man himself whose life isn't largely centred intellectually, still other activities, such as family life, career, hobbies, etc., namely, all practical and emotional ones, play the same role and end of being organic structures integral to the purification and refining of the psychological organism that is man into his higher, proper and necessary unity

Therefore, ideas are substances as one of the most rarefied products of our experiences and impressions of things, which form the very substance of our being.

4.10 Definition, Distinction and Unity of the Real and the True

Another way of seeing ideas as the substance of things is by a look at what the 'real' and the 'true' are, namely, by seeing in what way they are substances, for they are, in a sense, more specific definitions of the idea, since, properly speaking, an idea is always what is real and true.

The real or the true may be seen as the substance of things in that the reality of a thing is its perfection at any given moment and in any given state; or is its immediate perfection. In other words, this means that nothing can ever be anything less than what it is at the same time that it is, such that each thing's existence at the very given moment is perfect because there cannot be an inherent disproportion in this moment of its being, for if there were the thing would be ultimately indefinable, or exist as an isolated fragment, neither having identity (a something known or knowable) or unity (a something that immediately is and is able to become). This is what Spinoza means when he says that "reality is perfection."²⁹ The quality or essence of *identity* and *irreducible* or *indivisible* being (a monadic nature, to put it in other words) are absolutely – i.e. metaphysically – necessary to a thing's existence; without such attributes a thing simply could not exist.

Any time we define or simply assert what something is, we grasp it at that very moment of its existence; and though the thing's whole existence is in flux and cannot be overall restricted to any of its moments, the moment grasped is nonetheless a real moment of the being of the thing. This is so because each thing is constituted by Eternity – this is its being – and by the Infinite, which is its becoming, or its Time or Aeon. We can say that this mind's work – one of the Understanding according to Hegel³⁰ – captures an image of the moving reality of the thing. And just as it is said that "a picture says a thousand words," so with the *true* concept – it says very much about the reality of the thing, though never all of it

This is not to say a thing doesn't involve disproportion – presupposing becoming and change – but that when it does it always refers to the relation between the present existence of a thing and either its past or future, and thus its greater self-identity and being, what it is tending towards or striving for. Hence,

²⁹ Ibid , p. 80

³⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 18-19

the disproportion inherent in the existence of a thing is one constituted by the necessarily teleological nature of existence.

All notions of becoming – of greater and lesser, closer and further, etc. – involve time; time consists of relational and relative notions. Whereas, what we speak of here in such notions as the real and true concern the eternal, and it is the eternal that constitutes the inherent sense of any given thing, even the relational notions themselves (which does not deny the reality of Time, but denies that it is reality in and of itself) The inherent and intuitive sense of a thing is its perfection and this is constitutive of its eternal reality. The knowledge, even cognition, of a thing are just as essential to it as its being and material structure; for this concerns its essence – “that without which a thing cannot be, nor can be conceived”³¹ – while its being concerns its substance – that of the thing that “which is in itself and is conceived through itself”.³² Ultimately, the essence and substance are the same as that which is self-conceived, whose essence exists in and through itself; and this can only apply to that which is infinite and eternal.

But this bears some explanation.

Finite things, so long as they remain finite, which in the totality of things means non-existent, are always a disproportion or separation between being and knowledge, substance and essence; so-called ‘constituents’ of time as mentioned above. We can also see here the necessity of the reality of a thing’s immediate existence as a perfection because this finitude cannot apply to the parts that make up a thing; a part in relation to itself is, or possesses, the essence of the infinite, again, as an eternal moment; for if it didn’t we should only have a fragment of a fragment, a qualitatively less finitude with a finitude – but the finite is a qualitative expression and does not admit of any definitional differences that are relative, of lesser and greater, as this only applies quantitatively; indeed this may be the case with any definition, which is part of the same point.

By definition, then, finite things are part of a Totality and constituted by It (rather than being the sum of the parts); they are part of the chain of the Infinite, its moment as manifest in Time (Time being the perpetually recurring medium

³¹ Spinoza, *Ethics*, p. 79

³² Ibid , p. 41

of the eternal). A finite thing exists only in virtue of being in relation to other finite things, *ad infinitum*, and nothing can be separated out, that is, in any substantively material or ontological sense. Thus any one particular finite thing will always be a lack of true self-identity, or a disproportion, between itself and the whole (that is to say, between it and whatever is its proper nature); for considered by itself – in the absence of the light of the whole – it can only be conceived as a particularity infinitely extended through all finitude or through all finite things – extended infinitely, that is, between itself and its universal identity; and, as such, a finite thing can never be properly conceived and remains an awful abstraction.

But when we conceive of it in relation to the whole, we see that the part is either a participant in the ‘eternal and infinite essence’ of the highest being and has no existence save for this being – its source and end belonging to that which completes it and insofar as it exists towards this completion (which at whatever level is a necessity) remains this moment, aspect, species, kind, etc of Eternity; or if the part realizes its active capacity for perfection and how to support, maintain and perfect this drive, i.e how to develop, it can remain a link in the actuality, life and being of the Infinite. The former concerns a certain unity with Eternity, while the latter concerns the individual unity of Eternity and Time, a higher kind of Eternity since Time is ultimately a species of the eternal

So far we have addressed how the real as the perfection of a thing is its substance, one, moreover, which possesses an ‘eternal and infinite essence.’

Now, what about the true, and in what sense, if any, is the real and the true distinct, as we asked in the first theme of the right and the good? We said that the real is the very perfection of the thing, both relatively and absolutely, which can also be said to be the inherent sense of the thing. And we mentioned that the true is its self-identity. But perfection and self-identity amount to the same thing, and if so then the one is the ontological side of the thing’s existence and the other its epistemological, or, its being and knowledge, which are but two faces of the same reality

In an absolute sense, it doesn’t seem there can be a distinction between the real and the true, for if anything exists it is or is because of the Absolute, for nothing can come from nothing and if there are lower and higher kinds of existence, the higher cannot be derived from the lower, for the higher

ontologically and a priori precedes it; and for this very reason the very highest existence must be conceived as existing, since if there were something more to be added to a higher existence, such that the higher was still incomplete, either it would be limited by the lower existence, which would be the contradiction that the higher exists *only* in potential (but the higher, again, is that which is more real and actual to begin with), or, it is limited by yet a higher thing, the reasoning which goes on infinitely and must conceive of the highest being – the Absolute – as being that which before all else exists. And, further, the Absolute is ontologically absolutely prior to all existence because it is the only being that is self-derived, whose being is the substance and force or power of its own existence and its power of existence its being.

If the Absolute exists, then, ultimately Reality and Truth are one and the same, for the Absolute is what is most perfect; being, as Hegel says, the $A=A$ ³³, nothing can stand between it that would limit in any way from being itself, for such a relation is freedom from all limitation as absolute self-identity or the perfection of self-identity *and* the self-identity of perfection.

Now, the real and the true it seems can only be distinct relatively speaking, that is, concerning everything that isn't the Absolute itself. As such, the real and the true exist in a relation of proportional reciprocity, that is, the true always encompassing the real as the *form* of the self-identity of the thing's relative perfection, for if a thing isn't perfectly or relatively absolutely itself, it exists in a relation to its truth, i.e. it is knowing itself, its form of self-identity that it is in the process of actualizing; and, at the same time, the real encompasses the true as the form of its perfection, that is, if and when the thing has attained or realized *its* perfect self-identity, it nonetheless exists in a relation to its highest perfection – i.e. the Absolute – but when it can't or has no need of striving for it then it has become all that it can be (we may say that the former – the true as the form of the real – concerns beings which have the capacity for self-development, such as humans, and the latter – the real as form of the true- beings which don't have such capacity, or no longer do, having fulfilled it, such as animals).

Therefore, the real and true, being determinations of the idea, define the idea as a substance as that which is both self-encompassing (the real) and the

³³ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 9

encompassed (the true), or, in other words, as the reality as form of a thing and its truth as content of the thing. This, of course, as we discussed at the beginning of this theme, concerns the ideational mode of the existence of things, which is what really determines what things are, what they mean and how they affect us.

4.11 Concluding Remarks

As we also remarked at the beginning of this theme, while other words and concepts such as reality, truth and internal relations are generally synonymous with the concept of the Idea, and in some sense more accurately portray what we mean, 'Idea' is chosen in order to emphasize the great determination and articulation of the sense of things that is possible, a sense, again, which is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional.

This is important, for what it means is that everything proceeds from a mind, or rather, from the Mind, an intelligence, as that which creates, moves, forms, structures and gives purpose to the existence of things. For, to put it simply, a mind exists in every body, whereas, it is not right to say that a body exists in every body – this is a tautology, for the body is what differentiates one from others and is specific to that person. The mind, on the other hand, is that which is common and unites. But the two are not ultimately different, but rather different modes of the same thing. As remarked in the previous section, the mind is really a higher or more refined body, one that exists in the making as the very transformation of the physical body taking place in it. And this higher body, which in esoteric literature is called soul or astral body, among other names, can only develop and become the body of man by an increasing realization and manifestation of the commonality and unity with all human beings, creatures and the universe itself, the full process of which takes place through even higher bodies being formed.

On the contrary, as it concerns the physical body, that which we are born with and which nature 'fully' forms on its own, if that is the only body which we think is real and the only one we take care of – taken in a very materialistic sense – then its existence can only be one of separation from all other things and final dissolution.

In yet other words, in order to convey the sense of what we mean as accurately and completely as possible, that Mind, ideas, truth, reality, internal relations, and so forth, form the substance of things is also to say that that which is subtler, finer or purer is what gives rise to things, what is really creating, doing, being and making happen all that is created, done, is and occurs, both within in us and without us. It is always the subtler forces at work that gives rise to things, which is their cause and reason, which is to say it is always the inner that gives rise to the outer. That is why nothing, not even the most physical action, is totally clear and obvious as to its cause, reason and even mechanism. All that exists and all that happens contains something hidden, not so obvious, which draws us inward by provoking questions, wonder, perplexity, fascination, etc. But things are not so clear, not necessarily because they are not clear in themselves, but because we exist more on the surface than does the reality of things, we looking at things more externally than the way in which they really exist. To understand, to have clarity, means we must become more subtle, more sensitive, awake and aware; our bodies thus finer, purer, all of its energies and substances being transformed into its own cause and reason for being.

In these various senses that we've discussed and for these purposes are ideas the substance of things.

5. Third Theme: Ways in which Eternity is Implied in Existence

The third theme – that eternity is implied in existence – follows from the basic idea of the eternality of truth simply because if truth exists it must be real, living and conscious, and therefore eternity must be something really present or accessible to us through truth, specifically, through the living of truth.

First I will offer some thoughts on the idea of eternity and, then, look into various ways in which eternity is implied in existence. Again, no systematic order is given, or, at least, emphasized, but, as with the first and second theme, each argument has for the most part its own line of development that proceeds from the theme

5.1 The Idea of Eternity – its Metaphysical Side

Admittedly, this is a most difficult problem to deal with and answer; and, assuredly, the question of Eternity is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, question that philosophy faces, one which, in its current state, it chooses not to look into. What follows, it should be emphasized, is nothing more than speculation and, hopefully, thoughtful conjecture as to what eternity is. Eternity is not just an idea, if we mean by that, thoughts in my head and which only exists logically, rather, it is a reality. At least this is my philosophical belief, for I have not experienced Eternity, though, possibly have had very slight intimations of it.

At the same time, it is worth noting that, nonetheless, Eternity is something which we can deduce and induce from our experiences, namely, by reflection and logical analysis and synthesis of what exists, and come to the *necessity* of the existence of Eternity, an existence which, the more we look into it, is the most real or even the only reality.

* * * * *

Taking our cue, firstly, from Eternity as that which is opposite to time, we can speculate that everything that happens is preserved in Eternity, that is,

according to man who exists in time, but from the vantage point of Eternity, everything issues from it and indeed is constituted by it – contrary to time, wherein, everything passes away or dissolves, and apparently all things arise from nothing, that is to say, there is nothing in time that tells us time is what creates or manifests; things just happen and time as some kind of being is nowhere to be found.

This means that Eternity is the state of existence in its complete and pure qualitateness to which nothing can be added or taken away, nothing increasing or diminishing; in short, no temporal quality, no quantitateness, can exist there, that is, condition existence there in any sense. It is a state of irreducible completeness, each thing existing in its ultimate perfection without beginning or end. That temporality doesn't apply there means nothing possessing characteristics of the finite can exist there, and indeed whatever is finite and thus limited implies a certain lack of reality to it, as we discussed in the last section of the second theme. According to Spinoza, "eternity is the same as existence insofar as it is determined from the eternal nature of the thing." Thus, for God, the world and all of existence is eternal, occurring in its perfect purity in one and the same moment that is His very nature. This to us is inconceivable without at the same time saying something false. Nonetheless, we can conceive how what exists here is preserved in Eternity in the sense of how it approaches and is further away from and expresses its 'eternal and infinite essence.'

In truth, it seems that we are absolutely entangled in Eternity as the very constitution of it. And instead of seeing and distinguishing the real nature and order of things and distinguishing the true from the false (which would be the same as trying to unknot this thread of Eternity that we are), we fret and carry on, wrestle in our restlessness, are filled with panic, anxiety and fear to try and free ourselves from the eternal hold of existence (which is the same as wrangling about to get out of this bind, only to get that much more tangled in it)

But speaking in this way – of Eternity as it exists for man – we are speaking of a second-order kind of Eternity; one which then more properly applies, so it seems, to man's mind and emotion, for the body is more properly speaking a species of infinity; and thus such a disproportion or rather unequal relation between the basic parts of man introduces time into the relation of Eternity to man (or, to be more specific, it is because of the physical which is a certain

form of the body that limits it, or which has in its natural state – that of the animal – already fulfilled it, but which, in turn the body is not limited by, i.e. the physical is only one of the forms the body takes on).

5.1.1 The Idea of the Infinite and its Relation to Eternity

Before proceeding to discuss how Eternity is metaphysically implied in man's world, the preceding raises a difficulty within the concept of Eternity as we laid it out. If Eternity doesn't involve the determinations of time, then, it seems it can't involve the infinite, for the latter seems to involve time, especially in light of our association of the physical body with infinity. Infinity appears to involve quantitateness, that is, for instance, an infinity of numbers infinitely strung out through space as it were, thus, the relation of more or less, closer and further, smaller and larger, relations which because they are relative we wish to leave out of Eternity (as well as the concept of the Absolute).

But, strictly speaking, this is not the true concept of the Infinite. The Infinite cannot mean in its fullest sense an infinity of quantity, the infinite series of numbers, much less an infinitesimal – a number which is infinite – since the former is an incomplete argument, for we can never be sure if the infinite series will stop or not, and the latter an inherent contradiction, for any given number, if we still conceive it as a quantity, is, by definition, a limitation, and the infinite cannot be limited; and if we conceive of it as the quality of any given number, this already transcends the number itself, for number is still a quantity and symbolical in its highest sense.

The Infinite, then, is neither quantity nor a quality in any empirical sense. The Infinite is the quality or essence of endlessness, as Eternity is the quality or essence of completeness. Again, it is not the quantity of endlessness but the quality, but this seems to imply movement or the infinite expanse of the infinite beyond – an infinite horizon. The Infinite then is that which cannot be encompassed, the all-encompassing unencompassable. It seems to imply space and movement which is infinite, or, the infinite movement of space and the infinite space of movement.

But, as we've said, the movement of infinity cannot be in itself temporal, that is, linear, consisting of moments successively separated in space, but, infinity does involve such movement, an infinity of it, to which it can never be

reduced. The movement is akin to process, or, rather process is a species of infinity – movement for the sake of movement.

The question here is whether or not process intrinsically implies a result and hence a finality, or if there is any movement in the world that has the essence of the infinite, that is, endlessness.

It seems such a movement is either process or development, and in either case we mean, according to man, a movement that is attended to and engaged solely for the movement itself and not for any pre-given result, or concept of a result, or any result which is conclusive and final, such that the movement ends. And according to God, such a movement is spontaneous, free and unified as one movement.

We may, then, conclude that the Infinite is the spontaneous and free movement of the self-same unity of intelligence and will, whereas Eternity is this unity – and movement! – at rest.

5.1.2 Simultaneity, Immediacy and Movement as Establishing the Existence of Eternity

If Eternity is the state of all things in their pure qualitiveness, then, there are three things necessary in order to establish its existence or the real possibility of it as such: simultaneity and immediacy, which have to do with the coincidence of movements, or, for the latter, a coincidence of movement and rest, and, the third, an un-negatable continuity, which is the very essence of movement in and of itself. For (1) these three occurrences transcend time or are not limited by it, (2) are, when taken together, sufficient for the possible experience of Eternity, and (3) are actual occurrences which we experience in the world and in our life, and, which, in reality, below or above our usual awarenesses, we are constantly – without pausing – undergoing. Our whole life and all that is connected with it – namely, everything – is the constantly (i.e. eternally) immediate movement of simultaneity.

The purpose here is only to show in what way simultaneity, immediacy and movement are real for us.

Simultaneity obviously occurs when two things happen at once – at the same time and place – and, either remains two distinct lines or occurrences that are concurrent, or blend together without losing all of their distinctness, or, they

harmonize and create a greater or different movement. But the real simultaneity of which we wish to speak in relation to Eternity is one that is ever-present and which thus involves an awareness of it, which, in principle, is also ever-present, never-diminishing. And with awareness and cognizance of it comes the possibility of comprehension itself. Without these cognitive functions to simultaneity, there is nothing to guarantee it is nothing but chaos or movements parallel to each other, which in itself does not refer them as belonging to or occurring in one and the same world. If it is possible that simultaneity could be chaos or parallel movements, then, it is possible simultaneity could not be simultaneity, which is to say it wouldn't exist in the first place, since simultaneity does not arise from something, but to really be what it is it must be eternally present. It only appears to arise from something, namely, as the coincidence of movements, when we recognize or become aware of it in that moment, which only happens because it stands out as the affirmation or expanding of an occurrence. Thus does it often serve as a more or less intense shock, surprise, suddenness or as an enthrallment in the given situation in which one exists.

Awareness of simultaneity is thus necessary to establish it as it is, because by it we recognize that it was always occurring, though it be settled underneath other occurrences, or is subtle or latent as the potential that allows it to surface. And our intelligence is so constructed that it can be aware of more than one thing occurring at the same time and of what that means – its reason, purpose, etc. – and to actively cognize or deepen them in such ways, if not at the same time, by alternating between them, retaining their cognitions and then synthesizing them.

Furthermore, it appears that when things happen simultaneously they are at the same time more affirmed; that is, each moment is affirmed and enhanced more when they are simultaneous and, especially, when the light of the awareness is shed on it. Furthermore, when things work simultaneously they work better, and the more consciousness becomes aware of it, or it becomes conscious of itself, the more does it unfold, is enriched and empowered.

But due to time this self-enhancing simultaneity is not given to us. It must be worked for, that is, the conditions put in place for its reception. For time is more a concealing force than a diminishing one.

Now, for immediacy. It is simple and plain that everything is immediate as the moment that something occurs. Immediacy and the moment are the same. It occurs as what is just now, as what is experienced without needing anything other than the occurrence to experience it, that is, including the sense or receptivity for the occurrence. In this sense, it is also unique and irreducible.

Everything in some sense it seems is immediate. Even events and situations, though they do take time to occur.

We can see this in that an event is not real in itself. If it were then it would solely be determined by time, which is mediation. But any event is always artificially or externally demarcated as such, either before it has happened, after, or, while it is happening. This demarcation or delineation is one that separates it, or, is labelled as that which stands out from whatever is occurring - an occurring, though, which is always a continual process. And this delineation is immediately determined as such, even when it is events that are being, or are to be, made up, for the moment one thinks of organizing a series or a kind of occurrences, it is an event-to-be. And in the midst of an event it is only so when one conceives it as such, for there is nothing in an order or series of occurrences that determine the kind of occurrence it is; what happens and what we experience is not laid out before us in blocks, much less in categories, of what kind of occurrence they are, for what they are depends on consciousness, on what kind of person one is at the time, and this person, as well as the occurrences themselves, is a process, not one made up of events. In other words, time does not consist of species in the sense of species being determined by time.

In a word, an event is the immediate demarcation of a process, and one which is, to some extent, artificial.

A situation is also immediate as the continually present conditions and determination of the kind and quality of occurrences and experiences one will find oneself in, which one will have or will be likely to have. It is the immediate *qualitative* determination of one's experience and the occurrences in it, that is, insofar as nothing happens to change the situation, and excluding the form of the situation, which is a matter of one's consciousness and freedom, for by it can one determine and transcend one's situation.

We see this natural determination of what a situation is often in the turbulence of romantic love. Insofar as the situation doesn't change the same problems and issues will keep recurring, no matter what else the man or woman does. In this case, and probably in most cases, this is a fixation of the emotions, more specifically, the emotional predisposition both man and woman share. Emotional predispositions act as both anchor and orientating star. And emotions are immediate as the immediate felt apprehension of a situation, of what is occurring in one or outside of one, or, more usually, as the combination of the two.

Even time is immediacy insofar as it is the immediate and continuous waning of immediacy, which is, in one sense, mediation, for without immediacy there is no time, since what passes is the immediate changing of the immediate, i.e. the given.

We mentioned to begin with that immediacy is a coincidence of movement(s) with a point of rest. It definitely appears, though, that immediacy can exist without a point of rest being present, such as when two movements moving in their own direction and totally independent of each other suddenly coincide. Such is the case with accidents whose shock is the immediate result of their immediate, unexpected collision. But here the point of rest is itself the moment of accidental coincidence, which can as such be very striking – a moment frozen in time, singled upon our memory.

Also, immediacy can take the form of things that grate against and irritate our nerves. But here the point of rest is the point which is immediately interrupted or the seeking of a point of rest, for rest can only be sought if it is already present in some form; it is not created or made, but is realized, and, therefore, irritation, agitation, or, any kind of interruption of our state of being is, as it were, the static interference with this realization, wherein, the point of rest is present as the distance from being realized.

The point in all this is that without rest being present in some form, immediacy cannot be realized, cannot in fact exist. For without it a movement would be never-ending and never-beginning; but this is the opposite of immediacy, that is, it is mediation, which, in itself has no end or stopping point. Without a point of rest, there would be nothing by which a movement would be reflected or known for what the movement is. This also means that rest still

exists and in some way is present and felt, even if it is not immediately so. But whatever is immediate coincides with rest in some form. Either as the stopping point of movement or a combination of movements or as the reflection of them, their immediacy implies rest.

Now, for movement. In and of itself movement involves no negation, and therefore is continuous and endless; it is eternally posited, i.e. independent of time, as the *duration of its specific qualitative immediacy*. Any movement which comes to an end or is negated is always because of something other or external to it, and nothing inherent in the movement itself.

Of course this immediately raises the question of death or perishing, which is a consequence of entropy and which concerns existing things themselves, rather than the movements they undergo or which they are a part of.

Looking at entropy, then, we see that it only applies to closed systems, and closed systems exist for the sake of individuality, so that one and the same thing may maintain, grow and develop itself throughout time, to preserve its identity. Therefore, those which are greater closed systems, such as humans, will have the greater potential to extend their life, to be enduring individuals, whereas, those that are lesser closed systems, such as animals, only have so much potential as is given to them by Nature. And the ultimate closed system – namely, the universe – is also that which is infinite.

This more specifically means that any organic thing, including humans, exhausts its life not because there is a finite supply of energy, for the supply is actually infinite, nor because it hasn't the capacity to transform energy into its life, for this is what it means to be an organic thing, but because its capacity for doing so is limited, and this may only be because it doesn't know how to extend such a capacity infinitely. While it may well be true that animals, for instance, are not so constructed as to be able to extend their natural life, much less, extend it infinitely, according to certain Daoist practices, such a potential – that is, of longevity and immortality – is possible for man; that is to say, he is so made that he can extend the transformation of energy into life infinitely, granting he knows how to.

At any rate, while this involves a whole other discussion that is not the purpose here and which the author is not at all competent to comment on, the

possibility of extension of life or immortality seems consistent with the presupposition of entropy mentioned.

The point here, then, is that, *in principle*, a closed organic system may continue indefinitely and even infinitely the movement of its life, for an organic thing is so defined by its ability to generate its own life and that of others, given a source of energy, and the only reason it doesn't infinitely is due to a *quantitative* limitation, namely, that it can't extend its capacity to generate its life, but the possibility is already there; and even if, say, in the animal it can never be realized, in man it very well may.

Also, as discussed in the section on the quantitative of the second theme, there is no absolute limitation, or even an absolute definition, of the quantitative, if there were, then, infinity, and even the notion of it, would not exist.

Extending this thought – namely, the reason for a closed system presupposed by entropy – to another law of physics – the conservation of energy – we see that that which dies or perishes is not one and the same thing as that which lives or exists. As the law of conservation of energy states: 'no energy is ever lost, but its amount in the universe remains the same.' That is to say that what lives or what is energy continues but in a different form, and this form cannot be something absolutely different than its previous form, for nothing can change absolutely.

As it concerns organic things specifically, it appears that the impulse to continue living is indestructible, but the impulse to live hasn't its usual, embodied mechanism to continue doing so in that same thing, that is, the capacity and mechanism of the metabolism has been worn out, its energy exhausted, all of which is external, though, immediately, to the impulse. But, again, this does not destroy the impulse to live – an impulse or desire in which, moreover, is contained the essence of the being – but only denies it its outlet, its extension in the same body. We must conclude this speculation, then, by saying that this impulse, drive or desire of life continues in some different form, in a different body.

In inorganic things, movement as the duration of its specific qualitative immediacy, then, is given as its form of energy, which is very much subject to change, though, not in any absolute sense; and in organic things, this movement is given as the life-force, the *conatus*, which is increasingly less subject to

change the more complex and self-regulating the organism, as in man. In both, furthermore, the changing of form in death and perishing is continuous and unbroken.

Now, moving from things themselves, to the movements themselves of a thing, of a time, place, event, process, etc. we see that the duration of their specific qualitative immediacy is given in that every movement always possesses within it the next movement to come, as in a dance. That is to say that that which a movement is continuous with is pre-given in the prior movement, and this is spontaneity, the movement of the Dao.

For who in an *ultimate* sense makes anything happen? Everything that happens to us is always ignited or led by an impulse or desire, or by some pre-given thought, emotion, sensation or occurrence. We do not exist in a vacuum, or stand outside of things, and then magically, from the very stuff of our being, decide what to do or determine something to happen. If we look into ourselves we see that, ultimately, our thoughts, emotions, sensations, etc. just come to us or arise in us, without our having done anything. And, at the same time, everything is in constant flux and unbrokenly *continuous with itself*. Nothing stops for a moment, and, again, nothing changes itself absolutely, for, ultimately, everything is spontaneous.³⁴

Therefore, so long as one attends to a movement in a non-identified way (which is the true function of attention) and remains within it, there is no discontinuity or any discreteness that would change it into a different movement, and one would be naturally led to the next – appropriate or necessary – movement

Two things which give an indication, however slight it may be, in our earthly and temporal existence of such movements, that is, of the existence of eternity, is pure thought and a sufficiently intense emotion; and all the more so when the two are fused, or the power of their unity expressed and felt.

Pure thought, or, we may say, angelic thought, is when the reality of something is conceived in its transcendence of time and space, or in its

³⁴ That nothing stops for a moment, though, seems to contradict the very existence of rest and hence of immediacy as discussed above as that which is always, in some form or another, grounded in rest. But rest is not staticness, a frozenness, something which is totally unmoving in every respect. Rest, rather, is a form of movement, i.e. the immediate self-positing of equidistant points of a body, or, the movement of pure and simple being as pure and simple being.

occupation of a higher space. This conceiving is a vision of the way its elements eternally stand in relation to each other, an eternal ray beholding its identity as it emanates from the source of existence which, the more deeply penetrated it is, the more they fuse into one concept or thought, and thus is consolidated as an eternal part of the mind; whereas, the more abstract it is, that is, the more superficially grasped, the more do the parts remain suspended between each other, as it were, upon an invisible web. The latter is to grasp the form itself of the thing. And in both there is through the 'angelic' vision, potentially at least, the same eternal connection to all else that is perceived as totally conditioned by time and space.

As for sufficiently intense emotion, eternity is indicated in the immediacy that the emotion carries, an immediacy which is the consolidated or gravitationally-held-together content of a whole series of events or occurrences, or, of all that is compresent at the time, such as when we're in a certain place. As it were, the emotion carries immediately and at once all the information of the place, time, events, situation, etc., whatever of the totality of the object one is in relation to. An intense emotion immediately feels the all of something, its whole being; and this is a feeling of eternity because all that exists in and of the object really does exist in it and as it; it has always existed and always will, for nothing comes from nothing and nothing can become nothing. The greater the emotion, the greater the felt apprehension of all that exists.

And the more that an 'angelic' thought and an intense emotion of one and the same thing coincide, the more does that eternal perception and conception form one's very being; i.e. the more an eternal substance is gained.

As the duration of a specific qualitative immediacy, or, in a word, spontaneity, movements can be eternal and along with simultaneity there can be an infinity of them, all existing without or independent of time. If something is apprehended as the movement it is, which is to say in an unchanged, immediate way, and its simultaneity with all other things felt and, especially, at the same time, something one becomes conscious of – if all this is sustained in our being, that is, meditated on, eternity is there, or is accessible, in and as that very moment. And man's being, being no different in essence than the movements he undergoes or becomes a part of, is also essentially eternal – his conscious, emotive and lived life, necessarily, meant to be rooted in Eternity.

5.2 The Idea of Eternity – its Existential Side

Let us pause here for a moment, and ask what does it mean for a man to be rooted in Eternity, especially, for contemporary man whose only reality seems to be Time? We will give a simple answer – it means that the man in his being is not dependent on time and this means that he has attained Freedom, Sincerity and Authenticity. For such a man, none of the vicissitudes and corrupting influences of the world in time can take away his essential freedom, that is, he is independent of others and the changing moods and genres of his time for the attainment of his Being; it is the knowledge of himself, or it is nothing, that will determine what becomes of his life. No matter how difficult, or, even more importantly, how easy life becomes, he will not change his beliefs and understanding of the way life truly is, or more, his principles that serve as the foundation of his Freedom, which, in other words, means that what determines his thought and action is Necessity alone, for Necessity is ultimately Freedom.

For such a man, his abiding and irremovable faith is one of Truth and Reality; it is not possible for him to be insincere and at the same time not aware of it or have willed it to be so. The voice above all others that he hears, listens to and abides by is that of his conscience, or, even more, his conscience has fully awakened in his body, and this means that he constantly strives to be one with Truth and Reality, knowing in essence that he is not separate from them, but is called to attain and manifest them as much as he can – that is Sincerity, which such a man has attained.

And for such a man, every accomplishment gained through and because of Freedom and Sincerity is that measure of his being cast in Authenticity; the formation of the precious jewel of his being that nothing, not even God, can take away, for this is nothing but Time become Eternity, or that constituent of it, in the being of man.

Freedom, Sincerity and Authenticity each have their ground in Eternity, but in different ways: Freedom is to be inviolably grounded in Eternity, Sincerity to have inviolable knowledge of oneself in relation to Eternity and Authenticity, again, to have an inviolable being formed by Eternity. In metaphysical terms, we can say Freedom is Necessity, Sincerity – Unity and Authenticity – Eternity.

Having attempted to establish what Eternity is and how it may possibly exist for us here and now (something we will discuss a bit more in the conclusion of the discussion of this theme), we will now look at (metaphysical) ways in which Eternity is implied in existence.

5.3 Reflections on the Importance of the Concept and the Idea

Concepts condition our behaviour, how we act and respond to things. How concepts do this and condition us in all ways is a very important question. One problem we have is that our grasp and immediate sense of things, as when we are governed by objects moving in the world, and which we respond and react to, reflect on and feel in different ways, is not ordered – or not enough – according to any kind of unity. Our living in and moving with the world is about, in the basic sense, engagement, and concepts are one of the principal movers of our engagements with the world; and when they correspond to Truth and Reality constitute our very lives.

It seems to be the lot of modern man that he is governed and compelled by the Notion of Time; this is our dominant concept and Idea. And so our grasp, feeling-for, apprehension-of and beholding regard – what we keep close to us as likes and dislikes, our loves and friends, the greater and greater expanse of our world and the things in it – seem very far away, or, even, on the other hand, too close – for comfort or to be regarded with proper significance.

In other words, this is to say that we are governed by horizontal movements, stretched between the past and the future in a now and a present which is inherently ambiguous, or worse, equivocal, unaware of itself, that never seems truly right, or to be exactly where it needs to be, and which, most importantly, can give us access to the whole movement of things, for it is always either more or less (and usually less); that is, everything is always on the same level as ourselves and our sense of this everything can only extend as far as our senses can, but since we don't have the sense for everything, as this implies a relation of different levels and here we only speak of one level, we never truly know our place in this everything, how we are constituted by it. Such a conception really implies we are specks, or a cluster of specks, within an indefinitely extended line, one which can increase in mass but never in substance or quality; and

while no one really believes this, it seems that ultimately this, in a variety of complicated ways, is the concept of Time that we are conditioned by.

Whereas in times like the Middle Ages, the dominant concept appeared to be Eternity and what governed man and his society. It probably is the case that because culture is the working out of the Spirit in the world, as Hegel asserts³⁵ – and the Spirit being our most immediate and *mediate* Love – every culture and historical period of man has its own Idea; but this doesn't necessarily mean it is one which is simple and easily determined, but may be complex.

One of the plagues of mankind is that he doesn't remember himself, a self-remembering that Gurdjieff stressed the great importance of³⁶. For this reason, it is urgent that we understand how our ideas form us, how knowledge is certain and makes or discloses to us our reality. For knowledge is material. But another most obstinate problem of man is that we have a low-level concept of matter, in particular, of our own bodies. We must elevate our concept and Idea of matter; but for this matter must change as well.

Knowledge is the material of the presence of Memory in the world; for in man is carried and embedded everything; and of course everything implying different scales of and within Reality that correspond to each other and determine their nature and significance, in short, an ultimate relation to Eternity which, in the principle of things, constitutes and orders the different levels or space-times (i.e. measurements) of Reality. It is Eternity which must govern, order and move our minds and by our contemplation and meditation on it. Time is always an attuning with Reality and Eternity; in short, by that which transcends and for that reason constitutes us. (What we are to become in the true sense, that is, when we grow and develop, is really what we truly are and, in a sense, have always been. Becoming is really rather a matter of realization and revelation or disclosing, than of change or becoming something novel. We are created, in yet other words, from above and not from below. This is something that will be addressed in a later section.)

³⁵ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 3-7

³⁶ Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous*, pp. 116-22

5.4 The Nature of Perception as Essentially Eternal

Perception is always movement. The perceiver is that which is at rest and is moved or moves itself, the perceiving the unreflected or unreflective movement and the perceived the object, that which fixes perception, can govern, control and compel it

It is the perceiver who alone is actually moved, for only that which is at rest can be moved. Perception is the movement itself, but this moving is, as it were, a locomotion – so where the perceiver turns is where he appears, the perceiver, as it were, being moved by the object through the perception – *immediately*. Mediation is then never a full perception, but part of one, however extensive or intensive it is. When the perception is perceived, i.e. grasped and held by mind, emotion, body or all of these, fully and, especially, at once – in a moment – it is the immediate (and simultaneous) movement of the perceiver-perceiving-object (perceived). All this exists at once but in different forms according to the form or disposition (which way the perceiver is turned by mediate perception) of the perceiver or its rest, this also being the nature of perception and its type of cognition.

There is something really important in the idea that full and immediate perception is the perceiver-perceiving-object (perceived). This importance is that it is one where the Subject can (and does) become object to itself – as we mean to use ‘object’ here – that it can perceive itself as object without losing what the subject is, for this is the metaphysically necessary capacity for the Subject to turn inward and perceive and know itself. And when it does it implies the possibility and necessity for the Subject as object to govern and determine itself, i.e. that it can and must be objective. This specific capacity of the human and the perceiver-perceiving-perceived (object) is the *form* of the Subject, which means, its inward objective capacity and ability to change, govern, create, reveal, in general, determine and know itself to be as it perceives itself to be, and to do so as an object to itself, as empirical objects in the world determine us, but unlike them, one that has perceiving powers. We mention this analogy between the Subject as object and empirical objects, not because the Subject in its truth and totality is ever anything empirical, but because we want to assert that the Subject can determine itself objectively, as empirical objects

do our senses – directing, informing, affecting them, etc. This object, this objective Subject, is the Transcendental Ego.

But, again, the way in which this is determined is due to the nature of the object, which means, the nature of the subject, for nature can only be of the subject. The way in which the Subject determines itself as object of itself is according to the way it is turned to itself, either immediately or through other objects, during its objectifying regard; and this can be seen and is manifest in the form and extent of its perception. The way objects affect subjects is always determined by the capacity of the subject, its point of rest, which way it is turned and can move towards something, for nothing can be moved that doesn't have the capacity for being moved, meaning, locomotion, for which way it is turned, even if this only be one way. And if an object causes our turning itself, the subject already had the capacity for it.

5.4.1 The Unreality of Motion

Within this idea is the possibility to show how Eternity exists and is dynamic, which, negatively speaking, also means the unreality or impossibility of motion, that is, at least as we perceive it. For insofar as there is a 'being-perceived' (the moment or duration of perception, of that which exists between the perceiver and perceived), this moment and duration can't be a motion, by which we mean a movement of elapsed time, of succession, of 'taking time' to occur and arrive somewhere. For we are immediately moved by a perception when we aren't trying to perceive or control it with a perception, and a perception is always of an object, which means there is something which fixes perception or grounds and stabilizes it.

The medium between and difference of one place to another is perception; and while it is very true that I cannot immediately appear at another place without taking time and undergoing motion to do so, this is really because of perception – my perception of space and matter. Perception directly affects the body as do substances, and likewise the purer the perception the more potent it will be, i.e. the more it will affect the body as a whole or go more deeply into it. And I cannot change my perception of matter because of the conditioning of my body, of the object.

Let us reiterate the basic idea of perception here in a slightly different form, in order to try and illustrate the unreality of motion. The perceiver is the person or body at rest, the perceiving itself is its unreflective or unreflected movement, and the perceived, the object, is the reflected-on, where the perception ends and the perceiver becomes aware of it. When the latter is, as it usually is, a reflection on the unreflected movement – this being a perception – it appears as motion of bodies and/or persons, objects and/or subjects. That is to say, if the subject doesn't reflect immediately on its perceiving, on the perception as it is occurring, then, the reflection is a reflection of an unreflected movement, and the perception is twice removed from itself, and this is what appears as things moving independently of one another, whence our difficulty in trying to grasp, apprehend, penetrate with the light of the mind, and understand what is going on in us and in the world.

On the contrary, if one didn't reflect on their perceptions, they should be totally taken or moved by it, absorbed by the force of its movement; and rather than things moving independently of him, he would either be all that was moving or be the centre of all that was moving. For such a person, their experience would be one of a passive or unconscious eternity, such as we may imagine the infant or child exists in.

The other alternative here is, as mentioned above, if one reflects immediately on one's perceptions. That is to say, if one has a full and immediate perception, one where one is immediately cognisant of all that is happening, as well as feeling and sensing all that is happening. Here what would become apparent is that everything is at rest, that nothing is really changing, but not in a static sense, but at rest eternally, which is to say, in eternal movement. For such a person, eternity would be active and conscious, for we are where our perception is, or, more specifically, our attention. And this is because of the structure of perception that is an immediacy of the perceiver-perceiving-perceived.

But it definitely doesn't appear that perception is essentially something eternal, and two reasons, among others, for this are: lack of consciousness and the need for sleep.

That things in the world move more quickly than we're able to grasp because they move at a speed that the mind doesn't is true, but it is only a material or contingent reason, however compelling and extensive. The real reason – that which is fundamental and operative – is that the mind is attached to objects (in order to get impressions from them) and always regards them passively, for, in principle, the mind can move at the same rate as any moving object and even more quickly, for the speed of the object is not one in the object itself, but in the perception of it.

But the passivity of mind we speak of when all is motion – each thing moving at its own velocity, whence the mind is pulled hither and thither, by its sense-objects, or left indifferent because the object's motion does not correspond to any movement of the mind, or, yet again, is frustrated in its attempt to cognize things – this is all a sense-determined (empirical) activity of the mind; it is not, as science maintains, or maintains inadequately, observation. This is important because the first step towards understanding the proper active use of mind, where we are not compelled and determined by the motion of objects, is observation, if only in a rudimentary sense.

Taking a very simple example: it is not the same if I merely see a fast moving car speeding before my eyes and if I observe the motion of the fast moving car. The distinction is subtle and minor, but it still seems to illustrate the idea. When I only see and hear the car it whizzes by me and appears no more than a moving blurb; but if I observe it, while the object may (or may not) appear the same, what I notice is that my eyes move just as quickly as does the car, and the idea is that the more I attune to my vision and am focused in it, the more of the actual motion of the object I will perceive or apprehend; hence it will no longer be motion, but movement. The difference is that motion is some abstract movement the object undergoes, which is as it were applied to it, and hence ending at any point is discrete, it is not essential to the object for it just happens to be moving. Whereas movement is the concrete motion of the object, it is its essential movement and thus continuous with all other things moving. The one – motion – is an unreal moving, and the other – movement – is a real moving. And it seems that in the words themselves, this difference is implied. Move-ment implies the thing's motion as a whole, a certain completeness about

it; whereas motion is utter unrest, incompleteness, an indefiniteness of things moving. And so it is the movement of things that observation, and implicitly science, is concerned with, observation presupposing moving with the object as much as possible without being moved by it.

In Eternity, then, things move by the nature of perception alone. There is movement but not motion, and this movement is the Object of Eternity being the Subject perceiving itself immediately and ‘appearing’ everywhere as the perceived; that is, all things in Eternity eternally exist because they are constantly and immediately being perceived; the ‘material substance’ of Eternity being perception.

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Now we will look at some ways that Eternity is implied in existence. First we will look at the phenomenon of memory and recollection, the apprehension of form, certain aspects of the concept of form and the concept of order. This will, then, naturally lead to a discussion of certain eternal, or implicitly eternal, movements.

5.5 Memory and Recollection

As we said, everything is preserved in Eternity. And this is so for otherwise nothing could be recollected. If something is remembered or recollected it means that it has not totally vanished from existence, and if only time existed how could this be possible, for it is because of time that all fades away and vanishes for us, and where could it go, for time has not a resting place.

Taking Gurdjieff’s analogy, let us suppose the brain and body of man is formed of a material like that of the gramophone record, on which gets imprinted all his inner and outer experiences and impressions of things. And that the mind is like the sensitive needle and his emotion the turning of the record player. Firstly, we can’t even explain how such an apparatus could come into existence if only time existed, but it seems like an apt metaphor for the nature and functioning of man’s memory.

But, more importantly, at what point, though, are we to say this or that impression and experience, or the extent of it, has been inscribed, for if it is all being moved by time all that we could grasp are only the traces of the phenomenon. Yet, a trace is always the trace of the original movement, and of

what that movement has entirely been. But if only time exists the original movement would already and immediately be in a process of fading away – the original movement never apprehended in the first place. Therefore, our memory would only be, in its clearest, most vivid state, the beginning of a fragmentation, of vagueness. Accordingly, we would never have any sure criteria for knowing that what we remembered is what actually took place, since the only certainty is that it changes. The phenomenon would recede from our *present* experience just as much as it would fade away in memory.

Even if we grant purely temporal memory the capacity for apprehending the experience as it is experienced as a whole, we still cannot explain how the immediately subsequent traces of the experience in memory could ever get us back or closer to the original experience or impression. We can imagine how we might be able to conjecture and speculate through some logical inductive process what the original experience *could* have been like, but could never retrace our minds by moving backwards in time to a fuller and clearer remembrance of the experience. If memory is purely temporal we would not be able to ‘go back in time’ at all, for such a memory would be nothing more than a passive receptacle successively storing nothing but the fading traces of every temporal experience. And even less can we explain how any new content to a memory could ever emerge in the memory, for this implies something more to the original experience that is remembered, for in a purely temporal memory, at best, the present time and the conscious awareness of it would correspond exactly – neither one could exceed the other, much less be transcendent or immanent to each other.

From the other side, we also see that memory only and of time would mean that once something was forgotten it could never be recalled – it would be gone forever since it would coincide with the very last trace of the memory.

Memory as we know it – as that which records the totality of original experience and can retrace itself to it – not only exists in time, even if we suppose it has this eternal quality to it, but also exists in Eternity. One of the reasons is the one given above – that we can remember more than what we remember remembering, that we may come to an awareness of something not consciously remembered, but was subconsciously and even unconsciously apprehended and recorded. This means that the subconscious and unconscious

functions of memory do not, *in essence*, exist in time but in Eternity; for to apprehend and retain more than one moment, impression or experience simultaneously implies existence in Eternity, since there cannot be simultaneous or coexistent times within time itself, for such existence transcends temporality, i.e. finite duration. It is conceivable that different times may be simultaneous or coexist, but only in Eternity, for time is always mediation and as such cannot provide the conditions for simultaneity and contemporaneity. Or, in other words, if two times coexist they cannot happen in one time or in the other, otherwise they wouldn't be two. Nor can two times exist in a third time mediating or somehow uniting the two, for then it would not be given immediately and hence be simultaneous. And if the unity of two times is some mixture of them, its simultaneity would be diluted into some kind of homogeneity of the character of the two times, which is something other than their simultaneity, for a simultaneity doesn't diminish or negate the quality and force of the moments happening at the same time, but rather, as discussed in a section above, it is their full discernment held within one and the same moment that enhances and affirms the simultaneity of that moment; in short, if a simultaneity reduces or washes away the difference of its moments, the form of the simultaneity becomes less or no longer discernible and thus knowable.

Memory, it seems, must always occur in time but exists in Eternity in the sense that it is rooted there, that its contents issue from it and into time. What is said about memory here applies pretty much in the same way to recollection. The difference, though, would be that memory is always more of what occurs in time and recollection more of what occurs in Eternity.

5.6 The Apprehension of Form

Tied to memory as eternal is the apprehension of form, or, the whole of a thing, in any given perception. Such a perception, that is, apperception, qualitatively precedes the empirical sequence of the perception, something which indicates the existence and possible apprehension of the eternal in time and in our lives. Any time we perceive something, whether consciously or not, the first perception is of the form of the thing, what it is as a whole, or, more precisely, it is always the greater form or whole of the thing than what the senses and even the psychological mind tell us, however clearly it may do so.

For example, as it concerns the perception of a person what we first perceive is the uniqueness of the person, both his bodily form and his soul. We don't first perceive just the face, or the legs, hands or any parts of the body, and neither the specific personality or facets of the character of the person as his charming-ness, amiability, anxiousness, melancholy, etc. What we perceive is the sensible and psychological *form* of the person, for this is what contains the body, soul or mind and enables the parts that we empirically and psychologically perceived to be recognized as belonging to the person in the first place, these being the content which the form orders. And it appears that the form that we apprehend is always relative to the formal capacity of perception that we are at; for example, if I were in a drunken stupor, I might not notice if an angel walked by me, or even sense her presence; or, more specifically, as it concerns the type of being we are, for example, that animals cannot recognize humans as humans. At any rate, it seems necessary that there be a correspondence between the form of the capacity for perception and the form of the perception itself. In the same way that we apperceive space and times as a priori intuitions, which enable all their parts and movements to be assigned to the same space and time and indeed regulated by it, so is every individual thing likewise apprehended, though, again, most of the time this isn't at all recognized.

I also appeal to our experience. All of us have, at some time or another, seen someone or something out of the corner of our eye, or felt its presence and thought that it is this or that person or thing, and when we've turned our gaze to it, it is confirmed that it is; and this confirmation is, however unaware of it we are, always empirical. And it may be the slightest thing – a person's toe, the vaguest glimpse of their gait, a most fleeting glance at some object – and yet our intuitions told us correctly it is that thing. This could not be possible if it wasn't the form of the thing – that which transcends its empirical reality – that is the primary datum of our experience.

The existence and the necessity – though very subtle – of the apprehension of form indicates the eternal because it is the eternal movement of the individual; and at the same time its infinity, for ultimately we must infer that if we apprehend the form of the person, which, at least, immediately transcends his empirical existence, this form is necessarily infinitely extendable, since the

empirical is the only metaphysical limitation there is, and hence what we ultimately sense of the person is the body of the universe and the mind of God or Spirit, however abstract this *sense* is.

5.6.1 Form of the Person and the Ego

From the other side, as it sometimes happens, we glance at someone because they have been looking at us, but hadn't noticed they were. This is the sensing of our own form because if a person is looking at us without our knowing it, it is most likely a feature they are trying to apprehend that gives them more a sense of our form (and, at any rate, the form, both internal and external, of the person is their beauty).

From the point of view of the person looked at, we can also see that if she is being looked at without knowing it, her only sense that can subconsciously and unconsciously recognize this is that of her own form, for as the empirical is to form a limitation, so is the ego to the self, that is to say, the sense of the ego, strictly speaking, as it is in itself, belongs to the surface of one's conscious awareness, for we could also say the ego cannot in truth apprehend itself as either subject or object, for it is neither, but always the mediation or specific limitation between them that attempts to unite them. Though we desperately try to, we cannot identify the ego as subject because the ego is an empirical phenomenon, and the self a metaphysical or spiritual one. The more we try to do this, the more do we determine the ego as object, however much we are opposed to the idea, and this is factually impossible, since the ego is not a substance, but an empirical nexus of the social and defined label, or fine-tuned identification, of the most pleasant image of ourselves; and the more it becomes an object, the more is it an empirical limitation of the self. Also, the implication here that the ego is not the self can be seen when a person looks at us because our immediate response is one of not knowing *what* they are looking at, except ourselves, that is to say, if something of ourselves becomes an object to another and we don't know what this object is, it implies that our sense of ego is not our true sense of self.

The form of a person is also eternal because it is in principle possible to see and determine the whole life of an individual – his history, future and present

being – in one glance. But this of course is possible only for the clairvoyant, or those with the most penetrating and discerning minds.

Such eternal recognition is also implied in simpler, everyday things, such as knowing or feeling another is depressed by looking at them or by being in their presence, sensing that something is bothering them, inspiring them, that they are happy or wondering about something; also, in the recognition of their dispositions, personality types, what it is they desire and so forth. A lot of this is something we determine by looking at the person's face, and the face may be the most expressive part of the individual body and mind. And in the ancient Greek, the word translated as form or idea – *eidos* – also means face.

The argument for these normal interactions between people is the same as above anything that even slightly goes beyond what is empirically evident is a form, however 'small' or 'large'; and even if we cannot see beyond this form, limitation always suggests its own transcending. Also, content is always a tracing of the form, for the content is inherently ordered by the form, and so any apprehension of the content indicates within it its whole order, which is the fully fulfilled form. And this is what, for instance, makes psychology possible.

5.6.2 A Specific Definition of Form

Accordingly, a form is always the *specific* transcendence of empirical and temporal existence, an existence which is nothing but limitation for the sake of the focus, directing and filling of the content of the form's transcendence. And it is specific only to distinguish between higher and lower forms in the overall ordering of reality, so that everything in its movement towards perfection finds its proper form. These are qualitative and not quantitative or categorical distinctions – so every form is encompassed by a higher form to which it becomes its full content and ultimately by the one form of Eternity, Infinity, God, the Absolute, etc. (for all these mutually imply the supreme oneness of form, and which ultimately has no proper name). (Everything accordingly is penetrated by the 'eternal and infinite essence of God' and also this is why no form can be a form of limitation, but, on the contrary, one of openness and transcendence. Or, in other words the form of limitation is not one that limits us by conceiving it, but precisely situates us where the thing is transcendable.)

We may sum this up here by saying that the existence of the whole ontologically precedes that of the parts, and so it is really the individual as a whole, as form, that exists and so what is both empirically and metaphysically primarily perceived. And form is eternal because it is the order and meaning of the content of a thing as a whole, a content which insofar as it remains content is reeled out before us successively in time without any straightforward order, meaning or structure being given by it.

5.7 The Concept of Order (of Time)

In the same way as the form of something is not given temporally, the order of something is not given temporally but eternally; it is an expression of the eternal. Order cannot arise from temporality, for it necessarily precedes it – ontologically. For instance, linear time always has the order ‘before-now-after’; but this order cannot arise from time or be a function of it, for it determines the nature of this time as such. The order ‘before-now-after’ is one thing, not many; a quality, not quantity; it is the formal structure of linear time and not its content, for if time preceded the way in which it is ordered, then, in this case, it would be determined purely temporally, that is, mechanically, in which the very form of time would be an irreversible moving arrow, where it could never return to itself (even in memory) and the past and the present never grasped as such. – Again, we say in the very structure of time, so that its ‘before’ and ‘now’ would be contradicted in only existing in and as the ‘after’, since, if the very form of linear time were itself determined temporally, ‘before’ and ‘now’ would continually exist after, which negates the very order of time, since this would simply mean only the ‘after’ existed and no ‘before’ and ‘now’, and which further means no ‘after’ would exist, either, since the three cannot in linear time exist without each other, for what follows after must come after a ‘now’ that then becomes a ‘before.’ The fact that ‘before’, ‘now’ and ‘after’ can’t exist without each other means, again, that they are a *one order*, and this order is the very quality or essence of linear time, the essence of which cannot be a temporal phenomenon but an eternal one, for at every moment this order is preserved and is not subject to any kind of evanescence.

We can't even conceive of time preceding its order, for time necessarily has the form of a certain order. We can only conceive of it preceding order as motion, but motion also seems to presuppose a certain order; pure motion is inconceivable, it must move somewhere and come from some place, in-between which lays its order and so must essentially involve place, and if so, essentially involves order

In trying to conceive of time preceding order and thus as 'pure' time, we come against the notion of motion, and either motion refers us back to the order of linear time as basic, a priori – thus, as temporal motion – or to motion that involves an eternal order, one of lower, middle and higher, that is, of purely qualitative distinctions and which is also a priori. We will call the latter eternal motion, or rather, for reasons given above, movement; and then what the concept of motion refers us to is also a form of eternal time – or so it seems – where higher and lower are conceived as occurring before and after. Lastly if we attempt to conceive pure motion we come up against space, but space in itself is static and so is not motion (and it seems that, in some sense, space in itself – being a void – is not strictly speaking positively conceivable, but, indeed is emptied of all objects, and this might not be anything other than the positing of the object as it is in itself – the phenomena having space as its negative background, which enables it to appear as it is).

What we have said concerning time in its concrete aspect only refers to linear time. But the same applies, and to a greater degree, to other concepts or dimensions of time: time as cyclical, as we see in Nature, where things pass through the same stages and return to themselves; time as eternal recurrence where human life is repeated in the same way when we die and even as recurring patterns within this life; time as the fourth dimension, wherein, the whole movement of time is given all at once, or as the Idea of the lived life; time as the fifth dimension where all is eternally preserved, nothing lost and forgotten; and time as the sixth dimension, where time is a spiral both preserving and transforming all things in and as eternal and infinite perfection³⁷ – in all these senses we have (1) their form as an eternal order ontologically prior to their temporal order, or, in other words, any kind of temporality or

³⁷ Ouspensky, *A New Model of the Universe*, pp. 422-63. Here Ouspensky defines and discusses the relation between the fourth, fifth and sixth dimensions.

process is necessarily preceded and thus determined by its formal order, i.e. order cannot be reduced to temporality, and (2) eternal movements as their basis.

Whether or not these forms of time or motion – as temporal order, eternal order and the eternally temporal order – are strictly speaking or equally *a priori* is not certain, but it seems possible that they are properly conceived in a hierarchical sense – the form of the eternal order of motion or time being the ultimate – and thus as archetypal forms belonging perfectly and consistently to their own level which they order.

5.8 Eternal Movements

But the question arises here: how do we conceive of, if we can, an eternal motion, that is, an eternal movement if not temporally? We conceive of it as qualitative movement and such movements, among others, are change, becoming, time (the latter which we will discuss further) and, ultimately, transformation (growth and development), the latter of which further involves the intelligence as eternal or implying the eternal. To these fundamental qualitative, i.e. implicitly eternal, movements we will now turn our attention.

5.8.1 Change, Becoming and Time

Change, becoming and time mutually and very closely imply each other. For what changes becomes and becoming, insofar as it is the process of becoming, takes time. We will first discuss change, then becoming and briefly time. But it should be kept in mind that all that is said about change and becoming refers to time and time ultimately to eternity, and that there do not seem to be hard and fast distinctions between change, becoming and time.

5.8.1.1 Change and Becoming

In itself, change does not take place in passing time. For man, it certainly does, but this is not ultimately objective, but is totally conditional and determined by the level of knowledge he is at; and so it also applies to a finite number of men – those of us, at best, remaining at the level of ‘true opinion’,

that level once removed from the highest level of cognisance of the Forms or Ideas that Plato speaks about in the *Republic*.³⁸

In itself, change is the movement of difference, that is, a certain thing or quality becoming another thing or quality, the change of which is always immediate and never occurring through the medium of time, and only seems to occur thus – over however short a period – because we haven't detected all the intermediate changes

Nor is change ever an absolute change, for if something changed into something absolutely different it would negate the very process of the change itself, since relation always implies a certain likeness or similarity, as two things absolutely different from one another could only share in difference and to relate through difference is not to relate at all, since difference is, basically, not being something else, being what all other beings are not.

Absolute change, if occurring in time, would mean it occurred through a void, and either become absolutely nothing, or, somehow – magically – something absolutely different, and whether applying to one, many or all things, such change would make things absolutely irrelevant to each other, nothing being or being preserved, which is inconceivable and impossible.

And if somehow absolute change occurred in Eternity, it would imply an ultimate state of frozen solipsistic existences, each thing changing without any relation whatsoever to itself and to others. In each scenario, absolute change negates any thing that changes as such out of any possible existence

Nor can change as the movement of difference be merely relative, that is, absolutely relative. For if something changed *only* according to its relations with other things and not according to something that relates these things, hence gives it a certain order or form – be it unity, purpose, proportion, meaning, definition, etc. – then the thing would be changing infinitely, that is, in a strictly linear and infinite process of change; or, in other words, it would be changing for the sake of change, always becoming something other and never becoming anything, because of this irreversible and infinite movement of change. Purely relative change is nothing but relativism, where nothing can stand on its own and be anything in itself or essential because it is always subject to change.

³⁸ Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, translated with introduction and notes by F M. Cornford (London. Oxford University Press, 1941), pp. 216-19

Diametrically opposite to the formal Absolute that Hegel refers to as the “night when all cows are black” this formal relativity would be the ‘night when all cows are all colours, as well as chickens, goats, sheep, pigs, grass, farmer, trees, hills, and so on infinitely; the former, where everything is itself and the latter where everything is everything else, without being any one thing. Given that this relation of relativity is only bound by the form of change itself, it raises the absurd question of how change, being the only *permanent* movement in such a world, doesn’t change into something else. Hegel says that, “appearance is itself the arising and passing away that doesn’t arise and pass away;”³⁹ and we may say that the same applies to change, for the two seem to essentially express the same thought, though differently – the latter that something unchangeable must underlie change, otherwise it would itself pass away, or change into something that is not change, and the former that some abiding reality must underlie the appearances, or be what is precisely manifest in an essential way, otherwise their arising and passing away would neither arise nor would pass away, since what appears is something real in itself and not a nothing.

With relative change, then, we have nothing ever becoming anything via an infinite mediation; and with absolute change an absolute becoming or being that negates any kind of possible existence via an infinite immediacy of change, and so neither becoming anything.

But it is obvious change means becoming something, whether possible or actual, and this change is in itself neither absolute nor absolutely relative, but is a kind of mediation. And mediation is the movement of difference, which means that some one thing is mediated and becomes something different *to* itself, or rather other to itself, for it is still in relation to itself that it changes. Mediation is that which lies between the immediate and the result, it is the becoming of the immediate as it results in or to itself, or the *being* of the immediate result. Change is categorically the mediate becoming of the thing; it is the process of the thing being itself in its particularity, always what it is in this or that specific characteristic or quality of itself, and never what it is as a whole, as being-in-itself, or, in other words, it is the mediation of being-for-itself and, hence, as being-to-itself.

³⁹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 27

To explicate this further, change, then, is the *bare* preservation of the thing's being, it is what maintains its being but without the being necessarily knowing or realizing, nor, in any certain sense, becoming its being. To change is to become other to oneself, but still in relation to oneself, so that it is still the *one* being which changes (again, it can never become absolutely other to itself, that is, become another being), gathering, as it were, all its qualities or characteristics without necessarily assimilating and uniting these differences. Its different qualities that are its changes – in the actual becoming of the being – remain there as potential for true being, but as a diversity whose unity of being remains harder and harder to realize with the passage of time, which is basically change itself (for these accrue onto his being, making it more and more opaque to itself, but still as mediate, indirect indications of his being, such that the man who suddenly wakes up one day and realizes how much he has changed, that he finds it hard to even recognize himself, can very well realize his being in the difference between what he was and is now).

Change as the *movement* of difference is, then, qualitative mediation (and, again, neither absolute or relative), and qualitative mediation is not something temporal, does not pass through the medium of time, but is an aspect of time itself; and neither is it eternally necessary, since the immediate in itself may give us access to Eternity, but is something eternal, possibly as the barest eternal mediation of Eternity and Time (and eternal in the qualitative sense of existing always in order to return to Eternity, or for all Time to be subsumed in and as Eternity's revelation to itself.)

Change is something eternal, firstly, because it itself does not change and, more specifically, because its form as qualitative mediation means that all changes to a being eternally belong to it and cannot pass away, since, again, change is necessarily the very basic or bare form of the being in time. Or, to be more specific, all change is the accruing of qualities onto the being that serve as his irrevocable self-referential self-differentiation, or, simply, as closer or further *indications* of his being.

This also means there is necessarily an order to change, no matter how accidental, sporadic or chaotic it appears to be; but this is determined by the motivations and reasons, however conscious or not, of the being, and why we also say that change is the qualitative mediation of Eternity with Time, which is

determined by the individual's relation to Eternity that, in one sense, is his conscience. (In this sense, it may be that the ego is the individual's form of change, that is, that the only form of change – qualitative mediation – for the individual is his ego, the latter being the nexus of qualities or characteristics he's attached to his being in order to try and define it. But because the ego is but the conglomeration of temporal characteristics an individual has attached to his being in order to try and define it, the only way of finding some genuine identity is by seeing the characteristics of one's ego as indications of one's being, as referring beyond or deeply within themselves to what one's being really is and means. It then stands to reason that if a man discerned the whole order of his ego, as it has existed and been formed throughout time, he would have an immensely greater idea and recognition of his being – what he sincerely desires for himself, has told himself, understood himself, attained himself, required of himself and what he has not and so on.)

Existentially, time and change, though, are very real. And the only sense in which we can say – with the empiricists, though, without their temptation to downgrade things – that change and time are not eternal, but temporal phenomena, is that they are identical to man's forgetfulness of himself. The only sense in which change is real in itself is in man's self-forgetfulness, in his desire to escape his being or true self – it is only in, because and as this that change and time have their relative and transient natures. We see change as mere difference and time as mere transience because when we don't remember ourselves.

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Another, though similar, way in which to show that change is based eternally is because it is immediate, and immediacy shows that change is based eternally, for what is immediate can have no basis in time, but only in Eternity, since it involves no duration (and what else can there be except Time and Eternity?) Change is always the immediate mediation of that which is – either something changes into something else, however slight or major it is, or it doesn't – for, again, absolute change is impossible and mediation cannot in itself be infinite (purely relative change), but rather mediates the eternal and unchanging – infinitely.

Change in itself is ungraspable, for it is nothing in itself, being neither absolute nor absolutely relative, but, again, bare mediation itself, which is always qualitative and not quantitative. If it were grasped in itself it would be the very moment of absolute difference; but such a moment is impossible, nor could it be cognisable if it were, for everything would have to change. Change is that moving moment of becoming an other, or, if it is conceived in itself, it is the becoming of becoming an other, in which nothing would ever become anything, but would be stuck in the process of change. Change is the process of becoming itself and as such implies the immovable ground of the being that becomes, for neither can a non-being, or a being whose being is nothing but becoming, become at all; only being becomes.

5.8.1.1.1 Possible Distinctions between and Definition of Change and Becoming

It is difficult to distinguish between change and becoming, if they are so distinguishable in any truly essential sense. One way may be to say that change is distinguished in the sense that it is simple becoming – innocent and unreflective – becoming something else without apparent reference to what it is that is becoming and for what end. In this sense, change is indifferent becoming, whereas becoming is always change that refers to the being that changes and can never be fully detached from the changes of its being, for, however mediated they always indicate its being.

This, moreover, means becoming is fully developed change and change itself the process of becoming, or a contingent becoming, having this or that quality that may or may not be essential to the becoming of the thing, or, is only negatively essential; whereas becoming is an essential change of the thing and an integral moment or quality of what the thing is or is not, for to become is to be, and not to become is not to be, or to be something one is not.

In contrast, then, to the definition given above of what change is, namely, immediate difference, which is also qualitative mediation, becoming is mediate sameness or qualitative immediacy.

5.8.1.1.1.1 Elaborations of Change and Becoming

In looking further at the concepts of change and, implicitly, becoming – for what changes is always becoming at the same time – we need to distinguish between the process of change and becoming itself and the change and becoming itself, i.e. the moment it happens. It might be that change is the process of becoming and becoming the process of being, for there is no process of change itself – change is mediate becoming and becoming mediate being. Change by itself necessarily takes one away from being (but, again, never absolutely, *being* the bare form of the being in time whose basis is eternity, by which change is an immediate difference of the being, or, qualitative mediation of its essence), whereas becoming necessarily brings one closer to one's being, even in becoming what one is not, for in this the being of the individual becomes thought or pure potential through which the person may recognize or realize – and do so immediately – his true being; in other words, to be what one is not is to be one's being in negative form, hence clearing the way for everything to be a part of one's being; also, to be what one is not is, if realized, to negate any further changes, and to be means to realize.

The movement of change is always becoming, but one which is passive, for any change a being undergoes is one which is contingent, forming possibly or possibly not, an aspect of his being; it is a quality added onto his being whose status is as yet undetermined in relation to the being, suspended between something necessary or unnecessary to his being, and hence in itself remains in infinite mediation of his being. And if nothing is done, if all these changes remain passive and unassimilated, he will become them all, that is, he will forget himself and come that much *closer* to obliterating any integrity and authenticity to his being, for passive change is dissolution.

But even here we see that Eternity is still the ground for change, for no change can make one absolutely other to themselves, each change no matter how great and distant from other changes still retained within the form of the being; hence, in principle, the person may realize his being by turning from change to becoming. Each change is always the immediacy of the eternal, though, with the strictest *reference* to time, or, as the most abstract moment of the eternal.

Becoming on the other hand is a considerably more concrete moment of the eternal, though still abstract and with final reference to time; but it is the mediation of Eternity with Time. For we see that the moment of becoming is being, either being as a whole, which transcends becoming, and which we may refer to as the moment of realization, or, it is being as a part which is an essential constituent or moment of the whole, of the being itself.

It is easier to discuss becoming in relation to the life of a person. In relation therein becoming is finite mediation of one's being, establishing with certainty how far or close one is to being, and with every becoming does this finitude make eternal claims for itself, that is, negate its finitude for or against Eternity, and even if it is against, Eternity only draws that much closer to him in anxiety, boredom, despair and other such moods. (And these existential moods resolve themselves into two principal modes of being in sin and being in ignorance, where man realizes his being in, respectively, knowing that he is false or that he doesn't know himself.)

Becoming, then, has for its basis Eternity because it is the *bare* form of the being in Eternity. Anything a being becomes gets its meaning directly from Eternity, since what he has become is what he is *immediately for himself* as a greater or lesser unity of his being, which remains preserved as such. Whereas, change, as we said, is the bare form of the being in time, for it only gets its meaning from Eternity indirectly, is always deferred to becoming, either via an infinite mediation, in which such meaning is nothing more than a shadow, or, by a finite mediation, which then changes into the process of becoming, instead of mere change.

What one changes into one does only mediately, that is, one is still in the process of becoming it or not becoming it, or becoming or not becoming whatever the change is grounded in. What one becomes one is immediately, and it is either established as something defining one's being eternally, or only a change arising from eternity can undo it.

While it is true change and becoming have their immediate and general existences in time (immediately as experience and generally as concept), this is only one of mediation and so they have for their basis and essence Eternity, since time, if it existed in and of itself, would mediate itself out of existence, since what else would there be but change, becoming, arising and passing away

to mediate? – an arising and passing away, furthermore, that would be finite, since an infinity of it presupposes that which has not arisen from another, but from itself and, hence, is eternal. Mediation has its basis in what is immediate, in what by its nature exists in and through itself, and this can only be that which is self-derived or self-created, and these are such Forms of being as the Infinite, the Absolute, Substance, Eternity, God and so on

5.8.1.2 Time

Time in whatever sense and at whatever level is mediation, and it also seems to be appearance (for that which is real in itself need not constitute itself, its reality in or through appearance, which is only to say that it doesn't *depend* upon appearance to be what it is).

And it is also movement, but only in an incomplete sense, to which we have given the name motion in a section above (making the distinction, again, between motion and movement); for wherever there is mediation and appearance there is necessarily time, but not so with movement. Things may move without depending on a traversing of time and space, and this, as we've hoped to show, is the case with change and becoming itself, and with what the form of change and becoming are – as movement and form, they are eternal movements and everything in-between – their process – is a temporal movement. For I need not move in space in order to change or become; I do so whether I move spatially or not, since if I were to stay still I should not for that reason cease changing or becoming. And, again, the change and becoming itself of a thing is not itself a temporal process, but is eternal as the forms identifying a being.

Furthermore, time is not real in itself. It is a by-product or abstraction of the way we experience the world and ourselves, since there is no objective phenomena or measure of time given that identifies what it is or is made of, that is, as some substance existing in and of itself. For instance, there is no fundamental unit of time. We cannot cut up a second and a millisecond and so on to get at the fundamental unit of time. Such would go on forever, in which time as something we can hold onto and measure vanishes into a nothing that, nonetheless, continually passes.

Experience is always immediacy and immediacy is not temporal and can not arise out of the temporal; again, because it is immediate it is something eternal. So, again, time is mediation, or, more precisely, the qualitative distance of what has already happened, is happening and will happen (possibly, a form of immaterial space). Time is qualitative duration, the lengthening and shortening, i.e. measure, of immediacy or experience, and not of anything that time forms the proper object of.

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Another way in which time implies the eternal is by a simple analysis of the linearity of time, namely, past, present and future, which discloses a certain unreality to time and, again, brings us to the immediate which can only be eternal. This thought is taken from one of the chapters of Ouspensky's book *Tertium Organum* where he discusses time as the fourth dimension of space.

Past, present and future are not substantially, or, in any positive sense, real if it is only through time that they exist. For, according to time, the future arises from nothing, being in a state of non-existence until the moment it is manifest; likewise the future as it happens becomes past and the past passes away into nothing, at best, only existing in memory (but memory is not at all the same as that which is occurring in time); and the present is nothing but the constant and fleeting transition from the future to the past, "from one state of non-existence to another," and thus as impossibly graspable, as nothing but the most abstract fleeting velocity, it cannot be said to exist in any positive sense. As such, as Ouspensky proclaims, on this view of time, "nothing exists!"

Ouspensky likens the man existing through time believing it to be all that is real to the "stupid traveller" who believes that the place which he has just visited is now no longer existing or is in a process of disintegration and the place to which he is going neither existing, but in a process of becoming manifest, and the place which he is currently visiting not one at which he is staying, for it is nothing but the constant transition of the place he is going to the one he came from.⁴⁰ Surely this is an absurd notion, and it can't be the true view of time if we believe or know (as we must) that we and the world exist.

⁴⁰ Ouspensky, *Tertium Organum*, pp. 33-42

On the other hand, what we see when we look at time is that the only thing that can and does exist is the Now. When the future happens it only happens now; the present as that which currently exists, obviously, happening now; and the past, also, when it happened happened now. And if there be a protension of time from the present to the future, from the past to the present, or even from the future to the past or from the present to the past, this, too, can only be happening now. The Now is the only 'unit' of time, or the only mode in which time exists. But this Now cannot be due to time, for as we have shown, in itself, time is nothing but the irreversibly un-pausingly un-locatable immediately appearing and vanishing moment. This is to say that what is now cannot arise from what is future or become what is past, for what is the future and the past if it isn't now? It is nothing and, again, leads to the absurd consequences of purely linear time. Or, how can that which is future become what is now or the now become what is past through time? It cannot, or, rather does not, for even if the future or past were something other than the now (which we've said it isn't), they only can become now immediately, for what is now only exists immediately, and not through the medium of time, this medium being the order of before-after, or, linear succession.

As the Now can only exist and 'arise' immediately, and this can't be due to time, it can only be a determination of Eternity. The eternal Now is the only thing which really exists and it is the immediate determination of Eternity.

Of course, this raises many questions, requiring an extensive discussion, especially as it concerns the way in which we explain how this eternal Now can exist in relation to time, for time is nonetheless very real for us. To this, we will only remark that on this view of time as really a determination of Eternity, the way in which things exist and are, in principle, experienced is, putting it very simply, as a constant disclosing or unfolding of Eternity in and as time, which it continually does however long it may take for the realization of the eternal in it. On this view, time does not proceed linearly successively but, rather, as an expansion or contraction, a revealing and veiling of all that exists and possibly exists, has and may have existed and will or may exist.

Because time is the movement of Eternity are such things as the Dao – the spontaneous, effortless and perfect movement of something – possible, as well as the fact that our lives exhibit recurrent patterns – apparently due to a need to

work something out that we have left undone, or to resolve a conflict in our lives –, that time can suddenly catch up to us, that we can have epiphanies, realizations, can cognize and/or feel the present moment and expand such a cognition, can reflect deeply on anything, especially, on that which doesn't presently exist for us, and so on.

That we are limited to only portions of this movement of Eternity, and most of the time to minute fragments, is due to the form of our mind being limited to the linear structure of time, and not to any form of time in the world or of existence. And since this form is not in itself the real form of the world, but an instrument of it, it can be changed, can evolve, be cultivated, perfected, or, simply, transcended. The difference lies in the way in which we perceive things and not in the way in which the world exists.

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Change, becoming and time, therefore, have as their form the eternal in and by which they move. Change – the bare form of the being in time. Becoming – the bare form of the being in eternity. And time – the form of mediation of the eternal.

5.8.2 Transformation

Now we move from eternal movements implied in the temporal movement of change, becoming and time to eternal movements implied in certain processes of phenomena themselves, these being in the physical transformation of things, growth, development and the intelligence.

5.8.2.1 Physical Transformation and an Outline of a Cosmology

That transformation is an eternal movement is, firstly, implied in that there is no such thing as mere change from one form to another, such that it becomes totally different. This is nothing other than change itself, where we sought to disprove that it has for its essence and basis, or essential determination, time. The argument will be similar but in light of the present concept.

If we treat transformation in this immediate sense, which we will call physical transformation, we see that no thing ever changes its form absolutely, except, possibly, in appearance, for then it could never be likened to its previous form and thus be recognized as having changed form in the first place. This

means that its change of form cannot take place solely in time, that is, be a purely temporal movement, since this would mean being totally swept up – in all its properties and functions – into and consumed by the arising form, without any trace of its passing form, since linear time ceaselessly (and mercilessly) moves forward. But, in many, if not all, substances we can see how their different forms resemble each other (steam resembles water in colour, its feeling of moistness and in its fineness); and, most importantly, the properties and functions of the different forms must still be essentially retained in the substance which changes, for this enables the substance to change back to its previous form or, if there be such a thing, a basic physical form. And if we conceive of the changing of forms as the sum total of intermediate changes that become the different form, in order for any form to return to a previous state or just undergo another change, it would have to be destroyed or disassembled and then recreated or reconfigured anew. But this isn't how it occurs, for the physical transformation is one effected by a change in conditions or environment, not of the substance directly; in this sense, the substance possesses its different forms in potential and the conditions for their manifestation are the activating force of them; which, means the substance is neutral and all its possible states of properties and their functions potential. What we have are, as it were, different reconfigurations of the 'molecules' according to their position, velocity and proximity to each other. Let us keep in mind that we are talking about physical substances.

But in what sense does this imply an eternal movement to physical transformation? Again, every change when it occurs is immediate and immediacy has no basis in time, for time is essentially a form of mediation, but in Eternity, for there is nothing in-between Time and Eternity. Secondly, the differing physical forms of the substance potentially and essentially belong to it and somehow proceed according to the nature of the substance, wherein, the substance itself could not have, strictly speaking, arisen in and through time; that is to say, physical substances could not have arisen in a strictly evolutionary sense, for every substance in the world is a certain 'atom' of it, one integral to the eternal order of the world; which further means the order of the world has been made or determined by an eternal intelligence. We will dwell on this a bit.

Conceptually, we can give some explanation to the metaphysical or cosmogenic atomicity or primacy of substances in the world by the logical relation that physical form necessarily implies and belongs to a substance – and by substance here we mean a certain ‘material’ something integral to the formation of the world, thus, an atomic unit of the material world’s structure, such that, for example, wherever there may be life as we have here on earth, one of those ‘atoms’ or principal substances would be water.

Wherever there is a form it is of a substance, the form always being an appearance of the substance. The substances we refer to here should be called secondary or even tertiary substances, for the primary one is ontological, and is one, absolute and infinite, hence, in reality, the only substance. The others apply on the relative plane, and by an increasing relative status, they being emanations of the one substance – the Absolute or God – whose substantialness is only absolute on its plane of existence, having a more and more particular extension and power the further it is from Substance. The second-order substances might be termed metaphysical, that is, belonging to ‘a ray of creation of the Absolute’⁴¹ – one among others – or, in other words, the ontological order as it exists strictly for the world or universe we find ourselves in.⁴² A third-order substance might be termed cosmological, concerning as it does the necessary material substances and forces that were the condition for the Earth and man’s arising in it.

The point in mentioning this is to point out that what we call substances of different orders here is, when viewed from the Absolute, always form, but possessed of a greater or lesser substantialness (according to its level of importance in the cosmogenic order), since the former is the only substance that is real in itself. But viewed from the vantage point of the physical substances themselves, the world or the relative, they appear and are substances, while the Absolute will appear to be form, not something real in itself, if it is admitted of existence at all.

Form is only the appearance of Substance, as the most immediate essential aspect or ‘face’ of it to the most essential mediate aspect of it. From the

⁴¹ Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous*, pp. 82-86

⁴² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. with introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), key to special terminology, p. 631.

bottom-up we first have the physical form in its particularity, which is nothing but appearance itself, the least essential and thus least real existence possible, and this is simply how any physical thing at any given moment appears to the senses, the appearance of which is constantly changing, though often imperceptibly – thus always a particularity, for the physical form, say, of the table, is immediately and as a whole changed if we break a piece off it.

The next highest substance is the *transformations* themselves a given material thing can assume, and which appears limited before it changes into another material thing, or, rather, limited so that it can't change into some other physical thing (wood thus can't become iron, for instance, on this level of materiality), such as steam and ice from water can.

Next is the given material thing itself which undergoes the transformations, such as water, metal, wood, stone, sand, etc. This is what common sense would rightly refer to as 'material substances', but which the materialistic and naive tendency of reason wrongly posits as some kind of common material substance inhering in them.

On the next highest level of substances, then, we have the substances of which wood, metal, stone, etc. are the forms or transformations, substances which we can only surmise and infer, and not refer to concretely, since such ideas belong to the esoteric teaching of the genesis of the cosmos. But such substances might be the great formations that compose our Earth, such as mountains, volcanoes, the oceans, the sky, biosphere, etc.

Then, going beyond our planet, such primary substances would principally be the Sun and to a lesser degree the planets and their moons, since these have arisen from the Sun. And so forth to the Milky Way, and all encompassing galaxies, until we arrive at the most principal conceivable material-like substance, the elements of Fire, Air, Water and Earth, or, however these are conceived and enumerated, the point being that all substances must be modifications of basic elemental types

And lastly, beyond our conceptions of materiality, we come to the ultimate primary substance, the Form of Forms that is the One, or the Absolute. And as the limit of this chain of substance-form, when viewed from the sense-given or empirical side, is appearance itself, so, on the contrary, the chain of substance-form, when viewed from the ideational side, is Reality itself.

This outline of the genesis and nature of the cosmos, implied by the simple phenomena of physical transformation and derived from the esoteric cosmological teachings of Gurdjieff⁴³, is one which involves eternal movements because it admits of different, i.e. higher and lower, levels of materiality, and any such relation is one that can only be related and, further, ordered and overseen, by something eternal, since a higher and lower level differ only in quality – the quantitative being unessential to their being related – and thus exist immediately to each other, that is, they are actually simultaneous. By definition, this means that the cosmos is a system, a system meaning that it is governed by a hierarchical order, where all the parts and levels exist simultaneously, each functioning only at its own level when isolated from the others, but functioning and determined more and more by higher and higher levels the more it is related to them as a whole simultaneous, eternally present order.

Furthermore, the order itself of the cosmos is eternal because, if the *way* in which the cosmos were organized and held together were to change in the slightest way, the whole order of the cosmos would collapse, and everything within it be submerged into destructive chaos, or would just simply disappear. But being eternal, such an order cannot be changed and hence destroyed, for ultimately it is not a material order, but one that has arisen and is maintained by the eternal Intuition into what is Truthful, Good and Beautiful. Such is what the cosmos is ordered by and made from the substance of. Or we may say it is made from and by an Intelligence and Will working itself out in and as the cosmos.

5.8.3 Growth, Development and the Intelligence

The next and last sense of transformation to deal with is growth and development (the former applying to natural living things, such as plants, animals and, up to a stage, humans, and the latter exclusively to humans), and which naturally involves the intelligence. Applied to humans, we may call this psychological and spiritual transformation.

Growth and development are the same insofar as they involve the refinement of substances – changing from coarser to finer, grosser to subtler forms – but

⁴³ For a discussion of Gurdjieff's cosmological teachings see: Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous*, pp. 75-95, 137-40, 167-69 and 305

differ insofar as development, properly speaking, requires a conscious force, or, more so, a conscious intelligence that is aware of and determines the course of the transformation of substances. Thus the latter only applies to humans where the potential of development is coextensive with the person's potential of consciousness or its level of development – what they can conceive and are able to do – which means that because, in principle, consciousness and will are eternal and infinite, in principle, man has the potential for eternal and infinite development.

In general terms, growth is becoming different in order to become *more* the same as oneself; it is the self-differentiating progress of the fulfilment of the being's self-identity; or, in other words, the actualization of potential, the living thing becoming what it was designed to become. As such growth definitely involves a paradox – opposed movements somehow unitarily and harmoniously forming the being of a thing.

Growth is not a matter of increase in bulk, size, or material presence, this is still change. Rather, growth is a higher form of change (change directed towards beauty, and in its psychological mode towards goodness and spiritually towards truth; and all these may be spoken of as the perfection of movement, beginning with growth.) Growth, therefore, is also what differentiates change from becoming.

Growth is an unfolding. All that a thing grows into and becomes has already been present in it, and this is true also of whatever it will and can become. All this is determined by the nature of the thing and what possibilities this nature allows for, which is the nature or form of its capacity

Now, all this of the thing that is present in it is so eternally. It cannot be a result of time, for even if the complex nature of the thing were acquired through time there must be an eternal form of receptivity to retain it and sort out what is to belong it and what is not, since every single thing is specific – nothing is given and made use of or rejected in general; it is always this single thing or a part of it that is either used or not used for the existence of a thing's being. But this seems to be only part of the story.

For the form of the thing is both receptive and active. The nature of a thing, or, all that it is and can be, is eternally determined because this nature follows when the thing itself is given; it is not a result of any kind of production or

evolution, if by it we mean something strictly temporal, for what results from any amassing or combination of character traits, dispositions, capacities etc. is always something new, and as something new it means it cannot be reduced to what it is the result of. In the creation of something new that thing which is new did not come from anything that was actual in those things, otherwise it would be reducible to those things and be a repetition rather than something new. If the new comes from the potential inherent in that which produced it, then, ultimately, this potential is eternal, for it makes no sense to talk about a produced, i.e. a temporal potential, for this would mean the actual produced or existed prior to the potential, which is a contradiction, since the actual, if it exists or is produced temporally, comes from potential.

Another reason that all that a thing grows into must already be eternally present in it is that if it were to grow solely due to outside influences, forces and things, this would not be growth but be an amassing of the thing, or an acquiring of other traits, functions, etc. that would form attachments of the thing, but not the very thing itself. This means that any such supposed growth of the thing, which is really only an enlargement or external differentiation of the thing, cannot form the identity of the thing, that which it is in itself according to its own nature, i.e. its seed. Enlargement and attachments can only extend the nature of the thing, or in some way assist its growth, or, on the contrary hinder it; and if we imagine that the thing adapts to these extraneous influences then it can only do so insofar as it has the potential to so adapt, a potential which is limited by its nature.

Growth means that that which grows is a seed and this seed is the form of the self-identity of the thing, which it is constantly realizing and becoming. Once again, growth is changing – becoming different to itself – in order to become what it is all along – to realize its selfsame nature or identity, which has always, i.e. eternally, existed.

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Looking more at the phenomenon of growth we see that the moment growth becomes apparent and moves to its next stage is when something enters or manifests itself that wasn't there before, i.e. the seed becomes a shoot and a root

at the same time⁴⁴, the shoot a stem, the stem a bud and the bud a flower. The invisible becomes visible and this implies the eternal at work in the organism. For it seems that no matter how powerful, penetrating and sensitive our technology becomes it will never capture in any empirical sense the moment of transformation, growth, etc.

For one, the change is immediate, which means, it can have no temporal reference and is implicitly an eternal moment; and, for another, the form within the thing is invisible, it doesn't exist in any visible way until it has been fulfilled or in the process of being so. The latter also means, again, that all its potential forms have always existed in it, and hence they are the very 'stuff' of eternity and naturally given by it. And to speak of, for example, the cells within the thing dividing and replicating, through which the form is *constructed* is really a reduction of the form, losing sight of the total form that is there and always has been. What is invisible cannot have arisen solely through and because of time.

The great difference from what an organism formerly was to what it has become is, again, it really becoming more the same as itself, the unlocking of its potential. As it were, all the nutrients and other substances of the plant, for instance, feed into this potential – filling it up – or become the potential and its self-fulfilling, until it is filled and manifests itself. Therefore, the difference between one stage and another of a growing or developing thing is not one of essence, whereby we could imagine discrete, i.e. temporal, moments of the thing, nor is it simply a reconfiguration of its parts, which would be a function of linear time, but it is one of form and content, or insubstantial and substantial form, or put simply, of the transformation of energies.

The potential bud is an empty form and when it has materialized is a fulfilled form, i.e. a substance, which means it has filled itself with the content necessary for the form to be active, have function, purpose, its dynamic order and meaning, it has attained its active self-identity and can perfectly or normally enter into the proper relations with things. And this it can only do if its forms or potential issues from eternity.

⁴⁴ That the seed becomes both a shoot and root is very interesting. For it seems to indicate this dual-in-one movement that is essentially characteristic of growth. As it concerns plant life, the further down its roots go the higher does its trunk, branches, etc., moving both with and against gravity, or, more specifically, by gravity and with force, a simultaneous descension and ascension that is the forming of its being.

This means that form and content cannot be essentially separated, that the fulfilment of the one is the fulfilment of the other. Furthermore, it is always the form that determines the nature of the content that is to fulfil it and the way in which it will be ordered in order to be fulfilled. Only in an absolute being can the two be fully fulfilled, wherein, they become one, and any process of becoming no longer necessary.

For all other beings, the fulfilment of a form leads to the positing of a potential higher form, thus, there always remains a difference between form and content and which keeps the thing necessarily involved in becoming. For such a being, the empty form – that which the thing is supposed to become – always presupposes or implies a formed content, the point at which there is nothing but content and any additional content is only a repetition of the same content it has. At such a point, it has reached a climax where it cannot go any higher without transcending itself, this ‘sky’ of transcendence being its higher (empty) form. This higher empty form is always evinced by what needs to be developed, and it necessitates a new order of content to fulfil it until it no longer has any forms to fulfil, or seeds to be fertilized, and dies, or, if it has an infinite number of forms or seeds to fulfil it may continue to develop infinitely. For all such beings, that is, those that have been created, we may say that they are ‘contently’ or contextually incomplete because no content can ultimately fulfil it, the remainder of the content being the seed of its further growth or development, or, an empty form. At any rate, to be ultimately fulfilled as far as form and content go is to be immortal.

We have been speaking here of the relation between form and content as the way in which growth and development proceeds, but the refinement, purification or transformation of energies or substances within an organism is essentially the same process. The latter is a more precise description of the way growth takes place, but as it concerns the development of man, in the absence of some method or system where such terminology is concretely applied, in which the use of the body is of paramount importance, form and content seem more easily applicable to the phenomenon of growth, as it accords more with the way the mind sees and can work with things.

Looking at the way in which they are similar, we see that any organism is always faced with content, that is, with substances, sensations, feelings, etc. that

affect it and which it must use or discard. When being affected by all that the environment affects a being with, a process of discerning the way in which these affects should be used, how they should fit in with the form of the being, takes place. Plants and animals do this naturally and instinctively, and so do humans. But for the latter there are a great many things that happen to us and which we do that necessitate a conscious discernment that accords with the form, or that form most important for the time, of our being, and which then can be made use of, assimilated, for our good. This applies to so much of what we experience and the way in which we make use of our time, as opposed to that which happens as a matter of course, such as the taking care of the needs of our body and our everyday affairs.

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One of the main functions that growth is evinced in is metabolism. Only organisms which have metabolism can properly be said to grow. Metabolism involves the proper exchange of substances lying outside the organism and within it, and then their conversion within the organism. The organism takes in the 'raw' materials from food and air and then converts them into the substances it needs for its maintenance and which further become the very body itself that is growing, i.e. blood, muscle, tissue, cells, etc. Such a process is one of rarefaction or purification of the substances involved, and the purer the substances are to begin with the more easily assimilated and transformed are they. It is always a process of separating the pure from the impure, or the more pure from the less pure, the impure or less pure being reduced in the body to an ash that the organism must expunge.

Moving a step further from the phenomenon of growth itself to that which it implies or presupposes, the eternal is indicated here because all the processes and metaphysical forms of growth take place according to an immense and profound intelligence, which is to say, evolution as such cannot explain the increasing complexity and diversity of creatures, they being quite unnecessary and even clumsy and complicated for a strictly mechanistic universe. We could only explain such variety and complexity, as Aristophanes held, as an aberration

or defect within a universe that is one of an increasing imperfection of an initial state of simplicity and uniformity.⁴⁵

In the second place, and what is more, this intelligence has never been *produced* in the first place. Since the beginnings of the universe it has always existed, something which the fine-tuning argument indicates, for every physical process of material, animate and living things is always one which ‘instinctively knows’ what to do to preserve and facilitate its order and increase its order in order for the universe to evolve. It is instructed and moved by an instinctive intelligence, this being present within and as the very capacity and potential of the thing through which it attracts and receives the conditions, forces and substances necessary for the continuation and preservation of its being and order. Because such knowing is omnipresent and always has been, it cannot have arisen through time, but is an eternal phenomenon, integral to the eternal nature and order of Being.

According to ‘esoteric philosophy,’ another and most important feature of intelligence – one which seems to apply mostly to living organisms – is that it spans and, as it were, straddles, more than one dimension at once, that the intelligence of the organism encompasses more than one dimension in itself and which enables it to perform some of the more complex and intricate functions, some of which enable it to do things which are amazing, fantastic, magical and, as it concerns human, what we would regard as miraculous. As far as the purpose for these more complex functions of a multi-dimensional intelligence is concerned, it is for beings to be able to sustain and enjoy more and more their lives; and concerning the higher species, if not man alone, for power and freedom, will and intelligence, to coincide more and more.

To use the example Ouspensky uses, it is very implausible that the almost immediate effects of such substances as caffeine and alcohol have in our organism and all in the same dimension gone through their processes just as quickly. For if every stage of these intricate chemical and physiological processes were put under a microscope, one would see that one stage would

⁴⁵ According, that is, to Aristophanes’ speech in Plato’s *Symposium*. See: Plato, *Symposium a new translation by Robin Waterfield*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 24-30

take a longer time than what it takes in the organism as a whole, and much, much longer for all these stages to be run through in a linear succession.

Therefore, the space-time scale of the biological organism must be different than the one of our psychological and emotional states. This is more obviously seen when it comes to very potent substances, such as illicit drugs, but the same applies to all food and drink whose effects *we feel* relatively quickly ⁴⁶

Whether it is an intelligence or intelligences at work – each corresponding to that specific function and time-scale – it seems obvious that this implies an intelligence which is eternal, for, again, two or more dimensions, i.e. space-time scales, to intersect or exist simultaneously can only be possible if such a relation is maintained by or based on something eternal; otherwise these would be mediated by some other time and could not be simultaneous or ever recognized as touching at some point.

In summary, then, growth and, implicitly, development (the latter, again, only a consciously determined movement of the former), then, implies the eternal, because, if one and the same thing changes in order to become more the same as itself, this can only happen if the forms that the thing changes into exist eternally in it, and which manifest once the conditions are present for them. All such forms exist as potential within the seed of the thing, wherein, the invisible becomes visible – immediately, once, again, the conditions are present for it – the identity of the thing being realized, instead of being created or constructed, which would apply if growth were determined in and by time.

And growth as such can only be possible and enabled by an intelligence that already knows what to do, or how to respond, in order to grow and maintain itself, and which, for that reason, and, more specifically, due to the frequency and speed at which this takes place, which eludes, or, annuls strictly empirical measurement, must be multi-dimensional; and if it is multi-dimensional it can only be eternal or have its source in the eternal.

5.9 Concluding Remarks

Eternity as the moving state of pure and irreducible qualitateness, that is, of all things in the duration of their pure qualitateness, simultaneously and

⁴⁶ Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous*, pp. 329-40

constantly immediately, is the very movement of transcendental, most objective perception. That is, if one had in their lived life the awareness of the transcendental 'I', where the awareness and cognition was exactly simultaneous with the ever-present Now, and comprehended in philosophical meditation all that this Now means, its reason, purpose and structure, this would be Eternity. Such a comprehension would be a transcendental synthesis, and, so, it may be that the transcendental synthesis of time is Eternity, one whose substance, as mentioned above, as it were, is perception and which very well may, or characteristically does, happen in a moment.

We have mentioned duration here and it could be objected that Eternity if it had duration would not be Eternity but would involve time. It is true that duration – if it may still be called duration – for us takes time, but this is because we do not sustain our awareness unbrokenly continuously and because we lose and must regain energy. But duration in itself is the unbroken, thoroughly fluid continuity of moving immediacy. There can be nothing discrete in duration and therefore no elapsing of time. Duration neither goes nor comes from anywhere, nor does it pass through anything. It is simply the very being of movement, which, in a section above, we said involves no internal negation.

An appeal to our experience may suffice to portray what we mean. We are each aware of the fact that the more absorbed we are in an activity the less do we sense the passing of time, and may be very surprised to find that so much time has passed. And it is not so much that time is felt to pass away quickly, but that there is no sensing of time as such. There is a certain timelessness that one enters, or to some extent, a transcending of time, and at the extremities of this absorption we very well may come upon something of Eternity.

The very duration of the thing is its eternal movement. And as perception is, basically, always of the eternal form or quality of the thing, the duration of perception is the eternal moving form or quality of the thing, and this is the way in which Eternity exists.

The crucial arguments for the existence of Eternity have been the refutation of change, becoming and time as anything existing in themselves, for if they existed as such, time would be either separate from Eternity, or time would be the only thing that existed. On the contrary, they are eternally based, eternally

arisen. Or, what is more, because each is, in fact, a kind of duration – change, becoming and time themselves not changing, becoming or passing through time – they are eternal movements, or, an aspect of Eternity

All of existence, then, is Eternity. By looking at the phenomena of physical transformation and growth and development, we have sought to indicate ways in which the eternal is manifest in and as the existent things of time. In one way or another, all the processes of time, the way in which things exist in it, is a matter of their eternal being being, to whatever degree, revealed or veiled, or, from the very stuff of infinite possibility, being eternally created. Eternity and Time, thus, exist in a dialectical relation, possibly, as the playfulness of being able to be manifest in all ways; and, also, as the tensed striving of the two seeking to be one, which may be the seriousness of the existing individual, whom, in certain respects, Eternity, or even God, needs or requires

That existence is Eternity does not appear to us to be this way – things arising from and passing away into nothing, the existence of which we only quite partially and temporally perceive – is simply because we are not aware of it as such. We, so to speak, haven't the eyes to see it with, or, rather our eyes are not open enough; but, indeed, this is the very function of the mind, and the nature of our being as it is formed by it.

When it comes down to it, the difference between Eternity and Time, life and death, is perception, or, more specifically, between an enlightened and unenlightened perception – the ultimate aim being knowledge. But there can only be a change of perception with a change of being, and a change of being is always primarily a moral matter. Necessarily, then, the existential side of Eternity is required for access to and realization of Eternity. It is characterized by the restructuring of our being according to an eternal pattern, or, according to the form of eternity of the individual himself that as it proceeds opens up the faculties of perception for Eternity. To name two modes of the existential side of Eternity – virtue and sincerity – by striving to be and by being virtuous does one pattern their being – through moral behaviour and the moral internal relation and response to themselves and others – according to one of the most fundamental patterns of Eternity, namely, the Good. And by striving to be and by being sincere does one pattern or consolidate their being – through a vigilant,

uncompromising self-immediate honesty and action on *all* levels of their being – according to the eternal pattern of Truth.

For the sake of Eternity such and other patterns should be the duration of our being, and our perception one of attention for, or on, or cognition of, form, quality, essence, idea – in a word – the invisible. In this way can the movement of Eternity become the very movement of our life. This is something, in its more metaphysical mode, we will discuss further in the next and last section

6. Conclusion: Form, Will and Idea – Attempt at a Synthesis

The implicit but, nonetheless, central claim in this thesis has been that the unity of reason and our moral being⁴⁷ is constitutive of truth, and, vice versa, that truth necessarily involves man's reason and moral being, a truth which, in intimacy with our reason and moral being, is necessarily eternal and which we can have access to as Idea. In one sense, and a most important one, the Idea is ultimately Eternity, and so by the perfection of our reason and moral being we can have access to Eternity.

We have sought to show, though, mostly in a discrete and implicit way, how this is possible by presenting arguments for (1) truth only being known through the necessary and harmonious coexistence of reason and our moral being, (2) ideas as that which captures or can give us access to the reality of things and (3) for the existence of Eternity.

While we have argued in the introduction that no system of philosophy is *ultimately* possible, because of the many-sensed nature of concepts and ideas – the sense(s) of which determine the meaning(s) of the idea and which are by nature dynamic – and because philosophy is ultimately grounded in the possible, which is infinite, which is the source of manifestation and thus cannot be exhaustively comprehended – while this is true, it does not at all mean metaphysics is not possible. It only means that no metaphysics can be the complete and final word on reality, but that any true – that is coherent, consistent and experientially based – metaphysics is *a* synthesis of reality and can give us access to that reality within its vision

⁴⁷ I have restrained from using unity, but rather have used inseparability, for the former would require stronger arguments. But their unity is what is ultimately meant.

Furthermore, any true metaphysics being necessarily situated towards Eternity is necessarily situated towards transcendence, and, therefore, one of the main purposes of metaphysics is to transcend the limitations of reason, to realize something supra-rational, which is to cultivate the divinity of one's self. Metaphysics is then highly important, or, rather, necessary, for situating the mind to that which is greater than itself and in fact is, in principle, meant to become. Metaphysics is a synthesis of the mind seeking to think itself into its higher being. It is, to speak somewhat metaphorically, a vision of the higher or ideal reality, that is, one which is really and truly possible in it and makes it to be what it is, by which the mind seeks to clarify, refine and perfect itself accordingly. This also means that there are certain fundamental principles or necessary presuppositions to any metaphysics, one of them being, again, that the 'whole is greater than the sum of its parts' and another that nothing exists independently of perception. There are many more.

In light of this, and in light of the lack of a systematic argument in this thesis, some thoughts on a synthesis of what has been put forth seem in order. Such will only be very general and a faint indication of what I would wish to articulate

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If there is a thought that captures the essence of what has been discussed in this thesis, it is that *Form is the movement of the Will towards the Idea*. This is meant to be a metaphysical statement, thus, something which applies to the existence, or, more specifically, to the movement of anything. Anytime something occurs these three elements are at work.

We will proceed to discuss each of these – Form, Will and Idea – both discretely and the way in which they are related, looking at some different sides from which they are apprehended, then, discuss their movement as they exist in themselves and apply to phenomena and the self. Lastly, we will briefly conclude with the way in which this thought formally applies to the three themes discussed in this thesis, that is, in their accordingly metaphysical sense.

6.1 Variation of Form, Will and Idea

Form, Will and Idea are always – and must be – present for any experience or phenomena to arise. In fact, there are always three elements necessary for

the arising of anything, and we may use different words, but these are used in order to determine this relation in its phenomenological-metaphysical mode. Metaphysically, we may use the triad Spirit, Man and Nature, or, in a different light, Truth, Goodness and Beauty. Philosophically – and probably the most appropriate usage – the metaphysical, the ethical and the aesthetic. On a psychological level – mind, emotion and body. In the most basic sense, this has to do, as Gurdjieff pointed out, with positive, reconciling or neutralizing and receptive or negative forces.⁴⁸

Form, Will and Idea. Form – ultimately, the structure of one's mind through which things are perceived, ordered and their assimilation into being directed. Will – the moral being, where reason and desire are united, fused or harmonized. Idea – the object of a man's life, his highest good, that toward which all his energies are directed for realization and fulfilment. The Idea is, properly speaking, the fruit of his Form, the Form, in turn, being the seed of the Idea. And it is his Will, his moral being, that determines whether, in what way or to what extent this is achieved; it is what unites or brings into intimacy his future and his present, his ideal and his reality, the eternal and the temporal, the way in which he perceives and experiences and that which he seeks and desires in all his experiences and ways of being. Will just as much involves the intellect, for in essence they are one and the same, or, at least, modes of the same thing. Everything that moves is a matter of Will, for so long as there is an activity it is one that arises from a Will; and the intellect is an activity, or it is nothing, namely, the activity of thinking, contemplating, etc.

In a more abstract sense, Form is also that which appears, Idea the essence of that which appears and Will the activity of Form and Idea, that is, of essence in its extension into appearance, and appearance in its essential intensity, or of its intension into essence. Form and Idea, appearance and essence, are not essentially different. The one is only the moving outline, delineation or indication of and towards the other, and the only reason they appear to be different is due to perception, which is a matter of will, or of attention, which may be something of the intellectual mode of will.

⁴⁸ Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous*, p. 77

The Idea is the fully formed or fulfilled Form. By contrast, Form is the potential or empty Idea. And Will is the force or even matter that fulfils forms or empties ideas, by either willing or not willing them.

Every phenomenon first appears as form, most basically, when looking at it empirically, as physical form. Whatever a thing's first appearance it is always of the form, and the form is the appearance of its essence, at least, that part of the essence which is connected to the thing's ability to appear, its phenomenality.

Sticking with the empirical basis of a thing, we see that once we perceive the physical form fully we are in possession of its idea, which is simply the particular physical form of the thing perceived, and this, in a sense, becomes part of our being, for any idea once grasped becomes part of our being and the more it accords with our being, or the more internal it is, the more does it really form our being, as discussed in the second theme. Once grasped, the mind naturally moves deeper into the phenomena to other forms which it seeks to grasp as ideas, or in their essence, and in this way does the mind continually move towards the thing and the thing towards the mind in order for the two to become one in being, or, to form their essential relationship. This it does by the will to knowledge, which is the essence of the will and the mind's principal moving force. In this way does the mind move from the form to the idea of its objects – deeper and deeper or higher and higher – in order to realize or fulfil its being through and with them, and the more the object is of the same essence as the mind, as, for instance, another human person, the more is the other receptively fulfilled in its being, each constituting itself through the other through their shared essence. And in this way, because everything is a mode of an eternal Conscious Being of an eternal relationship between “I and Thou,”⁴⁹ can the eternal unity of all things, or Eternity itself, be realized

Form is always a drawing inwards of he who perceives it. The form contains all that the phenomenon is as Idea, but the Idea is dependent on our conscious apprehension, our cognition and understanding. Therefore, form is always relative to perception. The more dimly, less consciously, something is perceived, the more it appears as form. But, in itself, all can be read of it if one

⁴⁹ Buber, *I and Thou*.

had such 'eyes' as to see it with. And in every perception, in every situation in which we exist in, the form is always perceived as a whole; that is, it is the Idea formally perceived. In any perception it is as if the phenomena is scanned by our intelligence for all that it is, at least, to whatever degree this is possible (considering opacity, hidden-ness, things being deliberately or automatically concealed, etc., but this too being 'scanned'), by which we are in potential possession of full, or at least, clear and adequate, knowledge of the thing, or we are in proper relationship to it, wherein, what is can unfold more and more; or, in short, we are in touch with the very essence of the phenomenon.

Form as drawing us inward so that the form may be enlightened, transformed into its self-cognized, self-determining, or spontaneous and free being, which it does in and by the mind – form as such is beauty. Beauty, Simone Weil writes, "feeds only that part of the soul that gazes."⁵⁰ Could this then be the nourishment of the perception of form, to perceive form with vigour, clarity, vitality, sensitivity, love and so forth, so that our gaze unveils that which is perceived in its self-luminescent phenomenality? – A phenomenality that is its purity of being which is the essence shining forth in all its virtue and truth for the mind's upliftment, transformation, and transcendence, into its being that increasingly flourishes and delights in itself and others, and hence would be release from suffering. Beauty exists for the sake of the enlightenment of the intelligence (as well as the body, for the two are not separate), for the sake of deepening and heightening, in short, perfecting, the intelligence, and of liberating it from the shackles imposed upon it from within and without. For these reasons as well, "Beauty is Truth."

And if Form is Beauty, then, Will is Goodness and the Idea – Truth. By an apprehension of, or a being drawn by, beauty, we are given to that which is good and is appearing for the sake of its good and that of others. This good is in essence the will to life, which is the will of affirmation, for, again, only that which is good, or the good that exists in something, can be affirmed. And the more the life of a thing is willed, the more its good is affirmed, the more is that thing immediately revealed to be all that it is, which is, ultimately, its eternal and infinite essence, and this is its Idea which is its truth, for the immediate

⁵⁰ Simone Weil, *Simone Weil: An Anthology*, ed. and introduced by Sian Miles (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986), p. 72

being of a thing, or that which is immediately cognized, and, especially, immediately self-cognized is at one and same time truth. This is to say that the will to life is the will of the good, which, when it immediately touches or cognizes the being of the thing is truth manifest. For truth can only be manifest or evident when a being stands within its good, which is the affirmation of its life, since, at such a point, the being feels completely safe, or open and unhindered,⁵¹ and can only be all that it is meant to be; and what is meant to be, being a matter of necessary and sufficient reasons, is thus truth. Truth, then, is the manifestation of the meaning of a being and the being of its meaning, which awakens to itself or to another when its good is touched. In negative terms, falsity is non-being, or, more specifically, the meaninglessness of being.

Putting this in other words, Beauty turned inwards becomes Goodness, as Goodness turned inwards becomes Truth, and, ultimately, Truth turned inwards becomes God. The same relation holds between Form, Will and Idea

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Oscillating here, as we are, from Form, Will and Idea as it proceeds from the mind and as it is in itself reflects that the forms we speak of, as mentioned in the introduction, are both of the world and of the mind, and that, essentially, the two are not different, as if they could be different substances. In a sense, it may be that the world is the outward form of the mind and the mind the inward form of the world, and all individual forms a reflection, manifestation or mode of the central form that is the Idea of Eternity, God, the Universe, etc.

It seems that in any given perception or experience there are these two basic modes of Form at work that make it up to be as such as it is. Further, it may be that the mind is always the one form in and by which all external forms to it are perceived and apprehended accordingly. And this may occur in two ways: first, the mind perceiving the forms of the world themselves seeking to determine what they are, and secondly, ordering and determining the meaning, purpose,

⁵¹ 'Open and unhindered' here is meant to cover many other modes through which truth is revealed, for, lest we are to be too naive here, truth is not, and often is not, revealed to one, especially of oneself, only when one feels completely safe. What very well may be required, for instance, is fright, terror, the "fear and trembling" that Kierkegaard spoke about. In essence, though, it appears that, on the one hand, feeling safe, or, basically, comfort and, on the other, terror as requirements for truth being revealed is the same, but existing in different modes, or, on different levels of ones being. Terror, that is, may be the very negative form of comfort, the awesomeness of a higher comfort overwhelming one, since such a comfort and safety is unknown to one. This, though, does not or should not dilute the reality and feeling of "fear and trembling."

etc. of the forms so perceived, which it does according to its selfsame form, that is, according to the form of its mind. Whether and to what extent the mind does this properly has to do with the clarity of its cognition and the appropriateness of its form.⁵²

6.2 Form, Will and Idea as it Applies to Phenomena

Ultimately, the individual as this person in particular does nothing for existence to be this way or that way, and much less, has he caused anything to come into existence. Rather, as this *particular* individual he is purely determined by things, for ultimately that which has given rise to existence is the cause of itself, or simply exists eternally and infinitely because it necessarily exists. Therefore, ultimately, things move of their own accord, for their own reasons. And they do so, putting it in a somewhat primal sense, due to an impulse for being and knowledge, or in order to know themselves

As it concerns phenomena, that is, when the mind is purely receptive to it, Form as the movement of the Will towards the Idea, then, is evinced as a certain impulse inherent and driving the appearance of things, an impulse that arises

⁵² This, though, raises some very important questions, which I have not come to any definitive answer or conclusion on. It is, ultimately, a question of the status or nature of the self and of its relation to the mind, which is also a question of the relation between subjectivity and objectivity. The question may be put as follows: does the mind, in essence, have its own specific form, which would be determined by the nature of the self of that person, or, does it not have its own specific form, since the self, following Buddhism, does not really exist; and so, does the form of the mind, in essence, have a positive structure, or, is the form of the mind, in essence, empty? Or can it be both in some way?

As a working idea, I take the latter stance, that the mind is both empty, which enables it to simply see things as they are, and that it possesses its own specific form in light of the subjectivity of the self and of the kind of education it has received, and this form is what conceives of the universe in a certain ordered way. I take this stance because it seems that both ends if taken to the extreme come upon problems, or, simply leave important questions unanswered. For if we rely too much on the specific individual form of the mind, we become too subjective, only seeing things in light of our self. And, on the other hand, if we only see things as they are, in light of the objective perception of the mind, as opposed to seeing how things exist for me as a unique individual, we can become too objective, that is, we may exclude the subjectivity of our mind and that of other minds, the whole reason for their existence and the claims that subjectivity may make.

This question may come down to the question of whether or to what extent we can transcend our subjectivity, that is, our unique existence, and even whether we should or not? Or, from the other side, whether truth can only be something objective and impersonal which no human individual has any part in the *essential* determination or development of it? At any rate, this is a question it seems each man must work out for himself.

Therefore, in this conclusion, and as an implicit assumption throughout this work, I am seeking to give an account that straddles these two modes of perception, since it simply seems to me to be the way the mind naturally works, and hence, all the ambiguity, contradiction, equivocalness, obscurity, unclarity, etc. the mind is faced with; and, on the other hand, the times of lucidity, serene knowing, of having a vision of the universe and the personal and impersonal intellectual elation and upliftment, or transcendence, of our mind that we experience and which is infinitely possible. It seems that the mind oscillates between the two

from the source of all things with which it is eternally and infinitely connected. This impulse, this will, is, again, the desire to know, or, to be self-revealed and to dwell in the contemplation of the joy of its own being. Everything in the universe is an expression of this basic metaphysical relation and drive, to be founded in a mind which cognizes its Idea, its truth, and which it only can in an enlightened mind. Everything seeks to know and be itself as perfectly as possible

To put this in other words, the world appears independent of any *particular* perceiver – always has and always will – and that which appears is always an unrestrained giving of itself in and as the appearance manifested. And something gives itself to be known and to be as freely as it can that which is giving itself. Therefore, appearance in this sense is always the impulse of something seeking to know and be itself, and to do so as spontaneously and freely as possible.

As it concerns phenomena, then, Form as appearance is the movement of the Will as impulse towards the Idea as spontaneous being and being known.

6.3 Form, Will and Idea as it Applies to the Self

As mentioned in the introduction and in the second theme, an idea is the full determination of a given thing at a given time, as much as this is possible at any rate, and, as with form, likewise, do we have both internal and external ideas. Most often such a cognition (of the Idea) exceeds our mental grasp, as this requires an intensity of consciousness that few of us know, or are really capable of, due to the level of consciousness that we are at, and if it happens to happen it can be overwhelming and frightening, as well as utterly joyous and ecstatic. Or, on the other hand, there can be such lack of quality to a certain reality that it can be utterly depressing, requiring an idea that intellectually and emotionally suffers. But in suffering is the identity of idea and being no where more *naturally* evident.

Will is ultimately the desire for or will to knowledge. By it do we come closer to fully understanding something, which is to say that, as discussed above, at the basic level of the will, the more we follow our impulses – not being restrained by them, but giving into them and their full expression – the more

will the knowledge of that which is driving us, what we experience and desire reveal itself.

But, one of these impulses is fear, and so we do not at all readily give into them, for we sense that if we did we would likely come upon things which are very unpleasant. Also, if one could sustain a life of impulse, which is easier said than done, it would most likely be a considerably longer path to their reason and purpose, in which time would run out before, or too close to, the realization of a greater good. And besides this, we possess a mind, and possess it for its own sake, it existing in its own right and not as merely a servant of the will, or something at all secondary. On the contrary, the mind is in one sense both the seed and the fruit of the will, and the two are not, to repeat, essentially different things.

What is required for our will, then, is to increase its power, to nourish and feed it so that it may grow into a conscious will. And to increase such power of the will requires certain energies, such as, most importantly, moral and emotional energies. In some way the one affords greater concentration of the will and the other greater intensity. A lot of this involves the way in which we relate ourselves to that which we are involved in, experience and relate to, and which is, furthermore, very much a matter of attention.

The will to knowledge is the immediate form of the mind. All form that is apparently separate from Will, from, that is, some moving, animate force, only appears so because they are mediations of the form of the mind, which exists immediately as our self, at least, as we exist intellectually. This is to say that our self as it exists immediately as mind is the activity of seeking knowledge, of constant conscious apprehension of things for the sake of understanding them and, again, embodying them as being. Most of the time, rather than our being being formed by conscious knowledge of something, it is being formed by our responses to things. And this is to say that the vast majority of the time the activity of our consciousness is happening subconsciously. Therefore, the way in which a form, a phenomenon, moves us and takes significance for us is determined by what we seek or need to know from it, and what we seek to know from it is the Idea that forms the relation between it and ourselves of the good and truth that such a relation provides – and providing it for both the greater good and more realized truth of the self and the object.

In essence, again, the Idea is the full determination of a given thing, or, sense or senses experienced, and, thereby, is the being of that which is sensed, experienced, related to, etc. As yet undetermined, or not fully or adequately, the Idea is always the form of one's mind yet unrealized or unfulfilled, and as ideas, which is usually the case, modes of the form seeking to fulfil the whole of the mind through fulfilling this or that part of it. The more the Idea is determined, the more does the form of one's mind as Idea become self-cognisant and self-determining and since the Self, that is no self, is the only self – all somehow part of the ultimate or absolute Self that delights and flourishes in the perfect relation and continuous perfection of an I and You – the more self-determining a self the more are other selves spontaneously determined to be their truer self, and the more self-cognisant a self, the more do other selves participate in the universal contemplation – deepening and heightening – of the Self, and, usually, by some spontaneous showing or revealing of the Self in all selves. This is to say, in other words, that the Idea is always the highest object of the Good for each mind, and by fulfilling it thus, does the form of the mind – that which all is perceived through and given light – exist in an immediate contact and alchemical interaction with the Good in all things. Or, yet again, that the mind is simply this form of the Good that everything forms a relation to, and the more active and self-realized it is – the more, again, it is Idea – the more does everything happen in accord with its Good.

As it concerns the self, then, Form is the mind which is the movement of the moral being seeking knowledge (the Will) of its highest good or truth (the Idea) – this highest good and truth the self's essential, eternal being, or Eternity itself, for who can imagine a greater good and truth than that which is the non-diminishing, ever-affirming qualitative perfection of all existence.

We have just spoken about how this formula of the movement of the self relates more to the self and its relation to other selves, but what does it more fully mean for the self as a self?

It means that the movement of a man's life is primarily determined by the form of his mind that projects the idea of his life. This idea, though, always and only happens – is played out and developed – *through* the particular, through this or that action, relationship, situation, mental, emotional and/or physical state, i.e. through this or that experience, according to the man's needs and

relative to what he is most immediately or fully conscious of, all of which is determined and contained by the form of his mind, that is, cannot transcend it, for, in other words, each need, experience, relation, awareness and so forth of the person has for its form the same form of the person's mind, but differently – as a mode of it – expressed (And lest there be worry that this terribly simplifies or homogenizes any given mind, let us remark that the form of any given mind is not necessarily, if at all, simple, but, rather, is and can be very complex.)

At the same time, this idea of the mind's form projecting its life, or life-to-be, is really an Idea determined by Eternity, that is, one it is ever-presently being determined by, though, as it were, from the side of Eternity facing man in time. Therefore, from man's existence, this Idea of Eternity is determined by the form of his mind, which is the transcendental unity of all his experience and implicit experience whose meaning is to be *possibly* determined in and as his life, and for that reason is projected, or, conceived in the world, as the idea of his life. In the Idea itself, in Eternity, all that a man's life means, that is, his immediate, present, immanent, transcendent and transcendental existence is already actually being determined by Eternity. By knowing the form and structure of one's mind, one knows one's relation to Eternity, which one is constantly existing in relation to. Form and Idea, then, for man are essentially the same, the one his possible eternal determination and the other his actual eternal determination.

The Will, accordingly, is his lived life – all his needs, desires, experiences, relations, wishes, thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and movements, and so on – in the process of determining his Idea, that is, his eternal relation to Eternity, or eternal life, of fulfilling or disclosing his mind as Eternity. And one thing that necessarily ensures that that which is determined is an eternal determination of the person, is if it is a moral one.

As this intellectually forming will of his moral being towards eternal life, or Eternity itself, is the very movement of the self, no matter what a man does or doesn't do, if, as is often the case, this remains without a significant effect of his consciousness, but, rather, is left to the purposes of Nature, then, the eternal determination of his life will be determined in the end by Nature, or, by his body. This passivity to, or subconsciousness and unconsciousness of, the form of his mind means he will have, at best, the most minimal eternal relation to Eternity, or eternal existence. On the other hand, the movement of his self can

happen actively the more his life is principally determined by his consciousness, that is, by the willed filling of the form of his mind, or, by the realization of himself as Spirit.⁵³ The latter will be the greatest possible eternal life for him.

The more a man thus consciously wills his life, the more will it be determined as Idea, that is, the more will Eternity be his lived life. For the Idea in relation to the individual can only be determined in time, and Time is nothing but the eternal Now, which is everything that a man has experienced, is experiencing and will experience, and of all that it means and is connected with, synthesized and unified by a higher intelligence, of which the mind is a part, or, the very form of, in and as the living time and very lived moment of the self. That is to say, the Idea has spatiotemporal dimension as the broadest possible perception of a mind, which, insofar as it is of a man's whole lived life, which is necessarily continuous with the rest of the universe as this very movement of it, can only be of a higher, indeed, infinite mind. Our mind is a mode of this Mind, and its form is of the same form as It, which is why as it concerns our particular life we constantly operate through, or, in light of, the form of our mind – one which, again, formally determines and is in formal possession of all that we will experience in *this* life as the transcendental synthesis of all its possible, but necessary and eternal, determinations. And due to our mind having such a form is destiny possible.

The Idea as the broadest possible perception is always the spatiotemporal existence of the intelligence; that is to say, an idea is always coextensive with the very spatial temporality of a mind that perceives and conceives it. Thus what we perceive and conceive *is* the very character of space and time. Space and time appear to be something basic, existing unto itself, forming the background or empty form of our experience, or, as in Kant, even a priori – strictly formal and empty – intuitions of the mind – something we perceive *through* but never *as* – they appear as such only because of our finite mind which must presuppose them as strictly formal; but, ultimately, they are they very same as the Mind or Intelligence itself in its self-perceptual ground

⁵³ Spirit is a more accurate word for what is really meant by Idea in the formula herein given. For, as we have said, following Hegel, it is the unity of intelligence and will. But the use of Idea is left because it concerns *more* the intellectual, or, even metaphysical apprehension or determination of Eternity, which we are for the most part describing here. Spirit would mean both the metaphysical and existential apprehension and determination of Eternity.

The Idea, then, as we have been discussing, is the very spatiotemporal existence of Eternity, which is the same as the infinite intelligence, or Mind, that forms, has given rise to and sustains by its perception the cosmos. Our self is continuous with the whole existence of the cosmos, and by Eternity, by this intelligence, this whole existence is condensed into it in and as the living time (Aeon) and very lived moment of the self.⁵⁴ Our ideas are always modes of our mind, then, seeking to determine this eternal existence of the self, and the greater the idea the greater the apprehension of this existence. And in and through the will as the activity of the mind, or the formal determination of the self, seeking to determine its eternal relation and life through the way it thinks, feels, relates, acts, situates itself and so on in response to this existence, which is really a response to its Idea, to Eternity, does the self reveal itself eternally.

The movement of the self as eternal revelation of itself can, as we remarked, be either negative or positive. To be positive means it reveals its highest good and truth, which is its highest happiness, and the difference between this and what would be the opposite of this, lies in man's knowledge of himself and the extent to which his will is his moral being. Form is the seed of his eternal happiness, and for it to grow and flourish it must be nourished and cultivated by his Will as a moral being and the knowledge of his relation to Eternity – the Idea that is his very lived life.

Lastly, to conclude by applying this formula formally to what has been discussed in this work, Form is the idea as the substance of things, namely, the formal and ideational structure of them, the Will the active force of the unity of our reason and moral being contemplating and living them, and the Idea – Eternity. In a word, the substance of things – being ideas – is the movement of the activity of the unity of reason and moral being towards Eternity.

This, I propose – hoping to have shown to a sufficient degree with what has been discussed throughout and in the conclusion – is a synthesis of the movement of reality following from the eternality of truth.

⁵⁴ See Maurice Nicoll, *Living Time and the Integration of the Life* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1976), ch. 4-6 for a discussion of the essential relation between the idea, the life of a man lived in its entirety, time and higher dimensions.

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