

5 AN ESOTERICIAN'S VIEW OF THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY

5.1 Introduction

¹The history of philosophy can be written in different ways. One can treat it as history or as philosophy. One can emphasize the various attempts made to distinguish between concepts, or account for the philosophers' different contributions to pseudo-solutions of the philosophical pseudo-problems, or concentrate on the different principles, or criticize by demonstrating the contradictions within the philosophical systems, or take the ideas out of their frames without understanding of the rest of the philosophers' life views and world views.

²The following outline is based on the description of reality contained in the esoteric mental system of the Pythagoreans (chapters 1.4–1.41) and tries to show the attempts – on the whole unsuccessful – of the philosophers to catch some glimpse of this reality. In this connection also other ideas and facts have been used, more and more of which have been placed at mankind's disposal by our elder brothers. Without what has been said in the foregoing, the following will “be in the air”. The outline is an attempt to free mankind from its dependence on the imaginative speculations of philosophy, and to teach people to think for themselves.

5.2 The Basic Problems of Philosophy

¹So-called theoretical philosophy (world view) is divided into ontology, metaphysics, cosmology, psychology, and the theory of knowledge; and so-called practical philosophy (life view) into ethics, legal, political, and social philosophy.

²In all these matters acute and profound philosophers have held dissimilar opinions. Since life view must be based on the world view, they have not been able to agree even on the “practical” problems.

³It is inevitable that opinions should differ, since the philosophic problems cannot be solved without knowledge of the facts of existence, and these facts have been lacking. It has not been possible to formulate the problems correctly, which is impossible until the right answers are known. One must have knowledge before one can pose questions rationally. Such as they have been formulated they are absurd and unsolvable pseudo-problems.

⁴The esoteric counterpart to the “ontology” (science of reality) of philosophy is the science of matter, its origin and composition (esoteric chemistry).

⁵Metaphysics seeks to explain motion (processes in nature, the process of manifestation) and is esoterically the science of energies, their origin and nature (esoteric physics). In popular parlance the term “metaphysics” has been applied to everything superphysical. The “metaphysics” of philosophy is the speculation of ignorance and must not be confused with the “superphysics” of esoterics. Immediate understanding of esoterics is possessed only by those who have the knowledge latently (remembrance anew).

⁶Cosmology is the science of the universe, the genesis of the worlds, etc. (esoteric astronomy).

⁷Psychology is the science of consciousness.

⁸The theory of knowledge, or epistemology, is the problem of the possibility of knowledge, etc. This pseudo-problem, which has been the main problem of philosophy since Locke, Hume, and Kant, will be disposed of when man acquires knowledge of reality and life and the basic facts of existence.

⁹Ethics (the conception of right) seeks to decide what is right and wrong, what is right action and right motives for action. These principles of right are ultimately determined by the individual's conception of the meaning and goal of existence as seen from his view of reality and life. The history of philosophical ethics is the study of all the different conceptions of right propounded by acuity ignorant of life.

THE HYLOZOIC PERIOD

5.3 *Pythagoras*

¹The three absolutes (matter, motion, consciousness; the sum total of existence) existing for every consciousness must be susceptible of direct, immediate, unreflective apprehension by the most elementary consciousness (also animal consciousness). They must by man's common sense be seen to be the most evident of everything, the simplest application of the law of identity: this is this. This, the basic problem of philosophy, the most evident of all problems, the philosophers have not yet been able to solve. "Reality is given to me" (Tegnér); so simple is that which is immediate and which has been made an unsolvable problem.

²Pythagoras explained that reality has three aspects which are indissolubly and inseparably united without confusion or transformation, that all three are indispensable for a correct conception of reality.

³The trinity of existence is made up of:

the matter aspect
the motion aspect (the energy aspect)
the consciousness aspect

⁴The one-sidedness of speculation as regards the theory of knowledge can be seen in the fact that the three foremost philosophical views have each been able to discover only one side of reality, but not the Pythagorean synthesis.

⁵The scientists maintain that "everything is matter". The subjectivist philosophers of the West and the East assert that "everything is consciousness". The nuclear physicists now eagerly advocate that "everything is energy". The observable physical matter dissolves before their eyes into "nothing", or energy phenomena, and they at once conclude that "matter dissolves into energy". Only the esotericians know that it dissolves into matter that is invisible to the physicists, the energy effect of which matter is enormously greater because it is of a higher molecular kind.

⁶This, the only correct conception of reality, Pythagoras called hylozoics (spiritual materialism), thereby doing away with the antithesis of spirit and matter and explaining that "spirit" is the indestructible consciousness of the atoms.

⁷Pythagoras realized that anyone who in the physical world wishes to acquire as accurate a conception of reality as possible must start from the matter aspect of existence as the inevitable basis of scientific research. This has been confirmed brilliantly. Natural science has demonstrated its superiority not only in technological respects, but also in the fact that it has presented the least number of errors. Anyone who has acquired the sense of reality of common sense in the physical world does not so easily fall a victim to the illusions of emotional imagination, the fictions of mental activity, and the ideologies of the ignorance of life as up to now.

⁸The Westerners start from the objective matter aspect; the Indians, from the subjective

consciousness aspect. The cosmos consists of a series of atomic worlds of different degrees of density. All higher worlds embrace and penetrate all lower worlds. The apprehension of reality (the logically absolute apprehension by consciousness of the aspects of reality) differs in the different worlds depending on differences in density of primordial atoms, resulting in differences in dimension, duration, material composition, motion, consciousness, and conformity to law. The Oriental makes the logical blunder of calling the apprehension of reality “illusion” because it changes with each world.

5.4 *Other Esotericians*

¹Current textbooks of the history of philosophy make philosophical thought begin at about 600 B.C.E., which is instead the period marking the definitely helpless decline of Greek culture and, with it, of the so-called mysteries. It was in order to counteract the foreseen fall that Pythagoras (in about 700 B.C.E.) founded a colony (called Krotona) outside the town of Taormina in Sicily, the population of which was one day to annihilate the colony and murder him. There are three different legends of Pythagoras. Everything told about him is false, is far from the truth, since Pythagoras was an essential self (a 46-self) and the founder of an esoteric knowledge order.

²To the members of this order was imparted, under vow of secrecy as in the original mysteries, the knowledge of reality, which ignorance will always distort and which the thirst of power will always abuse.

³The order had several degrees. In the lowest degree the knowledge was imparted in the form of myth. In the higher degrees increasingly more interpretations of the symbols were given. Some of these myths, even they distorted, have come to be known to posterity.

⁴The higher initiates were given knowledge of the existence of higher material worlds than the physical. All matter is composed of primordial atoms which Pythagoras called monads (the smallest possible parts of primordial matter and the smallest firm points for individual consciousness). These monads are indestructible, because of which there cannot be any death, only disintegration of form. Once the monads’ potential consciousness has been roused to life, their consciousness development is continued through a series of natural kingdoms in ever higher worlds, until they attain the highest divine kingdom.

⁵Writing symbolically the Pythagoreans recorded their master’s doctrine of, among other matters, the three equivalent aspects of existence. They taught that the meaning of life is the development of consciousness, that “consciousness sleeps in the stone, dreams in the plant, awakens in the animal, becomes self-consciousness in man, consciousness of unity in the fifth natural kingdom, and acquires omniscience embracing more and more in ever higher divine kingdoms”.

⁶What more they taught is partly hinted at in the works of the subsequent esoteric (so-called pre-Sokratean) philosophers.

⁷Copernicus, Galilei, and Giordano Bruno, among others, had access to copies of these Pythagorean manuscripts.

⁸It was probably inevitable that some of the esoteric manners of speech became known to the uninitiated public and became the object of imaginative speculation. Apparently, some of the initiates took part in this game of imagination, not least in order to guide discussion into the domain of mental analysis (which of course degenerated into pointless subtlety) and in so doing to develop the ability to think in the “uneducated”.

⁹It is clear from the history of philosophy that little more than the names of some of those pre-

Sokratean philosophers is known. It is not even known when they were born. Everything known about them is legend and the attempts of intelligent ignorance at interpreting symbolic poems and other fragments of writings attributed to them.

¹⁰The pre-Sokratean philosophers were all hylozoicians. Even of their alleged wisdom nothing more is left than a few meagre utterances, and that fact alone should have enjoined caution in assessing them.

¹¹Those wise men possessed knowledge of reality that the scientists of today still lack. It is typical of the traditional lack of judgement that they are put forward as examples of the “first attempts at thinking”. And this in spite of the allegation that the following is known about them:

¹²They taught that the fixed stars are suns; that the planets revolve round the sun, shine with reflected light, and have once been liquid masses that have detached themselves from the sun. They described the periods of revolution of the sun and the moon, predicted eclipses of the sun and the moon. They knew that the earth is round, gave the correct figures concerning its size. They had views on the most fundamental concepts and the most difficult problems, for example, mechanical or final causes of processes in nature.

¹³To those men posterity has attributed the most primitive ignorance; that they would have given absurd explanations of what makes things up and how everything has originated. What one can glimpse in these fragments is thoroughly symbolic and is evidence that these remains once belonged to writings intended for the “initiates”. (Real knowledge was imparted in secret knowledge orders only.) Nor were they interested in practising acuity and profundity. In that respect logic has not progressed at all during 2,500 years. Philosophers still apply the contradictory “law of opposites”, although perspective thinking’s understanding of the significance of relativization has been making itself felt latterly. They are as far from higher mental powers as were their kind a couple of thousand years ago. The esoterician – who “knows how few people are able to think and that far fewer still are able to think correctly” – smiles when reading how some of these utterances attributed to the sages have been interpreted and distorted.

¹⁴“Everything has come from water” (Thales, the first generally known hylozoician). This is a hint that the solid state of aggregation has crystallized out of the liquid state. This was an esoteric tenet that was found in the ancient Kabbalah of the Chaldeans, which the Jews later revised. It was because of this that, “according to Moses”, spirit produced everything by “hovering over the waters”.

¹⁵“Everything has come from air” (Anaximenes). The liquid state has come from the gaseous.

¹⁶“Everything has come from fire” (Herakleitos). Fire termed the etheric state of aggregation. Everything must have been ether before it could become gaseous, liquid, and solid matter. They could not go further than to “fire” without betraying secrets. The superetheric state of aggregation was later given the Latin name of “quinta essentia”.

¹⁷Anaximandros taught that cosmoses, of which there is an unlimited number (!), originate in chaos and that each cosmos develops by itself. In saying this he pronounced two of the greatest truths of esoterics. And that is called primitive speculation!

¹⁸When Xenophanes in his symbolic language explains that the universe is god and that the deity is spherical, he gives some esoteric facts. The cosmos is a sphere, or globe, in primordial matter, which is truly unlimited space. At the same time the cosmos is the cosmic collective consciousness which is the highest deity. No wonder that he sharply criticized anthropomorphism!

¹⁹Parmenides made a distinction between what is seen (phainomenon) and what is thought (noumenon), terms that later were to be misused, especially by Kant. The concept, for example,

of table as a mental concept is unchangeable once it has its definition, while its physical counterpart can change and have different forms and colours. If, from this point of view, one wishes to regard the “world of concepts” as the “truly being”, one can of course do so. Parmenides showed by acutely formulated examples how we will get involved in contradictions and arrive at the absurd if we try to comprehend reality by means of our constructed concepts. If Parmenides’ distinction between phainomenon (physical existence) and noumenon (concept) had been correctly understood, then the concept as subjective reality would never have been confused with its objective physical counterpart, and people would have seen, among other things, the difference between the ground and consequence of logic and the cause and effect of physical existence.

²⁰Zenon proved incontrovertibly that “the arrow in flight is at rest” and that “Achilleus cannot catch up with the tortoise if the latter has got the start”, and other things. Clearly, it has not yet been understood what he meant by these proofs. In reality, we are deceived by our subjective reason, since the logical proofs, which the subjectivists regard as conclusive, are in reality absurd. The underlying idea was that we cannot explain existence with the ordinary resources of reason, that exoteric knowledge, limited to physical reality, remains fictionalism.

²¹Herakleitos explained that everything is in motion, is in a state of everlasting change and fluctuation. This is the esoteric fundamental axiom concerning the motion aspect of existence. He also taught that the world develops in cycles, that all change occurs in accordance with eternal laws of nature which are the only unchangeable things in the universe. All of it esoteric!

²²Empedokles collated and systematized what up to then had been permitted to become exoteric. He also taught the concepts of attraction and selection, the idea of reincarnation, and preached against eating meat.

²³Demokritos was the first to emphasize the matter aspect especially.

²⁴Pythagoras had taught that existence is constituted by a series of interpenetrating material worlds of different degrees of density. Each world is built up out of its own atomic kind. The atoms of the lower worlds contain atoms of all the higher worlds. Thus there is a whole series of different atomic kinds.

²⁵Demokritos tried, within the limits of the permissible, to construct an exoteric theory of the nature of matter. To enable himself to do this he introduced the concepts of “void” and “falling” of atoms. In order to explain the qualities of matter he made the unfortunate mistake of dividing these into objective (shape, solidity, weight) and subjective qualities. This unhappy pseudo-solution was to haunt philosophy from then on. Demokritos also taught that the motion of the atoms is determined by “blind necessity” (ananke), that is, by mechanical causes, and also that the soul is of material nature (by implication: a material envelope for the monad).

²⁶Demokritos marks the beginning of philosophy, or exoteric speculation as we know it, and thus one is wholly justified in saying that “materialism” (actually physicalism) is as old as philosophy (subjectivism).

5.5 THE FIRST SUBJECTIVIST PERIOD

¹Cultures are built up by clans at the stages of culture and humanity. When their work is taken over by clans at lower stages, a more or less swift decline sets in. This is so not only because these individuals lack the acquired, latent experience of life, which is the prerequisite of common sense and a right instinct of life, but also because injustice, with egoistic insatiability (exploitation), inhumanity (slavery), and general corruption, asserts itself more and more. The

history of the world has been called the world's court of justice. It is an eternal example of the validity of the law of sowing and reaping.

²The secret of the superior culture of the Greeks lies in the fact that all their leading men in philosophy, science, and art were initiates of esoteric knowledge orders. The sophists (like people of today) were not merely ignorant of the meaning and goal of life, but also unable to understand.

³Even before the sophists made their appearance the mysteries together with oracles, etc. had degenerated awfully. What was being taught had become mere superficial belief and thus subject to doubt. Had it been otherwise, a phenomenon like that of the sophists would have been impossible.

⁴With the sophists began that imaginative speculation of the ignorance of life which is called philosophy. They were the first theorists of knowledge. The sophists were not initiates. They had assimilated the exoteric learning available. With their undeniable acuity they saw that this learning afforded them no knowledge of reality. Thus exoteric learning cannot have been as primitive as the historians of philosophy will have it. Like Locke in a later subjectivist period, they thought that one proceeded in the wrong way, that instead of trying to explore the material external world one ought to begin by exploring reason's possibility of knowledge.

⁵Protagoras, the most important of the sophists, considered that "man is the measure of all things". Knowledge is a relationship between an apprehending subject and an apprehended object. The quality of the object depends on the apprehending subject (Kant). To this subjectivism individualism was added. Objects appear different to different individuals and they are always as they appear to the individual. The whole of existence is the individual's personal apprehension. We cannot know whether there is a reality independent of this apprehension (Hume).

⁶These statements already reflect the so-called problem of reality of the theory of knowledge, that pseudo-problem of philosophical subjectivism which has not yet been seen through. If ontology (the science of the matter aspect of existence) and metaphysics (the science of the motion aspect of existence) together with psychology (the science of the consciousness aspect) cannot provide the necessary facts about reality, then no theory of knowledge will help either. At the most it will be unsuccessful attempts to explain away that reality which is beyond the reach of the normal individual. Esoterics maintains that consciousness alone, without instruments or aids, can explore the entire matter aspect, that higher worlds can be studied by organs of apprehension as yet undeveloped in the normal individual, that all matter has consciousness and that this consciousness – when it has become self-active – can explore its own matter. It asserts that everything is above all what it "appears" to be, but at the same time always something totally different and infinitely more, "the great unexplored". This logical absolute (the "this is this" of the law of identity), different in different worlds, the subjectivists have never understood.

⁷The sages wanted to direct attention to the many problems of the physical world, since this world is the only world of which the normal individual can acquire knowledge. He must first find his bearings in this world and solve the problems of physical life before he acquires the requisite capacity for tackling the incomparably more difficult problems of higher worlds.

⁸It is easy to understand how ignorance has come to a subjectivist conception of existence. Our senses do occasionally deceive us, since our organism and brain do not always function perfectly. If then the sages tell us that material objects are made of atoms which we cannot see, then the conclusion presents itself almost immediately that these objects must be something else than what they appear to be. If that idea is pursued further, everything will be just appearance in the end.

And if that is being repeated often enough, one will finally be unable to see that the external world must be reality.

⁹Unlike the subjectivists the objectivists maintain that consciousness can be both subjective (reason) and objective (sense), that when observing external, material reality consciousness is directly and immediately determined by this reality, that only objective facts about objective material reality, ascertained by objective consciousness, can provide knowledge of the external world. Without objective consciousness we lose ourselves in subjectivity. This is especially manifest to those who in their higher envelopes in higher worlds are able to ascertain that same objectivity.

¹⁰The sophists were the “philosophers of enlightenment” of ancient Greece. They rejected everything traditionally taught, everything in world view and life view. They analysed everything conceivable, especially the conception of reality, religion, conceptions of right, and forms of government. It happened as it must when the normal individual with his tremendously limited resources ventures to solve the enigma of existence: abortive guesswork about everything that cannot be directly ascertained in physical reality. Restless reflection begins its work of destruction, dissolves all the concepts borrowed from esoterics, not suspecting that they stand for “unknown” reality. One does not understand that these auxiliary concepts serve an important purpose. They make a further mental working-up possible, until once we shall have acquired full knowledge of the corresponding realities and shall be able to replace the auxiliary concepts with more exact ones.

¹¹According to esoterics, the visible world constitutes about one per cent of the matter aspect of the total reality. The normal individual may be the greatest mental genius, but he is profoundly ignorant about existence. He can know nothing about the meaning and goal of life, about what in this respect is true and false, right and wrong. He is in no position to form a truly rational world view and life view for himself.

¹²Even though the early sophists were serious researchers, the whole of it soon degenerated. As all conceptions had their so-called justification, everybody was to let the light of his genius shine in the gathering darkness of increasing emotional and mental chaos. The most varied opinions found expression, eventually forming a spectrum of all self-glorious, sovereign caprices of the wise-acres, of so-called independent thinkers at the intermediate stage between deductive thinking and principle thinking. Overestimating their new ability, they imagine that they are able to think in accordance with reality, being unable to see the fictitiousness of their hypotheses.

¹³Some held the view, as later did Rousseau, that human nature is good and culture evil, that all men are born equal, and that laws have been made by those in power in order to oppress men. Others thought, as later did Nietzsche, that nature is beyond good and evil, that morality is an invention by the weak to disarm the strong, and that the only rational form of government is aristocracy.

¹⁴The sophists, being teachers of rhetoric, promised to teach, for hard cash of course, any political adventurer or so-called social reformer the art of quibble of rhetoric and legal casuistry. They developed an art of disputation, eristic, which by its tricks left any adversary without an answer. The only thing that mattered was to win in a disputation. They went so far as to end by trying to prove that black was white and making the worse cause appear the better, with the result that the word sophist (teacher of wisdom) became a word of abuse.

¹⁵Increasing politicalization of everything and democratization lowered incessantly, as they always do, the standard required of genuineness, reliability, and competence. In their place came

enterprisingness, contempt for authority, and volubility. Nothing is all right as it is. Everything old is to be rejected. Wise-acreness knows how everything should be done. Change is the same as improvement. Just pull down to get air and light and everything will build itself up again in the sterile desert. (The end of it we see in deserts and ruins.) The best way of getting a perfect cosmos is to work chaos. The best way of arousing envy is to give an exaggerated picture of how much better off others are. The best way of arousing dissatisfaction and the spirit of revolt is to promise the satisfaction of insatiable egoism. Since pretensions increase as demands are met, irresponsible demagogy has set in motion a blind force of nature that will not be stopped until national destitution is an accomplished fact, unless dictatorship puts an end to madness. But then, of course, “poverty is borne with equanimity when shared equally by all”. That there shall be no reason for envy seems to be the essential thing.

5.6 THE REACTION AGAINST SUBJECTIVISM

¹The sophists caused a general confusion of ideas by their teachings, which were devoid of principles and system. To counteract this was the endeavour of three courageous men. They saw that it all could only lead to intellectual black-out, social and economic catastrophe. But the reaction came too late to prevent devastation. Intellectual degeneration was too far advanced. The ability to understand anything truly rational was seen more and more seldom. Even the ability to comprehend diminished.

²The three great ones were Sokrates, Platon, and Aristoteles.

³Sokrates sought to find those original basic concepts of life view which were latent in him, but which he never succeeded in actualizing. He sought in vain for that system in which the concepts acquire firmness by being put in their correct contexts. In spite of creditable attempts, it was only exceptionally that he reached up to principle thinking.

⁴Platon and Aristoteles both possessed esoteric knowledge. But restricted as they were to the use of exoteric facts and views, they failed in their endeavours, since it is only by using the fundamental facts and ideas of esoterics that one can construct a truly rational and expedient system of thought in accord with reality.

5.7 Sokrates

¹The subjectivism of the sophists led (as it logically must do) to doubt about everything. Their individualism threatened to degenerate into arbitrariness and lawlessness. Their conceptual analysis destroyed all concepts of right, undermined all foundations of knowledge and activity. It almost sounds like our own times.

²To counteract this destructive influence there appeared in Athens a man of strength and will, a character of startling greatness, Sokrates, who by the power of his sterling personality and enthusiasm for his self-assumed task attracted a band of devoted disciples. The most brilliant of these, Platon (whom posterity called “the divine”), was to have a greater influence than any other philosopher, an influence that will always last. When reading his dialogues one can almost imagine one is listening to intellectual discussions of our time. The subjects with which he dealt are timeless.

³Sokrates made it his mission of life bringing order into the general confusion of ideas. He clearly saw through the pseudo-philosophy of the sophists thanks to his latent more correct conception, although he was able to actualize it only partially. Thanks to his superior dialectical ability, he was able to fight the sophists with their own weapons. His method was to demand an

explanation of what was meant by a certain concept: for example, virtue, justice, courage, wisdom, etc. Most people are then prepared to let the wisdom of their ignorance stream forth. The answers were just the usual phrases, slogans that people have picked up and believed they have comprehended. By clever questioning Sokrates soon made them see that they did not know what they were speaking about. Then the time had come for Sokrates to wonder whether perhaps “this explanation” would do. Those who were sharp enough would see the irony.

⁴Anyone who has made it his mission to teach people to see that their fancied wisdom is worthless must take the risk of not escaping unhurt from that venture. The more “humane” method of killing used nowadays is by silence. All the unrest and annoyance that the sophists had caused the conservative people was turned against Sokrates. They did not want to understand more of all his life-work than what they could turn into accusing him of seducing the young, propagating teachings subversive of the state, and himself being the most dangerous of all the sophists. This man, who had been trying to free people from their meaningless habitual thinking and unintelligent parroting, was accused of impiety and condemned to death by the citizens’ assembly. Another drastic example of the truth of the Vatican’s slogan, “the voice of the people is the voice of god”.

⁵Material reality did not interest Sokrates. He considered that we know far too little to be able to form a correct world view. Similarly, he was convinced that the life view taught by the great sages was true wisdom of life. But, as he was not an initiate and thus had not had occasion to remember his old knowledge anew, he was exclusively restricted to his life-instinct’s approval of what the ancients had said. Nor did he understand that life view is always based on world view, that norms for action are based on certain conditions, that one must have some knowledge of how things are in order to be able to say how they ought to be.

⁶Sokrates did not make the necessary distinction between comprehension and understanding. Those who understand have the knowledge latently from previous incarnations. They have already worked it up and, partially at least, have been able to put it into practice. Man can realize what he understands but not what he can only comprehend and what is above his level of development. Sokrates was able to realize what he gained knowledge of and he thought that others could understand and realize that which he with difficulty could force them to comprehend. As soon as his mental vibrations had volatilized from the brains of his audience, what he had said to them was as incomprehensible as before and, of course, impossible to realize.

⁷The maxims of the ancients he made his own. For example, he thought that it is better to suffer injustice than to cause injustice; that we should abstain from unjust action, not out of fear, but out of duty; that he who lives as the sages have taught us and sees the will of the gods in everything and is content with what life has to give, will find happiness and will be freed from fear and anxiety.

⁸Sokrates tried to define the concepts. There is still great uncertainty about them. There are objective and subjective, concrete and abstract concepts. A special kind of solely subjective concepts are those imaginative constructions of ignorance which are called illusions and fictions. These figments of the imagination do not have any foundation in reality.

⁹Experience of a material object (say, a table) is objective. As a memory picture this experience becomes a concrete representation through visualization of the object. The abstract concept of table includes all kinds of tables. Therefore, in defining the concept of table, imagination should evoke from memory tables of all shapes and colours. Furniture is a more abstract concept than table: it contains tables, chairs, cupboards, beds, etc. Still more abstract a concept is household

goods, as it includes still more kinds of objects. The more abstract a concept is, the richer its content and the larger its extent. To ordinary individuals, the larger the extent, the smaller is the content of visualization, since the normal individual's power of visualization is extremely limited and ignorance of what is included in the concepts is great. On this depends the mistake of accepted logic as to content and extent, concrete and abstract.

¹⁰Defining the objective concepts of the matter aspect is nevertheless relatively easy, since there is objectivity, that which is ascertainable by all. It is immensely more difficult to define all the concepts belonging to the subjective consciousness aspect. In most cases one will be restricted to generally accepted, to some extent arbitrary, conventional concepts. Almost always one will be involved in subjective valuations.

¹¹If action is to be judged correctly, it must be possible to isolate the motive. The actual causes may lie back in previous lives. By ascertaining which actions sooner or later have good or bad consequences in a life sense, one may hope eventually to acquire knowledge of the laws of life and discover the significance of the qualities of individual beings out of which actions arise.

¹²History records an enormous variety of valuations and conceptions. At mankind's present stage of development, not even the valuations of the largest collectives have any authority but can be just as arbitrary as the individual ones.

¹³Culture in the esoteric sense is achieved only through expedient, conscious or unconscious, application of the laws of life. In order to be discovered they must first have been applied. It was this unconscious striving that Sokrates endeavoured to make conscious.

¹⁴As he did not know the nature of existence, its meaning and purpose, Sokrates lacked the personal certainty that he was acting right in matters that did not conflict with the teaching of the sages. In individual cases he depended on the "voice", his daimonion (Augoeides), which he thus assumed to be an inspiration from without. He was ignorant of the esoterism that "angels whisper but lies", that man should only follow that which comes from his own common sense. Mistakes are the rule at mankind's present stage of development, but it is through mistakes that we learn. If we make a mistake when following the advice of others against our own conviction, it is an error of consequence and not the best way to learn either.

5.8 *Platon*

¹During many years Platon (Latinized: Plato) was in a position to listen to Sokrates' talks with the sophists and others interested in the problems of life. Many of Platon's dialogues would seem to be reports of such discussions. It is obvious that he improved in a superior way on what he had heard. Unprepared discussions are not as logical as these. No talks are recorded that exactly. Xenophon's "Recollections of Sokrates" gives a better picture of how it used to be. Sokrates became the anonymous mouthpiece that Platon needed in order to avoid persecution. Thanks to Platon, the execution of Sokrates was recognized as a judicial murder. Thus Sokrates was henceforth allowed to proclaim his views freely. By consistently putting his views into Sokrates' mouth Platon avoided the risk of attracting too much attention to himself. The democratic equality complex and envy would not tolerate anyone living raising himself above the crowd. ("If anyone is great among us, let him be great somewhere else.") What spared Perikles (the only one of the "great ones" of Athens) the fate of being overthrown was that he knew how to flatter the mob, begging forgiveness for his existence and, with tears in his eyes, beseeching them to excuse his genius. With his exception, all the great men of Athens were persecuted, ostracized, or murdered.

²Nobody has been better able than Platon to debate problems, to analyse the illusions and fictions of the sophists. By often withholding the solution of the problems, making the discussion the answer to the question, leaving it to the reader to draw his own conclusions, he knew how to keep interest alive and like no one else to develop the ability to think. It is undeniably an art to be able, like Platon, to give the uninitiated even a faint vision of existence using such inadequate material and by hints to show the instinct of life in which direction to search for the truth.

³Every philosopher has in vain attempted his own interpretation of Platon. A lot of acute and profound balderdash has been wasted on what Platon ought to have meant. For those to whom the visible world is the only one existing and “spiritual reality” a figment of the imagination, he was, of course, just a fantast. He writes so simply that people believe they comprehend him. They do not know that the simplest is not only the most difficult to discover, but also the most difficult to understand for posterity – unless it is immediately self-evident – and thus is unsuspectingly passed by. Such rare authors count only on readers whom Goethe thought of when writing: “Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst” (You resemble the mind you understand). One should certainly be skeptical of the attempted interpretations of translators.

⁴Platon was an initiate not only of the Orphic Mysteries but also of the Pythagorean Order, which was moved to Athens by Pythagoras’ disciple, Kleinias.

⁵To understand Platon, especially his doctrine of ideas and remembrance anew, one must know the Pythagorean world view on which his authorship was based. What Platon wanted was to give people a hint about higher worlds, reincarnation, and consciousness development, without betraying anything of esoterics. Hence the difficulties with which he had to wrestle.

⁶The Pythagoreans taught that existence consists of interpenetrating material worlds of different degrees of density. The monads begin their consciousness development in the mineral kingdom, then continue it in the vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms, and higher kingdoms. Reversion from a higher to a lower kingdom is impossible.

⁷The evolution of the lowest four natural kingdoms goes on in the lowest three planetary worlds (more properly, “material globes”): the physical, emotional, and mental worlds.

⁸In the physical world mankind can eventually acquire knowledge of its own of this world. It can by itself obtain knowledge of higher worlds once it has acquired higher objective consciousness. Until then it has to rely on the knowledge of authority. The emotional world is the world of illusions and the lower mental world, that of fictions. In those two intermediate regions real knowledge is out of the question. Only in the higher mental world, or the world of ideas, can the individual acquire knowledge of reality and life, of the meaning and goal of existence, because it is only in that world that the ideas (mental atoms and forms of these), which represent reality, can be correctly understood by the intuition.

⁹The matter of each world has its own characteristic kind of consciousness. Feelings correspond to vibrations in emotional matter, thoughts to vibrations in the matter of the mental world.

¹⁰The monads develop by acquiring the ability to perceive the vibrations in ever higher regions of their worlds and to contact ever higher worlds. The highest vegetable species can achieve contact with the emotional world and the highest animal species can contact the mental world. Man seeks to orient himself in the lower mental world. His goal is the higher mental world, the world of the intuition, the world of Platonic ideas.

¹¹The mental development of man presents five principal phases: discursive deduction from ground to consequence, principle thinking, perspective thinking, system thinking, and, finally,

intuition, or Platonic idea thinking.

¹²Knowledge as remembrance anew is a fundamental tenet of Platon's teaching. Esoterics explains this.

¹³The monad forgets nothing. Everything it has experienced is preserved in a latent state in its subconscious. In order for certain previously acquired knowledge to be revived in a new incarnation, it is necessary to renew the contact with this field of knowledge. Otherwise this knowledge remains latent. The corresponding applies to previously acquired abilities. What is not cultivated in a new life remains latent. "Gifts" depend on specialization during several lives: as a rule three for "talent" and seven for "genius" (on almost any level of development). Everything the monad has experienced in the human kingdom does not become available until the individual has acquired the intuition and is able to study in the world of ideas (but then only there) all his previous lives as a man. Many people do not have the time to regain in a new incarnation their true, latent level of development.

¹⁴Whatever we have once learned and worked up (!) we are unable to lose. Whatever we have known and been able to do is there latently. Knowledge becomes instant understanding in later lives. Qualities and abilities acquired are there as predispositions. They can be actualized quickly if need be, if the interest is there, and an opportunity for reacquisition is offered.

¹⁵Nothing is easily acquired. Countless experiences of the same kind are necessary in life after life before experiences are very slowly gathered into concepts and these can be put in their correct contexts, be worked up into insight and understanding. The monad spends millions of years in each kingdom before it has learned everything there is to learn in this kingdom, which is necessary for its further evolution.

¹⁶The ability to apprehend external objects, to learn more of the qualities of objects through their vibrations, comes as the result of a long and complicated process in kingdom after kingdom. In each higher world apprehension becomes more and more exact and penetrating. The monad comes to know everything by "identifying" itself with its vibrations.

¹⁷"Platonic ideas" cannot be understood without the following insight. The ideas of the world of ideas are objective forms as well as being subjective, and thus the ideas are faithful representations of enduring objective and subjective realities. Every intuition corresponds to a mental system of reality ideas. Lower worlds exist in the ideas of the world of ideas and thus the knowledge of these lower worlds is contained in the idea system of the intuitions. "Beholding the ideas in the world of ideas" meant experiencing the reality content, with all its relationships, of the knowledge system inherent in the causal idea.

¹⁸The world of ideas is, among many other things, the unadulterated memory of all past events in the physical, emotional, and mental worlds ever since the planet came into being. The subjective consciousness content of these ideas gives us exact knowledge of reality without possibility of mistake, fictitiousness, or deception. They also constitute our ideals, since they explain the ends and the ways of their realization. The forms in the world of ideas are the perfect forms of beauty.

¹⁹When the causal ideas of the intuition are mentalized into mental concepts, these ideas become ideals for reason, and when these ideals are emotionalized, they become dogmas for emotional thinking. But when the ideas have thus been twice scaled down, their relative validity has been made absolute and thus they have become hostile to life.

²⁰By placing the immutable, objective grounds and causes of the true, the beautiful, the good, in the world of ideas as the truly being, inaccessible to lower consciousness, Platon sought to

deprive the sophists of their sovereignty and authority. Rightly “idealists” of all ages have regarded Platon as the rescuer from subjective and individual arbitrariness.

²¹The history of philosophy has fully endorsed Platon’s misgiving that Aristoteles with the exoteric system he planned would only provide the uninitiated with fresh material and new incitements to continue their idle speculation. Only the world of ideas and the mighty revelations of the intuition can afford the right solutions of the problems of philosophy.

²²Platon’s ideal republic was never intended to be realized. He knew all too well that such a community can never be constructed, can never come into being without leaders who have reached the stage of unity (the fifth natural kingdom), that ideality presupposes individuals at the stage of ideality. He was not interested in practical politics and it was very much against his will that he lent himself to experiments with it. He had lots of opportunities to study different systems and had come to the conclusion that democracy was the worst of all. Democracy placed power in the hands of an undiscerning majority that allowed itself to be led by sophists and demagogues appealing to its worst instincts in order to get power and then to keep it, being indifferent to the fact that the result could only be economic ruin, social disorder, and cultural decline.

²³Platon’s republic was a veiled criticism of the democratic ideal of equality as well as an indication in which direction the solution should be sought. The most suitable society is a class society with social tasks apportioned among the classes. Competence (knowledge, ability, readiness to work) determines to which class the individual belongs. Everyone gets the opportunity of free competition. The state fails in its object if it does not create rational conditions and justice according to everybody’s merit. It is only the incorruptibly upright, having the requisite knowledge, qualities, and abilities, who should be allowed to manage the affairs of the state, occupy positions of power, and rule others. If the state is run by corrupt elements (as it inevitable is more or less in all democratic states), corruption will spread like plague. In a state rationally governed, the distribution of work is determined by the citizens’ levels of development, their understanding of life, and general competence.

²⁴Platon’s conception of right is shown in his doctrine of uprightness, the cardinal virtues, and the law of good.

²⁵Right is done when everybody does his duty. He was thoroughly familiar with the Indian doctrine of dharma, in which the concept of duty is clear from the individual’s life task and level of development. If he is to be upright, the individual must possess the idea of uprightness. That idea is not a bloodless abstraction, but the sum total of the knowledge of the expressions of uprightness in all the relationships of life.

²⁶Platon’s cardinal virtues have caused much puzzlement and have been criticized. They represent the most desirable ability in the individual at the different stages of development: the physical “courage” of the stage of barbarism, the “self-control” of the emotional stage, the “wisdom” (right knowledge) of the mental stage, the “justice” (only possible when there is real knowledge) of the intuitional stage. Compare these with the esoteric “to dare, to will, to know, to be silent” (the ability of being silent about what one knows before those who do not understand).

²⁷When Sokrates learned what was right, he did it without hesitation or regard for the consequences to himself. When he saw what was wrong, nothing could make him act contrarily to this insight. The fact that others did not do as he did he regarded as being due to ignorance. Enlighten man and he will then do right, since it is to his own interest to act rationally and expediently. It is the same ignorance of life that has always characterized all well-meaning enthusiastic enlighteners, that is without understanding of the enormous difference between

theoretical possibilities and the educated capabilities of practical skills.

²⁸Platon took a deeper view. For those who have already acquired knowledge, understanding, and ability in previous lives and have it all latently in them, it is an easy matter. They only need to come in contact with their latent knowledge to do the right thing automatically and spontaneously. According to the law of good, man always follows the highest ideal that he really sees and understands (not merely believes or resolves), because he cannot do otherwise, because it is for him a need and a joy to do so.

²⁹That Platon made a distinction between learning and wisdom, between theoretical knowledge and latent insight and ability, appears from his tenet that the wise man is qualified to be the most skilful one in everything that he takes an interest in.

5.9 *Aristoteles*

¹Aristoteles (Latinized: Aristo'teles, anglicized: Aristotle) was the always oppositional disciple of Platon. Where Platon regarded exoteric philosophy as a pedagogic art, to Aristoteles it was above all a logical, methodical, and systematic one. He was convinced that Platon would not be able to check the unfounded speculation of the sophists. What use did the exoterists have of the world of ideas? Since they lacked intuition it must to them seem a figment of the imagination. Before they could reach the intuition of the world of ideas, they would have to develop the four different kinds of mental consciousness: deductive thinking, principle thinking, perspective thinking, and system thinking. Only initiates of the highest degree of a knowledge order were capable of that. Aristoteles thought that the only way of checking speculation was to construct a system of thought that corresponded to the normal individual's ability to comprehend. That only the esoterician has been able to understand him correctly is another matter. This system, then, was as might be expected. How skilfully it was made, however, is best seen in the fact that it has occupied philosophic thought for more than two thousand years.

²It is with concepts as with facts. They are almost useless unless put in their correct contexts. Loose ideas and facts stimulate speculation to construct contexts that will seem to give them a meaning. It is just because facts have been put in wrong contexts – the “core of truth” there is in all superstition – that the mental world is a chaos of fictions.

³The esoteric mental system had convinced Aristoteles that the only way to give people clarity is to give them a system. Mental certainty comes from deduction only. The esoteric system gives clarity and certainty, since the knowledge can be deduced from it and the result be shown to agree with reality. A perfect system comprises all the facts in their correct contexts, but such a thing was out of the question, of course. He had to be content to gather as many facts as possible and to systematize them. After Platon's death Aristoteles took over the master's disciples and set each to explore the field in which his particular bent lay. His enormous personal fortune enabled him to purchase manuscripts relating to all lines of knowledge and to employ research-workers to collect information from all over the world. The material provided by thousands of manuscripts was worked upon methodically. Thus was laid the foundation of the exoteric science of the West. The scientific terminology he created is still largely used. Most of what the historians know of earlier philosophers comes via Aristoteles. He had a habit of reporting in his own way what he did not use himself.

⁴Extensive treatises came into being covering the learning at the time in mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, meteorology, astronomy, botany, zoology, anatomy, logic, psychology, ethics, and politics.

⁵Of all this enormous encyclopaedia only few, fragmentary remains, mostly unclear, unsystematic adaptations, could be found when a couple of hundred years later it was decided to save what there still was to save.

⁶Aristoteles made no secret of his sovereignty, of his being a titan among pygmies. This was dangerous with the prevailing equality complex of democracy, which demands the levelling of everything superior. When news reached Athens that his powerful protector, King Alexander, had died, Aristoteles, in order to avoid the fury of the mob, left the city that murdered Sokrates.

⁷The following is not an exposé of Aristoteles' exoteric system, but merely an indication as to its esoteric foundations.

⁸Comprehension is the result of reflection. Understanding is immediate perception as a result of remembrance anew on completed working-up of a certain subject-matter. The simplest mind can conclude from ground to consequence, from cause to effect. To be able to conclude from consequence to ground, from effect to cause, calls for judgement. Ignorance is lack of knowledge of facts. The ability to judge is intelligence (common sense) and presupposes the ability to analyse and synthesize. Judgement requires facts, concepts, and principles. These are absolute, viewed separately. But they acquire relative significance when put into relations to others in their correct system. Concepts are necessary to comprehension. Principles are necessary to survey concepts. A principle is a generalization of clear-cut cases that seldom occur in reality. As a rule many mutually modifying principles are required for correct judgement. Good judgement can judge facts correctly, put facts in their correct contexts, distinguish between fact and fiction, between blind belief and the critical view that asks whether sufficient facts are available for an assumption to be made for the time being.

⁹Aristoteles wanted to give men a mental system. He saw that system is the way of thought to orient itself in existence. The facts of sense are largely useless until reason can fit them into their correct contexts: historical, logical, psychological, causal ones. The task of reason is not to construct fictions. All thinking is based on principles and systems. Every thinking man has made his own system, whether he knows it or not. The quality of the system shows the individual's level of development, ability to judge, and knowledge of facts. The systems of most people are fictional systems, or belief systems of emotional thinking. Everyone has his petty beliefs about almost any absurdity, because most people have no possibility of getting real knowledge of anything but finally established facts of the visible world. They do not have access to the intuitional world of ideas.

¹⁰The understanding of life requires a fund of systematized experiences. This is the foundation that is acquired during the long process of mental development at the stage of barbarism. The greater abundance of ordered principles entails mental superiority in spheres of knowledge separately as well as in respect of life as a whole.

¹¹The prerequisite of comprehension is the possession of something more general than what one is trying to apprehend logically, for comprehension goes from the general to the particular, from the still more general, the mentally higher, to the mentally lower. The most general of all is the ideas of intuition which contain all facts. It is the principles that give the system its exactness.

¹²Platon had pointed out the necessity of unambiguous concepts. Aristoteles realized that for concepts (facts) to have their correct meanings, they must be put in their correct contexts, and that it is this ever wider interrelated whole that finally proves to be the system, or the highest mental conception. The intuitional ideas are higher still and even more comprehensive. But long before man's ability of conception can reach the ideas of the world of ideas, it must master the

higher mental abilities. Men are not yet able to think intuitively, that is, without concepts, principles, and systems. To be able to discover the more general, we must possess a knowledge of more facts than can be explained by the less general. As Goethe said in his *Faust*, we can have the parts in our hand (the necessary facts), yet still lack the unifying bond. It is the discovery of the more general that makes a widened understanding possible.

¹³Every Platonic idea, or intuition, if concretized, becomes a complete system of its own, comprising all the concepts and facts which are part of its subject-matter.

¹⁴Exoteric mental systems are ordered surveys of facts compiled methodically. They are practically never correct, since they can never be complete, but are changed with every new fact added. Their significance for science is in their facilitating orientation in and assimilation of what has already been explored. Unless they can be gradually replaced with continually more complete systems, however, they become obstacles to thought and research. Aristoteles' attempt at a system became such an obstacle since ignorance made it absolute.

¹⁵What is most characteristic of the logical view attributed to Aristoteles is its quite abortive attempt to separate form and content in subjective as well as in objective respect.

¹⁶This led to the formulation of the so-called third law of thought, which is no law of thought. Thought was thereby formalized. The more abstract a concept is, the larger its extent and the more limited its content. By trying to construct a scheme of more and more abstract concepts they hoped to arrive at the highest abstractions, the categories, and thus at "absolute knowledge".

¹⁷There is a core of truth in all this. The logician soon sees that clarity cannot be achieved without unity and system. The mistake was in trying to construct a system out of concepts without facts. This logical superstition was to dominate scholasticism and thought well into the 19th century, until science with its facts provided a knowledge of reality and thus refuted this pseudo-knowledge.

¹⁸When the individual, ignorant of reality, begins speculating, he is dealing with empty concepts. He will put into them no facts, since he does not have any, but an arbitrary content. This is how fictions arise. The entire history of philosophy is one of attempts at replacing old fictions with new fictions. Speculation without facts is fictionalism. Only research can give us facts. When research ceased in antiquity and people thought they could find knowledge epitomized in philosophy without experience of reality, this had to result in superstition. The explanations that were given by the by were never tested in material reality.

¹⁹The distinction between form and content in objective respect was to be as misleading.

²⁰Individual objects were thought to be products of form and content. Matter was the potentiality, possibility of reality. Just as Platon held that ideas were also forces acting with finality, so Aristoteles made "form" provide the same service. The "possibility of reality" inherent in form was realized through different stages of development. In this continuous process the lower was always matter in relation to the higher, its formative principle. The highest form was all-embracing reason, the source of power of everything, the deity.

²¹Obviously, such a division provides endless possibilities of fantastic speculations. These were exploited, with the result that thought was ensnared in a hopeless labyrinth. The doctrines of the deity as the highest form of matter and of the ability of matter (the atoms) to attain the highest divine stage have proved to be well-masked esoterisms, as is true of the doctrine that higher matter relates to lower matter as energy to matter.

²²In teaching the continuity of matter and denying the existence of absolute vacuum, Aristoteles enounced two esoteric facts.

²³Aristoteles wrestled all the time with the same difficulties as Platon: making an exoteric system out of the esoteric knowledge system. But only esoteric facts make a reality system possible. He did achieve his aim, however, of putting an end to the semantics of the sophists. It is only in our times, after a couple of thousand years and the overall fiasco of philosophy, that the principle of subjective arbitrariness has been proclaimed anew.

²⁴Platon's system can be understood by those who were once initiates of an esoteric knowledge order and have the knowledge latently. They find no difficulty in identifying the causal world with Platon's world of ideas. But to the uninitiated, restricted to the ordinary way of ignorance, the inductive way, Aristoteles' system was the only realistic one.

²⁵Of course, Aristoteles knew that the causal world is the world of real knowledge, that causal consciousness can ascertain all the facts required for comprehension and understanding in man's different worlds, ascertain the causes of processes. But since the causal world was inaccessible to the uninitiated, they had to be shown another way to the knowledge system. That is the inductive way of research, that of ascertaining facts and arranging them into a comprehensible system. This idea may be called ideally correct but unrealizable, since knowledge of all the facts of existence is the dreamt-of final goal of research.

²⁶Platon started from the fact that the causal world of ideas and knowledge is the final goal of human consciousness development, and called it the "truly being" as being the highest attainable stage in man's development as a man. Aristoteles disapproved of the term, suggesting that the "truly being" is homogenous primordial matter (in which countless cosmoses are formed, and are dissolved once their purpose has been realized). When Aristoteles, in his realistic manner, came to paraphrase what Platon had called the hierarchy of ideas, he tried to show how ever higher forms were possible through higher ones existing potentially in the lower. His method here has obviously never been understood by his disciples. And so instead there evolved the entire apparatus of form and matter, real and possible, which especially engrossed the schoolmen.

²⁷The terms that Aristoteles used: matter, possibility, and potentiality, form, reality, and actuality, mechanical and final causes, were never correctly understood. Add to this the fact that his successors were unable to separate logical ground and material cause, and mixed these up. It is no wonder that the so-called Aristotelian writings evinced obscurities and contradictions.

²⁸Aristoteles was familiar with the esoteric tenet that "form is matter's mode of existing" (and this in all worlds). By reality he meant what is factual, ascertainable. What could not be ascertained could of course exist as a theoretical possibility. Since only a fraction of material reality is ascertainable in the physical world, the larger remaining part of it exists only as a possibility.

²⁹Ever since reason developed enough for man to have some conception of right and wrong, man has preferred, in his self-assertion and self-importance, to learn only from painful experiences of life, not to comply with other norms than those which have resulted from social coercion. Such concepts of right emerge but slowly from stabilized order to be sanctified by tradition. In social upheavals the respect for law and right is lost once more.

³⁰An individual's independent conception of right indicates his level of development attained and understanding of life acquired.

³¹Aristoteles' view was that of all things being good within the limits set by the laws of life. Outside the law good becomes evil and virtues become vices. In his doctrine of the golden mean between the extremes (the "pairs of opposites" of esoterics) he tried to fix those norms which man must adopt if he is to become harmonious and happy. According to Buddha, this is the path

of wisdom.

³²“In all relations there can be one measure that is too much, one that is too little, and one that is right which lies midway between the other two. This cannot be calculated mathematically, but reason learns the correct measure through experience. Virtue is the middle way between two vices which are on either extreme side of virtue.” Virtue presupposes experience. Aristoteles thereby introduced the principle of relativity in so far as he showed that the middle way changes with every new situation, appears different from different points of view, and can be defined for the purpose of orientation only.

³³“The virtue of courage lies midway between the vices of cowardice and foolhardiness. The coward calls courage recklessness and the foolhardy person calls courage cowardice. Generosity is the virtue that lies between greed and extravagance. Temperance is the right middle way between love of enjoyment and asceticism, popularity between ingratiating and aloofness, meekness between slowness and wrath, etc. ad infinitum.”

³⁴We become virtuous through the habit of acting right, which presupposes experience, common sense, and ability of judgement.

5.10 PHYSICALISM

¹Along with increasing politicalization and democratization the level of Greek culture fell swiftly, of course, in just a few generations. Imaginative speculation spread more and more. Every wise-acre with platitudes for sale was bound to let the light of his genius shine. The less one comprehended of the great philosophers, the more eager one was to expound them. The itch to write became epidemic. “General education” increased as the ability of judgement decreased, and all praised their “enlightened age”. One cannot help thinking of our times.

²Tired of all that balderdash, the natural scientists of that time limited themselves, as also happened after Hegel, to the visible world and sought for a firm world view within the limits of common sense and physical reality. This view has been called philosophical or scientific materialism. More properly it ought to be called physicalism, since it took only physical matter into account, and there is a whole series of ever higher material worlds.

³Materialism is the only one of the different metaphysical views that it has been possible to confirm scientifically. The atomic theory can no longer be included in “metaphysics”, as it has been traditionally, now that research has so splendidly confirmed this fundamental esoteric fact: all material forms consist of material particles. In the history of philosophy, materialism has represented the sovereign common sense conception of reality, asserting the existence of an objectively enduring external world. The subjectivist theories that deny the existence of the external world refute themselves by always having to admit the existence of matter as soon as they are to explain natural phenomena.

⁴The physicalist erroneously assumes that the visible world is the only existing one, that organisms are the only forms of life, that the organism’s sense organs are man’s only means of apprehending the material external world.

⁵The Pythagoreans assert – as the yoga philosophers do – that it is possible for the normal individual, who is willing to undergo the requisite training, to develop organs of apprehension that will enable him to have objective consciousness of higher kinds of matter.

⁶Physicalism was represented by two philosophic lines criticizing each other, one upheld by Epikuros, the other by Chrysippos. There is little to be told about either of these leading men. Both were industrious writers, but only fragments of their writings have survived. What has

survived, however, is the gossip about their private lives, a subject that always seems to be of enormous interest. In order the more convincingly to defeat the views of their opponent, the master's disciples make him a saint and a wonder of acuity, whereas his opponent is made an indescribably miserable, ridiculous creature, whose conception of existence consequently must be totally worthless. According to the moral fictionalism prevalent, it is the emotionally sovereign "saint" who has a sort of patent on the knowledge of reality in contrast to the mental genius.

5.11 *Epikuros*

¹We have little from Epikuros himself as to what his conception of existence was. The exoterists maintain, however, that his doctrine was faithfully rendered by Lucretius, a Roman who still had access to his writings.

²Epikuros was a materialist in the more restricted sense of physicalist. To him the visible world was the only one. He based his views on Demokritos. It is, besides, through Epikuros and Lucretius that we have learned details of Demokritos' doctrine, the exoteric atomic theory. Demokritos is perhaps to be considered a materialist, but not a physicalist, for he was by no means ignorant of the existence of the matters of higher worlds.

³The following ideas are the essential ones in Epikuros' explanation of the world, the facts and hypotheses that are still characteristic of "philosophical materialism".

⁴All conception must be based on experience and investigation. Arbitrary supposition is hardly better than superstition. Knowledge is induced from the ascertainment by objective sense of the facts of reality. Repeated observations of the same kind afford certainty that the knowledge is correct. The concepts formed by subjective reason guided by the immediate apprehension of objective sense have to be tested against experience.

⁵Reality is made up of atoms and empty space. These are the bases on which to explain existence. Time is nothing by itself, merely perception of the succession of events in space. (This agrees with esoterics: time means duration, continued existence, and is merely a way of measuring processes in nature, for example, day and night, seasons, etc., which depend on the rotation of the planet and its revolution round the sun.) The number of the atoms is infinite.

⁶The formation and dissolution of matter, all processes, from the motion of the atoms to the revolution of the planets, occur in accordance with the eternal, mechanical laws of nature (ananke). The finality in nature that we can ascertain is a special case of the eternal play of atoms during endless time. The purposefulness which makes life at all enduring is due to the fact that precisely what is purposeful is the most stable and is able to communicate, or pass on, its purposefulness.

⁷The soul consists of matter and consciousness is exclusively a function of the brain. Consciousness is a special quality of organic matter and arises as a result of mechanical causes. Changes in the soul's state of consciousness are caused by motion in matter. Thinking is thus physically determined, is always the result of external influence. From this it follows that there is no possibility of self-initiated activity.

⁸To this Chrysippos could have added the following comments.

⁹The number of the atoms is not infinite, but so great as to be impossible for man to calculate. The only infinite thing is endless space which consists of undifferentiated primordial matter. A cosmos is a globe in primordial matter, and there are countless such globes.

¹⁰Only primordial atoms are indestructible, not the matter formed out of them. All material forms of existence undergo continual change. Energy consists of a current of etherically

(electrically) charged atoms, “points of force”.

¹¹Matter and consciousness are aspects simultaneously identical and dissimilar. Matter affects consciousness and consciousness affects matter. In this connection we can disregard the fact that it is not actually consciousness that is the ultimate cause of motion, but the third aspect of existence, the eternally self-active dynamic energy of primordial matter.

¹²Epikuros is not able to explain the origin of consciousness, nor its unity, nor its ability to affect matter, nor the causes of processes or of self-initiated thinking.

5.12 *Chrysippos*

¹Chrysippos, the theorist of the Stoic school, was an initiated esoterician. He decided to work out an exoteric hylozoic system, which has been handed down to posterity duly distorted and ridiculed, in so far as it has not been suppressed as an ally of Stoicism.

²Physical hylozoics was thus limited to physical reality, physical matter, and the visible world. Kant is proof that this hylozoics has been misunderstood completely. Thinking himself able to judge everything, he pronounced his oft-quoted judgement displaying his actual ignorance: “hylozoism would be the death of all natural philosophy”. On the contrary, it furthers research. The assertion that it excludes a mechanical explanation of nature is erroneous. The laws of nature are fundamental.

³According to Chrysippos there are two equivalent aspects of existence: matter and consciousness. All matter has consciousness.

⁴Earth originates from water, water from air, air from fire. Everything comes from primordial fire and returns to it in an eternal cycle in accordance with imperturbable laws. Some of these are final, others purely mechanical. Everything has a purpose. Everything in the world is governed by perfect wisdom.

⁵The deity as well as the soul has a material aspect. The deity is the cosmos and the source of all purposefulness. The soul lives on for a while after death. The foolish spend this time in the nether world; the wise, on the Elysian Fields. Everywhere the knowledge of pre-existence and reincarnation (not metempsychosis) shines through.

⁶Destiny, which is the will of the deity, leads everything to the deity. Those who do not strive towards the deity of their own accord are sooner or later compelled to do so by the force of circumstances. The evil in existence is a lesser good, necessary to the continuance of the whole, and impels the individual towards the deity.

⁷Man is responsible for his actions, since he has his reason, the possibility of choice, and the knowledge of what is right. The higher a man stands, the freer he is even where destiny is concerned. The wise man alone is free, rich, and beautiful: free because he wants what his destiny wants, rich because he possesses all he wishes, beautiful because he is natural and only what is natural is beautiful. He fears nothing, because nothing can harm him. The disposition, motive is the only thing that matters. Everything else is adiaphora. Freedom from affects, not to be moved by anything, is the most desirable state, that to strive after.

5.13 GNOSTICS

¹The effect of the steepening decline in culture combined with the increasing political, social, and economic confusion (as always at the transition into a new zodiacal epoch) and clans on the barbarian levels incarnating chiefly in such times of upheaval, was that of diminishing the interest in the more serious problems of knowledge.

²The hierophants of the esoteric knowledge orders looked in vain for suitable neophytes. The Chaldean Kabbalism in Mesopotamia, the Mithras Order in Persia, Hermetics in Egypt, led a languishing life for lack of aspirants. The Pythagorean Order had to confine its interests more and more to the scientific problems of the esoteric world view. Even the old forms of religion had lost their power over people's minds.

³In this emergency the Gnostic Order was founded in Alexandria, in 300 B.C.E. It had a mission that was both theoretical and practical. Inasmuch as the life view has to rest on a firm foundation, the knowledge of reality, the founders adopted the essential elements of hermetics, emotionally accentuated, and mental hylozoics. Thereby they possessed gnosis (the knowledge of existence, its meaning and goal). The practical and the most important task of the Order was to use new, free, undogmatic forms of presentation to attract those seekers who, recognizing the inadequacy of the old forms, sought the one true religion, man's eternal yearning for the divine by whatever name he chooses to call it.

⁴This original, genuine gnostics has remained secret. Its activity lasted some six hundred years (300 years before and 300 years after the current era). The Order died out as a result of the spread of that Christianity to which it had involuntarily given rise. In the history of philosophy, the Order's last offshoot has been given the misleading name of "neo-Platonism", with Plotinos as its best known exponent. The most important of the others were Origenes, Iamblichos, and Proklos.

⁵On account of the requirements laid down for admission to the Order (the highest emotional and mental capacity), it enjoyed great respect from the beginning. To be admitted was in itself a distinction. The society spread relatively quickly and had lodges in Egypt, Arabia, Persia, and Asia Minor. The members awaited the avatar of whom it had been prophesied that he would be born on the vernal equinox entering the zodiacal constellation and zodiacal epoch of Pisces. And he came, being born in what is now the month of March, in 105 B.C. (according to accepted chronology).

⁶Jeshu's parents were of Jewish stock, well-to-do, and belonged to the highest social stratum. Mary had been invited to give birth to the new avatar and, as both she and Joseph were gnosticians, they knew what this meant. At the age of twelve Jeshu chose to join the Jewish Essene Order, which, although secret, was not one instituted by the planetary hierarchy. Jeshu was perfectly aware of the risk to which he was thereby exposing himself. Shunned by all and hated in secret because of his matchless freedom from human faults, he left the Order at the age of nineteen and undertook journeys to India via Egypt, returning to Palestine in the year 76 before our era.

⁷There he gathered around him a group of disciples belonging to all the esoteric knowledge orders and imparted to them a mass of new esoteric facts about the processes of manifestation, the involution of the monads, etc. A great number of symbols were also by him given a new interpretation. One of these (unknown to other initiates) was that of the three crosses which were set up on the gnosticians' "altar". The middle cross represented the saviour of mankind (the planetary government), the two others: the penitent thief (the planetary hierarchy) and the unrepentant one (mankind).

⁸This work was soon interrupted, however. Accused by the Essenes of revealing secrets, the punishment for which was death, he was stoned, on the orders of the Supreme Council, by a stirred-up mob, in the year 72 before our era.

⁹In order to preserve the memory of the matchless (a word nowadays misused) teacher, a Jewish gnostic decided to depict a so-called perfect human life, exhorting people to imitation

and causing reflection by its harrowing tragedy. The idea existed before, in an ancient Egyptian symbolic tale of human life. Into this he ingeniously worked gnostic symbols and sayings, well-known episodes from the master's life and what he had been able to gather together of his parables, etc. This first draft was then worked upon individually by some fifty gnosticians of Alexandria.

¹⁰Inevitably, in this process gnostic sayings were changed in form and thus gained another import. One example of this is the statement: "No one will come to the father except through me." This was a reinterpretation of the esoteric fact that before the monad can attain the divine kingdom (the father = the monad's envelope in world 43) it has to acquire envelopes in the intermediate worlds (the son = the envelope in world 46).

¹¹Innumerable copies of these fifty legends were eventually made and distributed. A religious mass movement came into being, taking its name from its central figure, Christos, the son of god. This almost social-revolutionary movement spread throughout the Roman Empire despite all efforts of the authorities to stifle it. Finally, the only way out was to guide this revolution into suitable channels and turn it into a state religion.

¹²On the orders of Emperor Constantine, Father of the Church Eusebios prepared the necessary literary sources of the New Testament we know. The way he did this will be clear from the fact that in the esoteric history he is named the world's greatest literary faker. It is desirable that a 46-self should go through the Gospels verse by verse, specifying the origins: said by Christos, said by Jeshu, current gnostic saying, the Gospel author's own formulations, things altered and added by Eusebios. These are the original five sources. This Testament was accepted by acclamation at a council of bishops summoned by the Emperor (Nicaea, 325 C.E). The educational level of the attending bishops can be gauged from the fact that the only ones present able to read were the Emperor and Eusebios. Perhaps the right to vote is not the infallible proof of knowledge and judgement. The democratic voting system is perhaps not altogether rational.

¹³The quasi-gnostic writings also had another effect, however. Many who read them believed that the strange learning they then acquired made them ripe for entrance into the Gnostic Order. To most people's disappointment, however, and to many people's indignation, it proved that few were chosen of all those who thought they were called.

¹⁴However, those who were rejected found a way out. If the arrogant gnostic doctors would not initiate them, they could be "spiritually initiated" and be given power "from the highest authority" to set up lodges of their own. Such lodges, to be sure, sprang up everywhere like mushrooms. It is calculated that there were over seventy quasi-gnostic sects, all frantically quarrelling as to who possessed the one truth and heaping lampoons on each other. (Do we recognize the trend?) It went so far that the true gnosticians altered the name of their doctrine to theosophy when gnosticism became a term of abuse and as such went into that collection of legends called history.

5.14 Plotinos

¹Some of Platon's disciples also became initiated Pythagoreans, but did not go high in degrees. In attempts to make up for the lack of esoteric facts, they adopted many uninterpreted symbols from other societies. It all soon degenerated into the well-known speculation on symbols. The heirs of this "quasi" called themselves Platonists. That Plotinos has been accounted one of them is due to ignorance of the great difference. Under the common heading of "neo-Platonists" the historians have brought together: members of the Pythagorean and Gnostic Orders, "Platonists",

and traditionalist conservers of the teachings of Platon and Aristoteles.

²Explaining the general conception of beauty, Platon once said that we had all beheld the idea of beauty in the world of ideas. That was enough to make every fantast imagine himself thoroughly at home in that world.

³Plotinos, the best known of the “neo-Platonists”, realized that if ignorance was to be prevented from spoiling everything by its speculation, at least the highest thing had to be placed out of the reach of thought. To make further fantasy impossible, the deity had to be freed of the concept of personality and all other degrading attributes. Moreover, in the world of ideas one might have believed oneself to have acquired knowledge through “beholding the hierarchic system of the ideas”, but not surmised what was still more essential, namely the unity of existence.

⁴Plotinos, who was an initiate, knew that there are higher worlds: the essential (46) world (the buddhi of the Indians) and the superessential (45) world (Sanskrit: nirvana), the worlds of the fifth natural kingdom. Our next higher world is the essential world, the world of unity. But this was not to be told. You could always make a symbolic concept of it, however, and so he made “the One” the origin of everything.

⁵From the One comes existence, as we know it, in three stages (hypostases). First comes the world of ideas. From this comes the “world of souls” (the mental and emotional worlds), and out of this, finally, the physical world.

⁶With the “neo-Platonists” appears the old symbol of “creation out of nothing”, which is beginning to turn up again in modern research. Nuclear physics is “splitting atoms” so that “nothing” remains. According to Pythagoras, the atoms of primordial matter seem to be “impenetrable, infinitesimal voids in primordial matter” and thus “nothing”. The cosmos is made up of primordial atoms and thus is “created out of nothing”.

⁷To Plotinos the whole of existence was divine, even the physical part of it as perfect as it could be. What we consider to be imperfect is merely a lower stage. Evil is a lesser good. Good becomes evil if it prevents man from acquiring something still higher good. All this is esoterics. Life is a school. We are here to have experiences and to learn from them. We learn by identifying ourselves with what to us is the unknown. We free ourselves from lower things in a never-ending process. Every ideal points beyond itself to another still higher one, which we are unable to discover before we have realized the lower ideal and cannot fully understand before we have realized the higher one.

⁸The conception of beauty, according to Plotinos, depends on a union of symmetry, harmony, and finality.

5.15 SCHOLASTICISM

¹When the clan that built the Grecian culture ceased incarnating, it was the end of that epoch. Those who incarnated during the Roman Empire worked mainly to give men a life view and a conception of right. The barbarian clans that incarnated after that lacked all the prerequisites of culture and philosophy. The results that research had achieved were to be forgotten, the knowledge that nature is governed by laws was to be lost, and superstitious belief in the arbitrariness of omnipotence was to replace the common sense natural explanation of causes for close on two thousand years.

²The Fathers of the Church had all originally been quasi-gnosticians. For some reason none but Clemens and Origenes had been initiated. Those who had been refused initiation showed by the way in which they avenged themselves that they were unripe for the doctrine of the initiates.

With touching unity they resolved that in the future there should be no reason to concern oneself with philosophy or any other “devilish delusions”. They took pains to purge their doctrine of everything rational that was still left in it. They succeeded beyond their expectations. The systematic destruction of all manuscripts was an unbelievably effective means. Augustine did all he could to separate theology from science for ever. His conception of divine love is informative: “Annihilate all resistance! Kill him who will not convert!” The Church proved ready to learn.

³The Pythagoreans distinguished between three worlds; the mental, emotional, and physical worlds. The Fathers of the Church, who had heard of this tripartite division, but had no idea of what it stood for, invented “heaven, earth, and hell”, also in connection with the Elysian Fields and Hades of the Greeks.

⁴The intellectual level is best seen in the fact that not even the bishops, with very few exceptions, could read or write. To be able to was almost regarded as sinful. At the colleges where the priests were trained all instruction was given orally. Manuscripts were very rare. They were made to memorize by constant repetition all they needed to know and to say. By applying terror tactics (the fiction of unforgivable sin as a crime against an infinite being who exacts infinite punishment, by spreading fear of death and everlasting Hell), the Church knew how to dominate people’s minds, eventually to become the supreme political and spiritual power, which made and unmade kings and emperors.

⁵Having acquired the power it desired the Church increasingly felt it necessary to care for the education of spiritual leaders. Universities were founded at which students were taught mainly theology and dog Latin, which became a compulsory “universal language”. The more its power was established, the less cause the Church had to fear criticism. Contacts with the Arabs, who had preserved the knowledge of Greek philosophy, especially that of Platon and Aristoteles as presented by the “neo-Platonists”, provided the Church with some rational ideas. It was not until long afterwards, during the Renaissance, that excavations were to reveal remnants of the literary treasures of Greece and Rome.

⁶Scholasticism can be divided into three main periods. The first period was characterized by blind belief and irrational conviction. Nietzsche, quoting the well-known saying by Tertullian, one of the Fathers of the Church, remarked satirically that it should not have been “credo quia absurdum est” (I believe because it is absurd), but “credo quia absurdus sum” (I believe because I am an idiot). The second period was characterized by “credo ut intelligam”: I believe in order to understand. That understanding was as might be expected. The third period, still characteristic of the Catholic Church, makes possible a cautious recognition of those results of scientific research which can no longer be denied.

⁷As the number of rational conceptions increased and occupied greater and greater place in theological fictionalism, reflection slowly began to grow stronger. This enhanced the ability to subject the foundations of the faith, the so-called sacred sources (the Bible, the writings of the Fathers of the Church, and the decisions of the Councils), to critical examination. One result of this criticism was that the Church found itself obliged to appoint professors of philosophy at the universities. They were given the task of employing their minds enlightened by god to combat the critical reason clouded by the devil. Eventually a rich literature came into being. Existing views were wrought into a dogmatics of theological reason and that scholastic logic which was to paralyse thought until well into the 19th century.

⁸According to Thomas Aquinas, the foremost of the Church’s philosophers, certain dogmas could be proved. Others (for example, the trinity) were beyond the comprehension of reason, but

had to be believed.

⁹The philosophy of scholasticism is largely an adaptation of the writings traditionally attributed to Aristoteles. What in these was not clear or seemed contradictory became the subject of countless acute and, of course, abortive explanations of what Aristoteles really meant.

¹⁰There was a whole spectrum of guesses about Platon's world of ideas, Platonic ideas, the relationship between Platonic ideas and physical natural forms, what Aristoteles meant by potentiality (possibility) and actuality (reality), etc. And the learned still dispute about these and pertaining pseudo-problems.

¹¹The system that Aristoteles had constructed by his inductive method was regarded by the schoolmen as a system of absolute knowledge from which knowledge could be produced by deduction. They also thought that knowledge could be obtained logically by wider and wider generalizations, or abstractions. If only one "thought correctly", one would arrive at the ultimate abstractions, or the categories, and thus at absolute knowledge. The obscurity of the whole of this labyrinth of thought later misled Kant into constructing a "pure" reason of categories, or absolute concepts.

¹²The facts of esoterics about man's different envelopes (one in each world) had reached the schoolmen, in distorted form of course, via Aristoteles, the quasi-gnosticians, and the Arabs. Thus they taught in their psychology that man consisted of three distinct souls: *anima vegetativa*, which he shared with plants and animals; *anima sensitiva*, which he shared with animals; and *anima rationalis*, which was his alone and which was regarded as immortal and divine in origin. The function of the plant-soul was to assimilate nourishment; that of the animal soul, to move, perceive, and desire; and that of the human soul, to think.

¹³The capacity of reflection grows as it is exercised, unless it is paralysed by idiotization of reason. Despite all the efforts of the Church to prevent criticism, restless reflection, once roused, began little by little to discover one absurdity after the other. At the universities they began more and more to differentiate what was true according to theology and what was true according to philosophy. How much theological truth was appreciated is best shown by the stock-phrases that were abroad at that time: "Nothing can any longer be known by reason of the theologians knowing it. The theologians base their doctrines on fables. The philosophers are the only wise men in the world."

¹⁴A reaction set in, however, which sought to stifle all such criticism. The Church, guided by the Inquisition, finally saw, as do all dictatorships, that only by suppression, the abolition of free expression of opinion, force, and, if everything else fails, by terror, can the faith be defended. It was not until the French Revolution that philosophers dared to oppose dogmatism openly. Conditions were almost as bad in Protestant as in Catholic countries. Even in the 1840s, Schopenhauer had to consult a lawyer to see whether he dared publish one of his works. Theology, like any other dictatorship with its tyranny of opinion, prescribes to people what they should think and to research what reality should look like. The Church, the enemy of freedom, began fighting for freedom when it had lost power itself. Typical!

5.16 THE BREAK WITH SCHOLASTICISM

¹There are two kinds of objective knowledge of reality: that of the world of ideas and that of natural research. Scholasticism had neither. It had nothing in common with the mental knowledge system of esoterics. It did not know more about reality than the little that was preserved in the remnants of Aristotelian natural science. The scholastic system was a dogmatic system of

ignorance, criticizing which was forbidden on pain of death. The war that emergent common sense had to wage against it was long and bitter. It was not until well into the 19th century that all the remains of scholastic thought had been swept away. So difficult to eradicate are dogmatic systems ultimately based on emotional arguments. But in the long run no dictators, no lying ideologies, no powers of suppression, can hinder the human spirit in its seeking truth and finding truth, hinder research in its never-ending, continual discovery of reality, or philosophy in its construction of new temporary systems for orientation in the results of research obtained.

²The struggle against scholasticism was so long, because the Church had the privilege to decide what should be taught at the universities and in the city schools that were gradually established. Until the 19th century education was mainly confined to theology, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and the content of the pertaining literatures. Everything was to follow the traditional style, all departures from which were considered reprehensible.

³The break began with the discovery of classical literature during the Renaissance. Cusanus and Bruno, Galilei and Copernicus were able to stand out as breakers of new ground because all four had gained possession of Pythagorean manuscripts dealing with astronomy, physics, and other matters. In these writings they learned about the heliocentric solar system, the cosmos as being filled with solar systems, etc. The history of science has preserved the names of some of the pioneers of research and free thought. It often forgets the millions of martyrs to the truth.

⁴New discoveries were now slowly made step by step in most branches of natural science. In metaphysics Bacon, Hobbes, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and others tried to break the sovereign power of scholasticism and to put something more rational in its stead. Their efforts, however, amounted to little more than fumbling attempts to interpret what of late had been discovered of the teachings of the ancients.

⁵Usually it was an intuitional idea that prompted the thinkers to build a system. Those who, freed from the universal fictionalism, devote themselves to attempting to comprehend reality, can experience some intuition concretized into a mental vision. This is so powerful an experience that few can evade its power, but have to devote a life of self-denial to forming the idea into a system with the sparse material otherwise available. As a rule it is, therefore, only the original idea that survives when the outwork has later collapsed. In this way one esoteric idea after the other is inoculated, and thus it gradually becomes possible to prepare for an understanding of the esoteric system. In default of facts, these thinkers take recourse to many arguments which those brought up in scholasticism accepted as proofs, but which the children of a later age often find puzzling and incomprehensible. In order to penetrate these thinkers' attempted solutions of the philosophic pseudo-problems, one has to be familiar with the ways people looked at things in their day. It was characteristic of profundity that it saw something originally axiomatic in the patently absurd, tormenting itself to interpret this by new absurdities.

5.17 Bacon

¹Philosophy, according to Francis Bacon, is the science of existence deduced from a perfect system. This is esoteric. Until you can deduce you have not mastered the system. But from where do you get this perfect mental system?

²The thought systems constructed on the basis of ascertained and systematized facts are means of orientation in a chaos of unsystematically collected, loose facts. Such systems show how far research has advanced. Lacking sufficient facts, the system is supplemented with hypotheses and theories, more or less arbitrary assumptions and guesses.

³Beside these systems of natural science, philosophers and theologians construct their systems, quite different ones. The scientific systems collapse when new facts are ascertained, which cannot be fitted into them. The philosophical systems are demolished when subjected to the battering-ram of critical analysis. The theological dogmatic systems must not be criticized, only admired.

⁴Bacon, enjoying the protection of Queen Elizabeth, was able to attack the scholastic system, which he called “Aristoteles”. It was a violent, destructive attack on everything that had gone before, even the modest, new groping attempts. Only natural research, ascertainment of facts, description of realities, and the fitting of facts into their correct contexts, provided knowledge of objective reality. The natural scientists were to limit themselves exclusively to the causal laws of nature and to disregard the final ones. The prevailing dogmatic system of ignorance had to be abolished, because it had been allowed to mislead mankind for too long.

⁵Bacon has been blamed for not putting forward the knowledge system that he alleged he possessed. He has been condemned for many other things as well. When the history of esoterics can one day be publicized, the esoteric axiom that what we know about the great ones is the legend about them will be proved correct.

⁶Bacon was the head of the Order of the Rosicrucians and the system at which he hinted he taught to those whom he initiated into that Order. In our times a number of Rosicrucian sects have come into being which falsely claim to teach the genuine doctrine of the Rosicrucians, which has never come into the hands of the uninitiated, nor will be permitted to be publicized for a long time yet, because it contains facts about as yet undiscovered forces of nature which mankind would inevitably misuse to exterminate life on our earth.

⁷As regards that part of the esoteric system which has now been permitted to become exoteric, it should be pointed out that the hopelessly naïve question: “how can they know that?” is of course not answered, since it is not relevant. The esoterician is content to ask the critics to refute the system, a thing which they ought to find simple: to point out its false starting-points, its logical untenability, its inherent contradictions, absurd consequences, etc. There is no other kind of refutation. Anyone who dismisses it all as just a matter of belief (the usual kind of “refutation”) has never examined it logically. The esoteric mental system can never be anything but a working hypothesis where most people are concerned. As such it will, one day, be recognized as the only truly rational one.

⁸It is only in the rational mental system that one will find agreement between “being and thinking”, between reason’s mental construction and reality. This mental system can be obtained in two ways: by induction or by deduction. Ignorance must go the slow way of induction and analysis, ascertaining facts and synthesizing them. The esoterician goes the quick and infallible way of deduction from the idea system.

⁹Bacon wanted to replace the Aristotelian system with the atomic theory of Demokritos.

¹⁰The few symbolic hints that Bacon made were quite sufficient to stamp him as a superstitious charlatan in the eyes of posterity.

¹¹What ignorance does not understand its authorities call humbug. Before the idea system can be publicized, its fundamental ideas must have been inoculated one by one so that they can be recognized when the time comes for the whole system to be put forward. In fact, it has been publicized too early. The entrance examinations of an esoteric order were designed to ascertain what was latent in the neophyte and which degree he would be able to attain. Because ignorance either rejects or distorts everything it does not understand, apart from the fact that egoism abuses

the esoteric knowledge of otherwise unknown forces of nature.

¹²Bacon never had an opportunity to continue his pioneering philosophic work and was exoterically only able to demonstrate the usefulness of the inductive method of research. His criticism of the scholastic method, however, penetrated so deeply that people have still not yet seen that the deductive method is superior for instruction in schools. At school, young people are to be oriented in a universe unknown to them, not to be sent out to explore it for themselves. In such an orientation you cannot proceed inductively, not if you wish to produce order, method, and clarity in young people's minds. Fear of dogmatism has misled those who have not seen that cocksureness is a question of "temperament" no matter what method is employed.

¹³Induction is a method for research-workers who are already orientated and have formed their own systems, even though unconsciously. Otherwise all ascertainment would be at random and incoherent. Loose facts without a system are just misleading. The deductive method makes instruction much more interesting and easier to grasp, since comprehension goes from the universals to particulars. The deductive method, without any formalizing conclusions or dogmatism, is the best lesson in systematic thinking. Why at school was one made to learn all those unessential things as, for example, the teeth of carnivores, but nothing about biological evolution? That would have given a meaning to biology. All too many people with latent understanding lose interest in study at school.

¹⁴Bacon restored man's confidence in common sense and taught him to see the necessity of research, to see that there is a difference between logical conclusion, which the most simple mind can learn, and the ability to judge, which presupposes insight and understanding; that the former is a technical procedure whereas the latter requires knowledge of facts; that the judgements of public opinion are not real judgements; that most people judge everything from their own limited conception and in so doing become the victims of their own idiosyncrasies; that learning largely consists in knowing dogmas and other guesswork; that the philosophers have not grasped the philosophic problems but have only thought they have.

5.18 Descartes

¹For all its absurdity scholasticism suffered mankind to keep its objective apprehension of the existence of the external world.

²The two problems that mainly interested the philosophers when natural research began again with Galilei concerned the nature of matter and the relationship between consciousness and matter, especially that between body and soul. Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz invented different explanations. Hobbes stuck to Epikuros.

³Descartes was to begin his philosophic speculation by doubting everything and came to the conclusion that he could doubt everything except that he thought, and since he thought, he did exist. Skepticism cannot be refuted by that phrase. Nor would the skeptic accept the sophism that reality must exist, since otherwise the deity would be a deceiver who fooled us into believing that it did exist. His proof of god's existence is equally clever. It goes something like this: If we have an especially fine fiction, then it is correct; otherwise we should not have it.

⁴Descartes was a subjectivist. According to subjectivism, man's perception of objective material objects, or of a world outside himself, is purely subjective and not determined by either objects or the external world. Every conceivable attempt has been made to make people believe that they do not see what they see. For example, it has been asserted that objects may not be there at all, that they may be there but that we cannot prove or explain it, that objects perhaps are

different from our perception of them, that they are only images in our consciousness. This obsession began with Descartes. Hume, Kant, and Fichte were particularly inventive in their attempts to logically prove the correctness of the subjectivist doubt of the existence of an objective external world. Fortunately, it has been possible to prove all such attempts absurd. The common sense conception has triumphed, as will be explained further on. Objective consciousness is necessary to perceive the external world. What we cannot perceive objectively we cannot know anything about. Thus, superphysical objective consciousness is required to perceive superphysical objective reality.

⁵Descartes took the term substance from the schoolmen. They had come to know of the concepts of spirit and matter of the Persian religion. Spirit represented light and good, matter darkness and evil. Thus “matter” was banned from speculation. In its place the very vague term “substance” was used, meaning something that could not be explained, something that was assumed to lie behind the qualities of things. By using the term “substance” instead of “matter”, Descartes avoided the risk of being accused an ally of the powers of darkness.

⁶Everything consists of substance, being that which is independent of everything else. God is “absolute substance”. Man is relative, which means that he consists of two substances: body, which is of material substance; and soul, which is of immaterial substance.

⁷In fact, these are just new names for Chrysippos’ concepts of the body as visible and the soul as, to most people, invisible matter. The fiction of immaterial substance was definitely a change for the worse, since it implies a contradiction. The word “substance” is just another word for matter.

⁸Since substance, in contrast to matter, was not supposed to consist of atoms, he had to find ways of paraphrasing it. He made body consist of extension and soul of thought. As a result, the objective concepts were made subjective. By similar tricks all objective concepts were subjectivized, until everything had become subjective.

⁹The the relationship between body and soul had to be explained. This was a pseudo-problem that caused endless racking of brains and gave rise to the most fantastic excesses. The interaction of body and soul, according to Descartes, was brought about through special vital spirits. Others considered that the deity intervened in each individual case, arranging things to everyone’s satisfaction. And some guessed that this perpetual miracle had been fixed by god once and for all.

5.19 *Hobbes*

¹Hobbes started from scholasticism, but adopted for his philosophy lines of thought from the sophists and physicalists. The following sayings of his can be called esoteric:

²All external reality is material. The soul is also material, though of too fine a kind to be observable. All motion presupposes matter. The manifestations of the soul are, apart from subjective sensations, also movements in matter. Esoterics agrees that thought associations in the brain correspond to physiological functions of the brain cells, but it also maintains that brain substance is not sufficient in itself. Like all other main kinds of consciousness, mental consciousness corresponds to a kind of matter of its own.

³Hobbes is expressing an esoteric axiom when saying that science consists in deducing effects from causes and causes from effects. In spite of his otherwise very vague physicalism without an atomic theory, Hobbes helped by these definitions to establish the physicalist world view in England.

⁴It is obvious that the physicalists’ conception is immensely superior to all other philosophical

theories. They can explore objectively at least one world, the physical world. In so doing they keep their common sense. They do not deny the existence of the external world. Whatever conflicts with common sense, that is to say, the ascertainment of facts by sense, cannot agree with reality. This, too, is an esoteric axiom. Common sense sticks to objective reality.

⁵Epikuros' primitive atomic theory remained the predominant one in physicalist circles. After electricity was discovered, the movements of the atoms were explained as being caused by electromagnetic forces. This theory was not abandoned until nuclear physics in the 20th century began its so-called splitting of atoms. These experiments refuted the dogma of the "indestructibility of matter". According to esoterics, only primordial atoms are indestructible. All composite matter is dissolvable. Nuclear physics, however, attempting to explore the structure of matter, has not reached the physical atom. Long before the scientists will discover the physical atom, matter has become invisible even under the most powerful microscopes. Matter seems to "dissolve into nothing". This has of course given rise to the assumption that "matter dissolves into energy". There is no energy that is free of matter. Energy is matter, currents of "points of force". The higher the kind of matter to which a molecule belongs, the less is its content of matter and the greater its energetical effect. Some time, when it will be possible to split the physical atom, a new main kind of matter will be obtained belonging to the emotional world, which is inaccessible to most people.

5.20 Spinoza

¹Spinoza started from Descartes. He took from him the terms substance, extension, and thought. But he improved on the theory by making one single substance out of two. Instead, this substance was given two basic qualities: extension and thought (or body and soul: matter and consciousness). He defined substance as "that which exists in itself and is perceived by itself". God or substance or nature is both reason and law of nature, both formative principle and mechanical necessity. In god we live, move, and have our being. Good is positive, evil is negative.

²It should be added here that in esoterics the word "soul" has a dual significance: it means consciousness as a quality of all matter as well as a certain kind of material envelope for the monad.

³Whether, like Descartes, one calls matter and consciousness two different substances, or, like Spinoza, regards them as one substance having two attributes, matter and consciousness remain two different principles, two different aspects. The two different aspects cannot be made identical or parallel. "Monism" obtained in that way is just a play on words. Neither matter nor consciousness can be derived from one another. And what cannot be explained by something else is itself original and its own ground and cause. Consciousness is as absolute as matter.

⁴To Spinoza, matter and consciousness were different sides of the same reality. Thereby he did away with the pseudo-problem of any special interaction between body and soul.

⁵Psycho-physical parallelism deprives both matter and consciousness of all independence. Nor can it explain motion (force, energy, proper motion, will). Consciousness without motion is passive. It is ever apparent that none of the three aspects of reality can be omitted or explained away without the result being vague, contradictory, misleading.

⁶Another problem that the philosophers have vainly tried to solve is that of the relation between freedom and necessity, between freedom and law. Spinoza got as near to the solution as speculation can get. Order determined by law reigns in external objective reality as well as in

internal subjective reality. Everything that happens does so in accordance with the pertaining laws. Man is unfree in so far as his actions are always determined by motives and by the strongest motive. He can free himself by working to make any motive whatever the strongest. It has appeared, however, that most motives lie in subconscious complexes which assert themselves automatically and spontaneously.

⁷Spinoza tried in vain to solve his main problem, that of the contrariety of mechanical and final causes of processes.

5.21 *Leibniz*

¹Leibniz, being an initiate of the Rosicrucian Order, had been taught that existence has three equivalent and inseparable aspects: matter, motion, and consciousness; that the whole cosmos is composed of primordial atoms (monads); that the monads are the only indestructible things in the universe; that all material forms are dissolved when they have served their purpose; that the forms of nature make up an ascending series of ever higher kinds of life; that the monads develop (acquire the ability to apprehend ever higher kinds of vibrations in ever higher kinds of matter) once they have been awakened to consciousness by entering into and acting as envelopes of monads at higher stages of development.

²Of course, he was not allowed, nor would he have dared, to present the matter in this way to his contemporaries, who were wholly unprepared and without understanding. Thus he had to find a way of hinting at truth. The result of all the labour and acuity wasted on it was just a lot of absurdities. One cannot make esoterics comprehensible by exoteric paraphrasing and adaptation to prevalent fictions.

³Leibniz took over Descartes' fiction of immaterial substance as an essential definition of the monad. As has already been pointed out, substance cannot be immaterial, since substance cannot be anything but matter. In fact, he was in this respect influenced by his esoteric knowledge of higher kinds of matter.

⁴He contradicted himself when contesting the existence of the physical external world (Berkeley), but nevertheless maintaining that space, time, matter, and motion had relative, though not absolute reality. Without a specification of what one means by absolute and relative in each particular case, any such division is wholly arbitrary and nonsensical.

⁵Leibniz was a mathematician and became the victim of his mathematical concepts. He took the atom to be "infinitely" divisible. Since there must be a limit to material divisibility, the monad, which is indivisible, must be "immaterial". It was just a mathematical point of force. (The esoteric definition says: The primordial atom is the smallest possible firm point of primordial matter and for individual consciousness.) In taking this position Leibniz deprived himself of the possibility of explaining the existence of the external world, since even an infinite quantity of nothingness can never form the least material magnitude.

⁶His difficulty in explaining the relation between body and soul led Leibniz to adopt the baroque fiction of "predestabilized harmony". This construction unites several ideas which have no particular connection with each other: conformity to law, predestination, analogous correspondence, individual character, the unity of everything, finality, development. God has fixed once and for all the relation not only between body and soul, but also between the mutual perceptions of all monads. Bodies act as though they did not possess consciousness, and consciousness as though it did not possess a body, and both act as though they influenced one another. The monads do not require an external world or each other in order to develop, but it all goes on like a common piece

of clock-work inside the monads' minds.

⁷One is continually amazed at the immense mass of acuity and profundity that philosophers can expend in constructing one absurdity after the other. In this way pseudo-solutions of pseudo-problems are formulated with such talented persuasiveness that anyone who is not trained in philosophy is always convinced that the philosopher he has chosen to be his interpreter of reality has really found the "philosopher's stone". It is not easy for an untrained person to assert himself against the overwhelming argumentation of an acute thinker. How easily even the so-called educated fall victim to a superior mind is shown by the disciples of all the great ones. This is especially manifest when a "philosopher à la mode" appears, one epitomizing the views of his day, or expressing what most people are prepared to accept. Without knowledge of reality the philosophers will helplessly go astray by every new vagary. One ends by thinking that philosophy is not comprehension of reality, but inability to see through fictions, especially the self-constructed ones.

⁸Another thing one notices in this connection is how strikingly easy it seems to turn the most absurd fiction into an *idée fixe* just by repeating it often enough. One finds, too, that people have infinite difficulty in ridding themselves of false notions that they have once acquired. Indeed, Bacon considered that in the philosophers' schools "the adepts learn to believe". And many people have so fallen in love with their fictional system that they do not want to deal with reality. All philosophy has been subjectivist imaginative speculation in general, or one-sided consideration of the consciousness aspect only.

5.22 THE SECOND SUBJECTIVIST PERIOD

¹Bacon demolished the scholastic system for every unprejudiced, acute thinker. There were many who tried to put forward new systems. There was not much to them. Voltaire was right in exclaiming: "O metaphysics! We are now just as far advanced as in the time of the first druids." (The philosophers, instead, have regressed. In recent times they have even tried to disclaim their heritage.) Epikuros' physicalism as presented by Hobbes made itself felt more and more among natural scientists and objectivists. What else was possible?

²Only objective sense provides objective facts about external, material reality. Unless he has a higher objective consciousness, the individual is restricted to the physical world and thus there cannot be any "metaphysics" (science of superphysical reality) for him. The normal philosopher has only three possibilities: either to accept traditional theology or authoritative esoterics or continue in speculative fictionalism.

³When it appeared impossible to explore objective material reality by objective sense, the thought presented itself that subjective reason should be used in an attempt to explore the world of consciousness. And thus begins the speculation as to the theory of knowledge. Having discovered the existence of consciousness, many people are seized with a desire to investigate it, without any idea of what they have embarked on. It would be easier to swim the Atlantic. (Something for the psychologists to take into consideration.) Those who become entirely absorbed in the consciousness aspect lose contact with the matter aspect and so lose the necessary criterion of truth, which sets a limit to the excesses of imagination. Any attempt at divisions of consciousness except with the aid of matter is doomed to failure.

⁴For Locke and Hume, the English subjectivists, the main problem was how we acquire knowledge of the external world. They started from sense perceptions as being the only source of all knowledge. (Hence the division of reality into the "world of senses" = the physical world, and

the “spiritual world” = the superphysical worlds.) It will be seen, however, that if one concentrates long enough on perceptions only, one will end by seeing nothing but these, as if they were their own origin and the objective apprehension of the objects of the external world was not caused (note this!) and determined by material objects. The subjectivists end by thinking that they can apprehend the perceptions of the objects only, not the objects themselves. The so-called positivists of more recent times have pursued the idea even further, saying that, logically, external material objects consist of sense perceptions, since perceptions are the only things of which we can be conscious.

⁵The absurdity that the sense perceptions of our physical organism are the raw material of all kinds of consciousness: desires, feelings, thoughts, intuitions, manifestations of the will – is part of these fantastic fictions. For the esoterician there are other ways of apprehending material reality than through physical sense organs.

⁶Of the three subjectivists, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, only Berkeley made his subjectivism so absolute as to deny even the objective existence of the material external world. Matter did exist for Locke, though it was incompletely apprehended. Hume considered that the external world might exist, but that we could not “prove” that it did. And one could not say anything for certain about something one could not prove. Mankind’s common, universally valid experience obviously did not settle the matter.

5.23 *Locke*

¹Locke considered, and rightly, that the attempts made by previous philosophers to explain reality were unsatisfactory. He took it into his head that one ought to investigate whether our reason was in a position to solve the philosophic problems. The first thing to do was to determine the possibilities and limits of knowledge.

²This attempt was doomed to failure, as it was when the sophists made it. The notion led to new pseudo-problems. Common sense tells us that we can have knowledge only of what we have experienced and worked up. Our possibilities of acquiring knowledge appear in the results of research: correct prediction and technical application. They are also proof of the correctness of knowledge.

³According to Descartes, man’s ideas were either innate or acquired through objective sense (sense perceptions) or self-made through the working-up by subjective reason of the content of sense. Locke denied the possibility of innate ideas, contending that the child’s mind was from the beginning like a blank page. Reason obtains all knowledge from the objective experiences of sense.

⁴Inasmuch as it is through objective sense that we get to know the qualities of physical objects, common sense of course thinks that there should be no ground for denying the objects certain qualities. But, being fascinated by the idea that we get all knowledge “from our senses” and thus that everything appears to be sense perceptions, and being unable to explain certain of these sense perceptions (sounds, smells, colours), Locke resorted to the conjecture that certain qualities were subjective only and not simultaneously objective apprehensions. He realized, however, that there was an external world. We are able to make exact calculations of eclipses of the sun and moon and predict a lot of other things. All this cannot possibly be mere coincidence. The objects must exist, but presumably we cannot know more about them than what we can measure and weigh.

⁵Locke, therefore, quite arbitrarily and with fatal consequences for philosophy, set about dividing the qualities of objects into primary and secondary ones. The primary qualities he

attributed to the objects. The secondary ones he denied them. The primary or so-called quantitative qualities, which everybody could measure, weigh, and count, included form, solidity, weight, motion, number. The secondary or “qualitative” qualities included sound, colour, smell, heat, cold, etc. These qualitative qualities were thus supposed to be just subjective perceptions in us which we attributed to the objects.

⁶By denying the objects certain qualities, Locke deprived himself of his foremost argument when trying to save the existence of the external world. In his self-inflicted helplessness he found a resource in saying that it would conflict with common sense to believe that the world was not such as we apprehend it with our senses. In dividing the qualities it was this same common sense that he had doubted.

⁷Nor does esoterics admit of any innate ideas. But the monad retains in its subconscious a latent memory of what it has experienced in previous existences. When, in a new life, we come into contact with similar objective or subjective realities, we remember anew experiences we have had, especially if these have been worked up into knowledge, quality, or ability. Without a new contact the old knowledge remains latent. Our difficulty is in knowing what experiences we have had previously. To a certain extent this can be seen from the things that we immediately recognize, comprehend, understand, or find easy to master, whether it be theological, philosophic, etc. systems, or any kind of talent.

5.24 Berkeley

¹Once a start was made to deprive matter of some of its qualities, “logical consistency” required that it be deprived of all its qualities. Berkeley was the name of the logician who was also a bishop. He considered that we never perceive anything but our own perceptions. The objects with all their qualities are just a cluster of perceptions held together in the mind. Apprehensions are not objective, not copies of the objects outside us, but copies of the ideas of others. To exist is the same as to be perceived by somebody. There is no external world. The universe with its content exists in god’s consciousness only, and it is god’s thoughts that we take for objective reality.

²Just repeat a thought often enough, and it will become ineradicable in the end. Most philosophers are proof of that. It is very easy to imagine that everything is imagination.

³The subjectivists, who as a matter of fact have idiotized their common sense helplessly, have made two desperate attempts to save themselves from their self-inflicted helplessness. They must have recourse either to god’s thought or someone else’s consciousness as the cause of their own apprehension of the universe. Thus some think that as long as there is just one animal on our earth able to observe the universe, the universe exists. But when this last consciousness has also been extinguished, the subjective universe will have gone. There never was such a thing as an objective universe, you see.

⁴Such freaks are not explanations, but reason somersaulting out into fantasy. But the philosophers have thought they could explain everything by constructing fictions.

⁵Such subjectivism is often based on unconscious thinking in circles: conception is a product of the brain and the brain a product of the conception. The subjectivists have thus managed to eliminate the knowledge that the brain is objective material reality and the notion of the brain, the objective apprehension by sense. Subjectivism cannot explain how knowledge of the material world is possible.

⁶Physical etheric objective consciousness ascertains that a physical object, say a stone, consists

of tiny particles in constant motion. Sophistry, which can never let this be this, but must always make this into something else, says that our apprehension of the stone is false, which is the very mistake of the subjectivists. A stone is a stone and such as we apprehend it with our physical sense in the “visible” world. That it is apprehended differently in another world, in ten different ways in ten different worlds, has nothing to do with our physical apprehension of reality. The nuclear physicists do not know that they have managed to penetrate into a new world, the “etheric world”.

5.25 Hume

¹One way of refuting a conception is to demonstrate the absurdity of its consequences. This was the service that Hume performed for philosophy. He refuted subjectivism by dissolving both the subject of knowledge (the soul, the self) and the object of knowledge (the external world with its material content). Everything was mere meaningless perceptions.

²According to Hume, all our ideas derive from sense perceptions. Every individual part of a composite idea derives from observations. We cannot “pass” from subject to object, from subjective consciousness to objective reality; indeed, we cannot even prove that there is an external world. Everything is just ideas constructed by our reason and composed of different kinds of sense perceptions. Hume convincingly made it clear that subjectivism must lead to skepticism.

³There cannot be any self, either, no coherent soul. The only thing we meet with in our consciousness is different clusters of perceptions. The soul is a term of a series of thought associations.

⁴Hume also contested the validity of the law of cause and effect. Laws of nature are the result of habitual observation. We note what is happening, dividing it into a before, which we call cause, and an after, which we call effect. We have always seen the one following upon the other and assume that they must always do so. The concept of cause we derive from a subjective associative compulsion.

⁵Hume could not find any difference between temporal connection and causal connection. He did not have the experience of the experimenter, who in his laboratory decides himself the time sequence (cause) and also predicts the effect in each individual case with unfailing certainty. Hume did not realize that the conformity to law of existence is a necessity, since otherwise the cosmos would be a chaos. No single exception has as yet been found to an ascertained law of nature, only that a law of nature did not have the general validity that ignorance assumed it to have.

⁶Hume was a master analyst unable to synthesize. His intellectual myopia made him unsurpassed as a demonstrator of errors in conclusions, but prevented him from discovering principles or a system in his own thinking. Quite naïvely he started from the philosophic superstition that what cannot be demonstrated by formal logic can always be doubted. A true logician, he put more trust in his logic than in his experience, relied more on his subjective reason than on his objective sense. The unanimous statements of however many individuals had no significance for him. He could deny everything that he considered could not be logically demonstrated.

⁷Faced with such philosophical superstition, esoterics puts forward the fundamental proposition that the proofs of subjective reason are fictions if they are contradicted by the evidence of objective sense.

⁸Sense experiences material reality directly and immediately. It identifies itself with the object of its observation according to the law of identity and identification: I am experiencing this. The subjectivists' contention that one cannot "pass" from consciousness to the material object is a typical philosophical fictitious construction that sounds plausible and has paralysed thought, yet is easy to refute. It is by no means a question of "passing" from any reflected image to the object. The direct apprehension of the object has been made into a representation independent of the object instead of the object itself. The visual picture is not the object. The observation is not a reflected image of the object, but an apprehension of a concrete object. The experience of the object is no arbitrary subjective conception, but an objective apprehension of the object in its concreteness independent of consciousness. The whole of the subjectivist line of thought implies a tautology and a logical regress, and thus is logically absurd. The tautology: what consciousness imagines it has to imagine through its own imagination. The regress: imagination must always be an imagination of something, this is an imagination of an imagination, which in its turn is an imagination, etc. ad infinitum. Thereby subjectivism is logically refuted, which later philosophers (Russell, etc.) have not yet grasped.

⁹If the objects were not the ground of knowledge, one would not be able in consciousness to distinguish between objective reality and figments of the imagination, not discover anything objective at all. Sense's objective consciousness is knowledge, since objective consciousness apprehends something that is independent of consciousness, is determined by something that is external to consciousness.

¹⁰Sense is objective consciousness. Reason is subjective consciousness. This is the original meaning of the words "sense" and "reason". Sense is direct, immediate, unreflective experience of reality. The attempt of the subjectivists to explain this psychologically is illogical and misleading, a confusion of logical and psychological problems. Reason is the instrument for working up the content of sense. Reason obtains all its reality material and knowledge material from sense. After testing, sense is always proved right. Our mistakes begin with doubting the correctness of sense, with incorrect working-up by reason, with hypotheses and other kinds of guesswork.

5.26 THE PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION

¹To properly understand post-scholastic philosophy, one must be fully aware of the intolerable conditions under which it came into being. In most countries full freedom of expression was not possible until well into the 19th century (about 1880). The Church with its dogmatism and fanaticism dominated not only the government, which appointed officials and teachers, but also public opinion with its frantic aggressiveness. The Church (Voltaire had good reasons for his war-cry: "Écrasez l'infâme, Crush the infamous one!") kept watchful guard that no new ideas were admitted. Thus with incessant bows to ecclesiastical authority and with eager assurances of their loyalty to the dogmatic system of theological tyranny, the philosophers had to treat of the new ideas as being delusions of minds clouded by the devil, which were mentioned just in order to be confuted effectively. A trick frequently used was to satirize and exaggerate to such an extent that the intelligentsia, who would be aware of the method used, must see that the intended meaning was quite the opposite of what was said. The "great Kant" is an example of how even the most glaring satire could pass unnoticed. Unable to perceive his reservation, he dismissed Locke's entire philosophy simply on the ground that Locke, having demonstrated that we cannot know anything about the invisible, declared that one could prove god's existence with the same

evidence as a mathematical proof. Kant did not suspect that he had missed a wonderful opportunity of improving on the satire by pointing out what a great loss it was to mankind that Locke had omitted to furnish that proof. The following statement by Lord Shaftesbury, Locke's patron, shows how careful the philosophers had to be. Lord Shaftesbury was replying to a lady who had heard of his saying that "men of sense are really but of one religion" and wanted to know what kind of religion this was. "Madam," he said, "men of sense never tell." They knew what their peace depended on. Besides, truth has always been cramped.

²In discussing this matter of dogmatic intolerance, it will not be out of place to say something also about conditions of later times. As a rule it is the professors of the universities who constitute the academic authority, stipulate the dogmas of the day, and decide what is to be considered true or false. Pioneers of research who have not yet conquered a chair and dare to be ahead of their time, so far ahead that academic opinion – slowly lagging behind – cannot keep up, are declared incompetent if they venture to oppose the prevalent views, and are killed by silence. There is a fairly general realization that this had impeded development.

³Even constitutionally guaranteed freedom of expression has its risks. Because of the masses' lack of discernment, the blinding power of emotional arguments in conjunction with egoistic interests of individuals and classes, the multitude can be persuaded to believe whatever power-thirsting demagogues wish them to. Propaganda, with the psychoses that it enacts, has a great stupidizing effect, as Fascism, Nazism, and Bolshevism have proved millions of times over. The press, film, radio, and television (the "idiot box") have shown convincingly how swiftly the levels of taste, culture, and discernment even of the so-called educated classes can be debased. Lacking the foundation of knowledge, mankind will be led astray by innumerable fantasts.

⁴Sometimes there would be a "freethinker on the throne", who allowed the philosophers to speak freely. Once published (by way of precaution usually anonymously), their work could not easily be suppressed, but was allowed to exert its influence quietly. It has been seen that no tyranny has been able in the long run to prevent the voice of freedom being heard. Another of the lessons of history is that all power is abused whatever its kind (not least that of democracy and the rule of the majority).

⁵From the studies of those "whose nocturnal lamps enlighten the world" views found their way to the educated classes that were to shake Europe towards the end of the 18th century. At first tentative and cautious, then more and more daring in their struggle against tyranny of opinion and oppression, these propagandists prepared the way for a public opinion that was to overcome the despotism of theological dictatorship. Enunciating man's inalienable rights with enthusiasm and flaming exultation, they roused enslaved souls from their degradation.

⁶The philosophers of revolution were typical eclectics. Their propaganda, a mixture of facts, half-truths, platitudes, sentimental romanticism, and revolutionary pathos, inflamed the minds and started a process of dissolution in the established orders, a process that is still going on. The most important of them culturally (a couple of centuries ahead of their times) were Voltaire and Rousseau. Voltaire's philosophy was a concoction of Newton, Locke, and Shaftesbury. At the same time he propagated the liberal ideas that had revolutionized England. His heroic, untiring, self-sacrificing struggle for justice, tolerance, humanity, freedom of thought, and love of mankind, against all the powers of darkness, cannot be admired too much. In this endeavour of his he had the help of a host of encyclopaedists and popularizers. They made propaganda largely for physicalism, not suspecting the existence of higher material worlds equally bound by laws.

⁷The apostles of ignorance think that you just have to pull things down and "let in air and light"

for the desert to turn itself into paradise. Just proclaim freedom and people will all become saints. Just preach brotherhood and they will all become angels. Just destroy everything that has gone before and you will conjure up the ideal society. Just tell the masses, the ignorance of life, that they understand everything and all life's problems are no more. Voltaire later realized the risk of popularization: "Once the masses begin to reason, all is lost." "As soon as the masses embrace a view, it thereby becomes a lie." (Kierkegaard)

⁸Experiencing the power of ideas over themselves, and overestimating their power over all the others, in whom they were not latent, these idealists (the cultural *élite*) overlooked the fact that what was for them, as the cultural *élite*, a necessary liberation, was not the best for those who saw in freedom only a longed-for opportunity of arbitrariness and self-will. To the cultural individual, lack of respect and irreverence are signs of emotional crudeness and barbarism. That insight found its clearest expression in the ancient Chinese culture, which has now succumbed to the new civilizational barbarism. In true culture everything in the way of dictatorship (lack of rights) is precluded. Knowledge is for those who have already acquired it and with it an understanding of freedom bound by law and the responsibility that goes with freedom. To people at the stage of barbarism, humanity is the same as demanding rights without duties. Equality leads to contempt for everything superior. The fool is not only master of his own wisdom, which is his evident right to be, but he wants to be an authority for the wise too.

⁹All revolutionary idealists are guilty of these and similar erroneous conclusions. They believe that the ideas that impel them to sacrifice everything for truth, freedom, and what is right, are latent in everybody else as well. They believe that if only a few lead the way, setting examples, everybody else will follow along. How many of these people have with sorrowing hearts seen their ideals, more precious than anything, trampled in the dust by those whom they were trying to help, scorned by egoism and brutality! How many of them have themselves been victims of the blind fury of the released masses!

¹⁰There was only one realist among all these sanguine madmen: Rousseau. It was irony of fate that made Rousseau the chosen philosopher of the French revolutionaries, and hence wrongly judged by many. The following quotations from him should suffice. They speak volumes: "The best natural constitution is the wise ruling the ignorant. Democracy is a form of government suited, not to men, but to a race of gods. There has never been and will never be a real democracy." Rousseau cherished no illusions as to the value of that philosophy, science, and culture which he had before his eyes. He even went so far in his contempt for the superficiality and frivolity of the aristocracy of his day that he declared reason worthless, a thinking man a degenerate animal. Culture and philosophy had helped to deprave man. Voltaire thanked him, sarcastically saying that he "had got a desire for walking on all fours". Of course people misunderstood Rousseau who by "return to nature" meant liberation from the artificiality and unnaturalness that have always characterized European culture.

¹¹In textbooks, French popular philosophy is usually mentioned in connection with German humanism, revolution of another kind. Lessing, Herder, Schiller, and Goethe were initiated Rosicrucians representing a sovereign point of view quite different even from the professional philosophers (Kant, etc.), who were still dealing with the principle thinking of the stage of civilization. They showed that they had attained the perspective thinking of the stage of humanity, which facilitates contact with the world of ideas. Just as in ancient Greece, it was these humanists, pyramids in the Sahara of German culture, who made their age a time of new brilliance in European history. Until then, German "culture" had been French. These men made

out of the semi-barbarian German language a perfect literary language. They roused to life the German individual character and freed literature from the imitation of classical and French examples, and thought from the prevalent platitudinous rationalism. They compelled the Church to discover in the Gospels the message of love, the one and only salvation, hitherto more or less disregarded. They became the protagonists of truth and justice, tolerance and humanity. The true greatness of these men is still not understood.

¹²Lessing, who has been called the explorer of truth and enemy of lies, emphasized the difference between theological synod dogmatism, the Gospels' teaching of the Christ, and the esoteric doctrine of the Christ. In demonstrating laws of style, he laid the foundations of modern aesthetics. In his work on the education of mankind he showed the development as to culture and the conception of right from the stage of total ignorance to a final goal in the dim and distant future. The different religions mark different stages of development. No religion has as yet said the last word. Mankind advances step by step, guided by the continuous revelation, through the ideas, of the esoteric knowledge. How far ahead of his time he was appears best in his venturing to point out that reincarnation (not metempsychosis with its implication that man can be reborn as an animal) was the only possible way of combining the deity's omniscience, infinite goodness, and omnipotence with the evident existence of evil and the seeming injustices of life.

¹³People's attitude to new ideas, their intolerance, and manic persecution of all the carriers of ideas, their inability to apprehend reality ideas recognition of which can only be forced slowly and with one at a time, have been some of the reasons why the knowledge has been kept secret. The knowledge of reality is only for those who cannot possibly abuse power, for those who are prepared to sacrifice themselves in order to serve mankind, evolution, and unity. Like all the other esoteric knowledge orders, the Rosicrucians taught that the whole of existence is a gigantic process of development. The monads, which in the mineral kingdom have little more than a possibility of active consciousness, in each higher kingdom acquire a higher kind of consciousness, an ever greater share in the cosmic total consciousness. Leibniz had suggested this basic idea, and Lessing contributed several pertaining ones.

¹⁴Herder developed a philosophy of history. To the philosophers of so-called enlightenment history was the story of man's stupidity and brutality. To Lessing, it was the story of slowly awakening reason. Herder saw in it the individual's striving after individual character. In man, all-nature awakens to clarity and self-reflection. Without going into details, he describes how the soul lives between incarnations in the splendour of bright space and seeks its way back to earth again in order to acquire self-consciousness and self-determination, to develop self-consciousness into total consciousness embracing more and more (esoterically: to acquire more and more ideas of intuition as preparation for an ultimate understanding of the esoteric knowledge system). Herder emphasized that the historian must enter into the ages he describes and try to understand each period from the viewpoint of its peculiar conditions and attitudes. One has a glimpse of the idea of history as awakening reason, an idea that Hegel was to make a great show of, duly manhandling it. "Hume thought that the origin of religion was to be sought in man's fear of the unknown. Herder considered it to be primitive man's first attempt to explain existence. The Old Testament, which provided Voltaire with an inexhaustible source of satire, was to Lessing mankind's first reading-book and to Herder original national poetry. History lived in folk-tale and folk-tale in history."

¹⁵Schiller understood that Kant's categorical imperative was an attempt to replace the Mosaic dictation, "thou shalt", with conscience's "injunction of duty" with a semblance of self-

determination, and thus not an expression of true autonomy; that morality is freedom and not compulsion (not even from within), Schiller refused to accept any existing form of religion on religious grounds and any ruling philosophy on logical grounds.

¹⁶Goethe, the master synthesist, assimilated most of the collected ideas of mankind. The expert will find everywhere in the sayings of the initiates hints that betray the source of their knowledge. In such cases the historians will search in vain for the original influences. Everyone sets his mark on the ideas according to his individual character. Thus only those capable of giving them an independent expression are ripe for them.

¹⁷Being an initiate, Goethe had been given knowledge of certain fundamental facts. For example, he knew about higher worlds and how impossible it must be for a man apprehending only the visible world to try to explain existence on his own. He knew, too, that there was no gulf fixed between consciousness and material reality; that consciousness experiences reality directly and immediately; that matter, motion (energy), and consciousness are different aspects of the same reality.

¹⁸All understanding depends on the individual's share in cosmic reason. All beings have as much of this as they need in order to be able to develop further, as they have acquired experience of and are able to express on their level of development. Man has come so far that he is able to grasp that there is more than just what is visible, that higher existence cannot be understood at a lower stage of development, that man will be able to comprehend the meaning of existence once he has received the necessary facts.

¹⁹According to Goethe's esoteric conception of art, the artist should seek to discover the primordial forms, which in nature's forms of life strive towards perfection, and to put the universal into the individual like lawfulness in nature. The artist should seek to surpass nature. Only what is expressive of an idea is suited to artistic representation. The arbitrariness of subjectivism Goethe rightly described as lack of discipline.

²⁰It was through Schiller, who understood Platon better than anyone before him, who had cleared away Kant's verbiage and formed his own rational theory of knowledge, that Goethe learned to understand what Kant with his baroque scholasticism had been unable to explain. Schiller showed that we can comprehend the particular only from the universal, that the idea is the universal and is necessary to correct conception, that the idea makes it possible to put facts into their correct contexts, that the idea can correctly explain reality.

²¹Like all initiates, Goethe knew that all will attain the highest divine stage via the different divine intermediary stages. The same divine unity of life is in everything, both within all beings (god immanent) and outside one's own being (god transcendent). It is god-nature which produces everything in everyone, which makes every being attain its final destiny. Religion is the unity one feels when experiencing how in the necessity of life (the Law = the sum total of all laws of nature and laws of life) everything works together to the best possible end.

²²We are here to have experiences and to learn from them. Individual character seeks itself those conditions in which to learn. Our development depends on how we employ our time in getting to know reality and the laws of life, acquiring knowledge, qualities, and abilities. We can learn from everything. There is nothing banal, nothing too simple, nor are there any experiences that do not have a meaning if we understand them correctly. As human beings, we become ready for higher tasks when we have learned everything that is within the limits of human understanding.

²³It has been thought that Goethe accepted Kant's abortive construction of the so-called moral

law with its duty of obedience, sense of compulsion, and abolition of freedom (once Kant's fictitious autonomy is seen through). Nothing could be more erroneous. Being an initiate, Goethe knew about the great Law, the sum total of all the laws of nature and laws of life which we ourselves have to seek, to find, and laboriously learn to apply if we are to reach higher, be able to identify ourselves with divine realities. It was this law and not Kant's fiction that Goethe had in mind.

²⁴God-nature is governed by eternal, imperturbable laws which preclude all arbitrariness of self-will. We obey the laws of nature even when seeking to defy them. We act by them even when believing that we act against them. Evil, too, serves good in its way. The law of development leads everything to its final consummation.

5.27 THE PHILOSOPHY OF ROMANTICISM

¹Many a reader may think that the whole of this romanticism could be safely omitted in an outline that only intends to trace man's thinking in its striving after a truly rational explanation of existence. These romantics, however, still play too large a part for that to be possible. It is high time that their fanciful errors were duly pointed out. By and large the history of philosophy is the history of errors. Its significance lies in the fact that it explains the necessity of knowing the facts in order to form opinions, that ignorance without facts about existence only produces nonsensical vagaries and freaks, that one cannot even pose questions correctly until one knows the correct answers.

²The philosophy of romanticism has continued disorganizing mentality, a process that began with the sophists, was continued by the scholastics, to touch bottom with Hegel. What has come since is infantile attempts at mimicry.

³These romantics are the best example of the risk of engrossing oneself in the world of thought so deeply as to lose contact with reality and to take fancies to be facts or axioms. It is so easy to forget that concept and reality by no means necessarily have anything to do with each other. Assuredly, systems are necessary to comprehend reality. But we must be content to construct orienting systems of survey, until we take pains to study the esoteric system. Until then we are to limit ourselves to trying to fit the facts ascertained by research into their correct contexts.

⁴By his comical saying (accepted by philosophic posterity) that "reality conforms to our concepts", Kant (like the sophist Protagoras in his time) flung the door wide open for philosophic delusion. In no uncertain terms he indicated the typical tendency of subjectivism, that of sovereign arbitrariness. This becomes evident in him and in his three closest successors: Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Reading them one might think one was attending lectures in the emotional world at which were given practical demonstrations of how matter obeys the slightest hint from consciousness, and thus that reality is just a figment of the imagination. Such a mistake would be explainable as in the emotional and mental worlds. But it is not true of our visible world, nor of the world of Platonic ideas. And the physical world is the one we are in and to which we must restrict ourselves when we are to try to comprehend its reality. We shall learn about the other worlds when we get there. They are not relevant in this context. Each world is a thing apart, though there are certain analogies.

⁵The subjectivists evince an obvious tendency to arbitrariness. In the romantics this arbitrariness appeared in their self-willed interpretation of enduring reality.

⁶Going by his own titles of his books, the world named Kant the critical philosopher. How undeserved a title of honour that is will be shown when we treat of him. It is a common trait in

men that they think they are something that they lack all possibilities of being. Self-deception is great and wish is the father or thought. It was Kant who led philosophy into a cul-de-sac where his echoes are still straying, mentally disoriented.

⁷Characteristic of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel is their urge to construct that makes everything superficial, to try to press ideas into artificial pigeon-holes without understanding the reality behind them.

⁸Fichte and Schelling have been called transcendental philosophers. That ought to mean that they were immanence philosophers and kept within the limits of the normal individual's possibility of knowledge, that is: within the boundaries of physical existence, the only rational thing to do for those who have not acquired causal sense. In fact they, too, were "meta-physicians", though of an even more fantastic kind.

⁹Hegel's philosophy has been hailed by some as the absolute philosophy. In so doing they have termed irrationality "absolute". In conceptual respect absolute is what is axiomatic.

¹⁰Schelling and Hegel studied everything they could lay hands on in all disciplines, which of course were then still in their infancy, in order to find material for their imaginative systems. They helped themselves liberally from the stream of ideas flowing from the many humanists who, from the middle of the 18th century onward, were actively working to raise the level of culture. They shoved these ideas into the straitjacket of their fictional systems without worrying about the ideas getting very badly mauled in the process.

¹¹The text-books of the history of philosophy give an entirely false picture of this speculation, since the absurdities have been weeded out, the ideas removed from their baroque framings, and the whole thing has thus been made pretty presentable. What commentators, years later, thought they could read into the writings of their predecessors, has often been wrongly attributed to these. You have to go to the romantics' own works with all their never-ending verbiage, their tiresome juggling with ideas and quibbling over words, to see what they were getting at. Then you will see that their much-vaunted ideas were partly old esoteric ones, partly such as were found in contemporary literature. The only original thing about them was their new formulation. The esoterician will see that what was tenable was not new and what was new was not tenable.

¹²Many people study philosophy in the wrong way; they take the ideas out of their contexts, causing them to lose the significance they had with the different thinkers. The ideas were known by the ancients but they have been misinterpreted and maltreated in more recent systems. The essential is the very criticism, showing the mental acuity of the conception of the different philosophers' interpretations, the critique of the many misconceptions of the idea.

¹³Again and again one comes across phrases like "Spinoza said", or "Fichte said", etc., ad infinitum, prefacing something that they never meant in that way. They are thus given credit for ideas they never had, since they misunderstood them. Discoveries and observations of later times are read into their works. They used those words, but did not grasp their rational content or their reality content. One is to beware of the afterwise know-all who with their platitudes seek to explain what "they really meant".

¹⁴That time is perhaps not all that distant when students of philosophy, reading the works of these romantics, will ask in astonishment how such things were possible, could be written, printed, and generally accepted as rational. As Schopenhauer pointed out, appositely, it is a characteristic trait of the German mentality to see chasms of profundity in what is incomprehensible and to prefer looking up into the clouds for what lies at one's feet. In scholasticism, too, one finds the same tendency to make everything as complicated as possible

and what self-evident incomprehensible by trying to explain it with meaningless profundities. Furthermore, education in those days was markedly scholastic, tying down thought. In the educated, the need to be free of these fetters of thought was so great that they were ready to accept anything that would liberate them from the intellectual tyranny they felt more and more oppressive. Of the different absurdities they had to choose from, they chose the new one that was presented in the very way that appealed to those with a scholastic over-education. Of course there was no possibility of refuting the fantasies by the facts of research, as in those days natural science, which is the only one that can give us knowledge of at least physical reality, scarcely existed.

5.28 Kant

¹Kant's philosophy has had such a destructive and thought-paralysing influence that it is unfortunately necessary to deal in detail with some of the most important of his many arbitrary constructions. It has not been easy to discover and refute their falsity. It has taken a considerable number of philosophers, mathematicians, and natural scientists more than 150 years to scrap all Kant's fictions.

²It is still with many authors of text-books of the history of philosophy, as well as general encyclopaedias, a seemingly ineradicable stock-phrase that Kant was a wonder of acuity and profundity. Countless scholars have earned themselves doctorates and chairs by his philosophy. Everyone has believed himself able to show what Kant ought to have meant on this point or that. All the different interpretations advanced have been defended with an abundance of evidence. Since nobody has been able to comprehend him, only the most clear-headed have dared to suggest that perhaps the great Kant could have been mistaken on some minor point. In a letter to his friend Beck, Kant himself conceded: "I admit when writing this that I do not even comprehend myself." (No wonder that he was feeble-minded in the end.) Considering how much is required to reach such an insight, it would not seem too bold to say that this is the best thing Kant ever said. Lichtenberg has pointed out, satirically, that the philosophers, when unable to comprehend Kant, have blamed not Kant but their own reason. Besides, it would seem that Kant's inability to express his opinion should have been warning enough. No clear-thinking intellect will write thus. "Obscure writing is obscure thinking". It is about time that Kant is shown up for the sophist he was. Nietzsche called him, unkindly but by no means without grounds, an "overgrown concept-cripple".

³Kant was a scholastic, logicist, psychologicist, subjectivist, positivist, agnostic, pragmatic, anti-metaphysician, and metaphysician. All these different views have always found something in Kant to profit by. No wonder that he became the authority whom all could refer to.

⁴Kant's many errors include, among others, his division of reality into phenomenon and thing in itself; his absurd statement that matter is something totally unknown and devoid of qualities; his abortive inventions of space and time as forms of apprehension, of "pure" reason, the categories, synthetic judgements a priori, antinomies of reason, "practical" reason, the categorical imperative, and the three "transcendent" ideas. And with such madness they have idiotized all students of philosophy.

⁵Kant was a scholastic. His entire philosophy dealt with the form and content of scholasticism. Strange were the things he made out of them. Form became "pure" reason (void reason without content). Into this form he carpentered twelve different pigeon-holes which he got from the forms of judgement of scholasticism. They were given the impressive name categories (properly:

ultimate abstractions). Into these pigeon-holes he sorted all man's sense perceptions, saying that we cannot apprehend reality in any other way. That is tantamount to saying that we could not apprehend the seas and continents of a terrestrial globe except through the grid of longitudinal and latitudinal lines. He did not indicate any perceptual units that would logically synthesize the psychological perceptions. His categories are arbitrary constructions. And he did not explain how the perceptual units, or concepts, which the sense activity uses, have originated. These units later led to the distinction between what is primary in logical and psychological respect.

⁶The fact that Hägerström never succeeded in freeing himself from Kant showed in his constant slogan: "Metaphysics is to be destroyed." It was entirely in Kant's spirit. That Kant was an agnostic, in spite of his speaking about religion, is clear from his denial of the existence of spiritual reality.

⁷Kant was a subjectivist. In the first edition of his theoretical work he denies the existence of the material external world, which was allowed to exist in our imagination only. This is obvious from the following quotation: "If I remove the thinking subject, the whole world must disappear." Or: "The world ceases to exist when we turn away from it." The baroque-ness of this view is illustrated in Kant's foremost disciple and "heir-apparent", according to whom: "it is naïve to say that objects do not only exist in our imagination, but also in reality", and: "geological processes have no objective existence, since no consciousness existed that could observe them. The whole of Laplacean cosmology cannot really be true, because it is a description of things that have never been, since they could only have existed in a brain." (Parerga § 28 and § 85). This means that we cannot know anything about that which is the objective ground and criterion of our knowledge: the very objects.

⁸In the second edition Kant tried to "save" the existence of the external world. It is part of the irony of philosophic fate that posterity, believing in Kant's infallibility, lacking Ariadne's thread, and being unable to find its way out of the grotesque labyrinth, made the "monster" in it the hugest of all.

⁹Kant was a psychologist, by which term is meant a theorist of knowledge who tries to substitute explanations of sense physiology for a logical conception of reality.

¹⁰Kant was a logicist. The visible world was a construction of subjective concepts. Subsequent romantics took this as their starting-point and constructed realities out of fictions (as the scholastics did) which had nothing to do with reality. It was not until in the 20th century that it dawned upon philosophers more generally that the knowledge of reality consists of facts put into their correct contexts and that these contexts make up the only real knowledge system. Until this system is completely built up, we must be content with a provisional system to be able to orient ourselves in reality.

¹¹Space and time are no forms of apprehension independent of matter. It is enough to point out that the physical as well as the emotional and mental material worlds, like all still higher worlds, have their own kinds of space (dimension) and time (duration) and that these are determined by the nature of material reality. Through the activity of its sense the child, even during its first year, automatically develops correct "instinctive" apprehensions of a number of qualities belonging to material reality, which qualities later will be formed into concepts through the activity of reason. The automatism of sense is that mainly instinctive, mechanical process – one among the many processes continually going on in the subconscious – which transforms the multiplicity experienced into those perceptual units that make the activity of sense possible or facilitate it. At a higher stage of the development of reason, that activity corresponds to the conception of ideas,

which is also a process finding unity.

¹²The apprehension of space, for instance, is developed by observation of the forms of matter; and the apprehension of time, by observation of the different kinds of time intervals. As a mathematical concept, physical space is constructed by the determinations of its three dimensions in the same way as the other mathematical basic concepts (axioms) are constructed from the elements of experience that sense supplies.

¹³Sense provides the necessary conditions of, the reality material for, describing reality or ascertaining facts. Reason works this material up by reflection. If the result is not correct, this is the fault not of sense but of reason. Sense observes the sun's passage in the heavens. The explanation of reason that this is because the sun moves while the earth stands still is not correct. Certain misleading optical refractions ("optical contradictions") sense will correct by continued observation. Reason's correct explanations have usually come long afterwards. Reason obtains all its reality material and knowledge material from sense. Reason is our ability to work up, clarify, and construct. Subsequent testing always proves sense right. Our mistakes begin with reason's working-up, with hypotheses, theories, and all other kinds of explanation.

¹⁴A great show has been made of synthetic judgements a priori, that vagary of Kant. The correct explanation of what is aprioristic in our apprehension was given long ago by Platon. According to him, there is another kind of certainty than that of ordinary experience. This certainty is the outcome of remembering anew concepts acquired in previous incarnations. Everything aprioristic is thus obtained ultimately from experience. The infallibility of mathematics, besides, is due to the fact that it is demonstrably an exact construction of axioms obtained from experience of physical reality and of the three dimensions of physical matter. Animals, too, have acquired this same aprioristic certainty, as is manifest from their instinctive and spontaneous trust in life's universal conformity to law despite their ignorance of grounds or causes. Kant's definitions of analytic and synthetic judgements are incorrect, being based on his confusing psychological and logical criteria.

¹⁵Kant's many inventions include his so-called antinomies of reason. Of course there are no contradictions in reason itself. The fact that we use quite a number of mutually contradictory hypotheses is due to our lacking the facts required for explanation. Every application of the law of identity is absolute. According to the law of identity, a concept as a concept is absolute. Every deductive conclusion is absolute. Every fact is absolute. Put into relations to other concepts, a concept gets a relative significance. An antinomy of reason would mean that something in the very function of our reason forced us to put facts into the wrong contexts. That is obvious nonsense.

¹⁶Also, Kant's arbitrary division of reality into phenomenon and thing in itself has been misleading. He found the terms phainomenon (physical reality) and noumenon (mental reality) in the Eleatics. Not grasping these two quite correct distinctions, Kant made phainomenon, or the visible world, illusory reality (Erscheinung), matter deprived of all qualities; and noumenon (Ding an sich), unattainable true reality, the incomprehensible cause of illusory reality. Kant also set an entirely arbitrary as well as insuperable bound between what is explored and what is as yet unexplored, between what the normal individual can apprehend and what higher objective consciousness is able to ascertain. In order the more to accentuate this contrariety, Kant re-defined the word "transcendental" to denote the opposite of transcendent. "Transcendental" was to mean "within the confines of human apprehension". "Transcendent" meant what was beyond these confines, what was inconceivable, incomprehensible, irrational, metaphysical. The trans-

cidental is reason's working-up of physical experience. ("Transcendent" and "transcendental" are not differentiated in the usage of other languages.) Kant called his a transcendental philosophy. With his habitual obscurity and ambiguity he also called it metaphysical. I was, of course, a long time before it was generally seen that Kant rejected everything "metaphysical" as inconceivable to reason. With his habitual cocksureness he announced that "no metaphysics of the supersensual will ever be written". Kant would not have been Kant if he had not contradicted himself even here. He states positively that we can know nothing about the "thing in itself". Nevertheless he makes two quite incomprehensible statements about it, both of which are false, of course. Thus he asserts that matter, which in fact contains all the qualities of life, lacks every characteristic and is absolutely without quality. To speak of an "inner side of nature" (quite correct, of course, esoterically), is, he says, "pure imagination". He further states that superphysical reality, about which nothing is known, is "beyond space and time". This misleading expression of Kant has since become familiar as a quotation. Thus Kant meant that space and time belonged to the phenomenal world (the visible world, the transcendental), and not to the metaphysical (transcendent, superphysical) thing in itself. In his ignorance of reality he did not suspect the existence of those higher worlds which esoterics as well as Indian yoga philosophy maintain exist, nor that the expression "beyond space and time" terms the Pythagorean chaos, outside the cosmos. One can well say that Kant, like the schoolmen, did what he could to mislead and stupidize. It is only with the advent of modern nuclear physics that the fetters he tried to forge for scientific research have been shattered. Thereby also vanish the "limits to natural research" that du Bois-Reymond in his day thought he could set. There are no limits to research (albeit to the instrumental one) any more than there are to consciousness development.

¹⁷Kant was unaware of the fact that by our feelings we belong to the emotional world, by our thoughts to the mental world, and by our intuitions to the world of ideas. He was quite devoid of any instinct for higher reality, any sense of the experiences had at the stage of the mystic. He was generous with his sarcasm when discussing higher existence than physical life. His criticism of Swedenborg (whom he insisted on calling Schwedenberg) shows that he was incapable of perceiving anything of higher reality. Swedenborg's works, which contain many esoteric facts in symbolic form, he dismissed as "four quarto tomes replete with madness". But, anyway, how much understanding is to be expected of one capable of this piffle typical of Kant: "It is easy to see that any sort of presentiment is a figment of the imagination, because how can one apprehend something that does not yet exist?". Where Swedenborg is concerned, he had emotional objective consciousness and saw in the emotional world many things that he interpreted by the false notions of the nature of that world he had previously formed. All your false notions you bring with you find confirmation in the emotional world. That is why it is called the world of illusions.

¹⁸Beside his "critique" of pure (theoretical) reason Kant also manufactured a "critique" of (pure) practical reason. All to be said of this is that there is no such special reason and that Kant's critique of it is no more a critique than the theoretical one, just an imaginative construction.

¹⁹In his first so-called critique, Kant refuted the wise-acre proofs of god's existence, of the immortality of the soul, and of free-will. According to his theoretical reason, it is impossible for us to know anything about the three transcendent ideas, just because they belonged to the transcendent and not to the transcendental. But when he came to construct his practical reason, he needed them again. Using some poetical abracadabra he made the transcendent transcendental. What we need must be true. By doing this he laid the first foundations of pragmatism, a new sort of logic that made itself a school. There has always been, it is true, a tendency in this direction.

Voltaire needed a god and Sundberg, a Swedish archbishop, a hell “in order to keep the peasants in check”.

²⁰Kant wanted proof, however, to support his three transcendent ideas: There are no Platonic ideas. But now there are these three. Without these three there cannot be any moral creature. Experience shows that there are moral creatures. Therefore, the transcendent ideas must exist. And then the somersault: morality, the concept of virtue, cannot have come from experience, since nobody corresponds to the concept of virtue and thus nobody is a moral creature.

²¹Kant invented “moral law”. The term, it is true, was coined by Fichte, who always carried Kant’s worst inventions to the absurd. But the notion was Kant’s. He called his construction the categorical imperative: Thou shalt. So then we have the schoolman again with his form and content. The form was the “pure” (void) practical reason without any content, with the command: Obey. The content consisted in obedience to the orders of authority as well as to self-made principles.

²²The theologians made a new discipline of this invention of Kant: moral theology. First, the three transcendent ideas which Kant maintained existed, on his proving that there was no proof of them. And then, in addition, his impressive reformulation of the old Mosaic law: thou shalt. A firm footing, to be sure.

²³According to Kant, moral behaviour consisted in obedience to a rule. We can always know how we ought to behave, he assures with his habitual cocksureness, we have only to see that the rule we invent can be made a law that can be valid for everyone in all circumstances. (An absurdity, even this.) What cannot be derived from a principle cannot be right action. The man whose conduct is not guided by principles is immoral. Thus, for example, one must not let one’s conduct be determined by motives for love, because love is an emotion and not a principle. There was not to be any other feeling than that of compulsion. The satisfaction that comes from duty fulfilled was, even it, questionable. But, of course, this was prescribed for man, a creature which he declared to be irremediably evil, “an animal that needs a master”. Add to this that “the common people (das gemeine Volk) are nothing but a lot of idiots”.

²⁴Allow the esoterician to add one or two comments on these last statements, absurd as they are both logically and psychologically. All conception of right ultimately rests on the understanding of the meaning and goal of life and of its conformity to law. Its conformity to law can be seen in the principle of reciprocity: “an eye for an eye” among barbarians and “do as you would be done by” among the civilized. When acting deliberately man is always determined by motives: physical, emotional, or, when he has definitively left the emotional stage, mental motives. No rules can be made absolute. Action is conditioned by the totality of actual circumstances, which can almost never be foreseen. Even afterwards we often cannot decide whether we acted right. Right action presupposes wisdom, and this is not obtained from rules which, at the best, cannot be more than orienting. The best actions are the spontaneous ones that come from the unconscious once we have acquired the right attitude to life. Anyone who needs to inquire and analyse, to argue with himself, or who needs to be influenced by rules or sentimentality, or be persuaded, does not have the spontaneity that comes from the understanding of life.

²⁵In his theory of justice, Kant requires absolute obedience to the arbitrariness of the governing power and holds that it is one’s duty to submit to inhuman measures. Many of Kant’s sayings demonstrate his inhumanity. Two examples should suffice: “The illegitimate child is beyond the pale of the law, thus society can permit its killing” and: “No law can remove the shame from the unmarried mother.” (What about obeying the law here!)

²⁶Kant's merit is that he helped us see the absurdity of the imaginative speculation of pseudo-philosophy. But that merit he shares with most philosophers.

²⁷The "post-Kantians" (a very extensive concept if it means all who seek support from Kant) have mostly rehashed what he said, still maintaining that this is what Kant said, that is, a truth with modifications, sometimes very great ones.

²⁸One very typical example of the logical excesses of later Kantians: "If our knowledge were absolute, the laws of nature would stifle all independence of thought in us, and man's own existence would be without significance. We would either lose ourselves completely in the world or be forced to assert our significance by dogmatic means. As it is, we can go by our experience without hindrance, because the concepts that make experience possible at the same time guarantee man's sovereignty and freedom by excluding knowledge of the absolute and explaining the part we must ourselves play in the world. Our very organ of knowledge, which prevents us having any knowledge of the absolute, is a mystery and an enigma that guarantees the existence of the absolute and our participation in it."

²⁹That is an extraordinary example of acute and profound balderdash in Kant's spirit. There is no single rational word in it, that is, no word that agrees with reality. We become free by ascertaining laws of nature and applying them. If knowledge as knowledge were not absolute (facts in their correct contexts), there would be no knowledge. A mystery and an enigma guarantee nothing. Natural science is not limited to what is visible at the present day. Research is "endless". When we have explored the physical atom with its content of the whole series of ever higher atomic kinds, only then shall we have attained the omniscience of the highest cosmic world.

5.29 *Fichte*

¹Fichte started from Kant, and his merit was that by exaggerating Kant's vagaries he made their absurdity even more manifest. His acute subtleties of romantic fictionalism have nothing to do with common sense or reality. Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel had a profound contempt for common sense, which nevertheless is the prerequisite of acquiring higher kinds of mental consciousness.

²Both Fichte and Kant found it difficult to explain how they arrived at their categories. Kant constructed a "pure apperception" which conjured them up. To Fichte that construction seemed rather suspect, and instead he invented another way of demonstrating the incomprehensible, namely "intellectual outlook" as the ultimate source of knowledge.

³Fichte made it his starting-point that Kant's "thing in itself" was quite superfluous. If we cannot know anything about it, then of course it does not exist – so: away with it! That annihilated the last bit of material reality. Since reality conforms to our ideas, since everything can exist only in consciousness, it is the self that creates everything. And so he decreed that: "the self sets up a not-self against itself", and out of itself it conjures up the whole universe.

⁴The subjectivists, who contrary to common sense have managed to imagine that there is no material external world, in vain try to explain the universally valid and inevitable apprehension of reality.

⁵Common sense, which in all modesty is man's highest resort, objects to this that if the objective existence of objects is denied, then all knowledge is reduced to mere fantasy. Objects are the objectivity of consciousness and the corrective of subjectivity.

⁶Fichte renamed Kant's categorical imperative ("thou shalt" of the Mosaic dictate), calling it

“moral law”. The historians of philosophy and theology have proclaimed this invention a great intellectual discovery. By such-like things they have always known how to paralyse thought and impress the ignorant and undiscerning.

⁷Fichte, by his denial of material reality, of the objectivity and inevitability of existence, by his grotesque freak that the self creates the whole of existence from out of itself, laid the foundation of German romanticism and nationalist hysteria.

⁸That was precisely what suited fantasists ignorant of life, imagining themselves creative gods powerful enough to refashion reality. This limitless individualism believed it was able to dictate arbitrary laws to life. These helpless, vain attempts of the romantics to escape reality eventually led to worship of what was irrational, unreal, fallacious, life-falsifying, and consistently, to the complete capitulation of reason “in allegiance to faith”. Nietzsche can be called an offshoot of romanticism, the whole of his production being vehement constructions of 19th-century illusions and fictions devoid of any reality content. In his wake came all those arrogant superman apes. One might have thought that this was rock-bottom. But there does not seem to be any bottom.

⁹Fichte was the “philosopher” who considered that the individual’s choice of philosophy was determined by his ethical view of existence and thus not by his knowledge or ability to comprehend reality. That is what happens when one deprives oneself of the objective criterion. Everything becomes “fictitious”.

¹⁰In his *Addresses to the German Nation*, Fichte asserts that he opposites German and foreign are the same as good and evil. German (the recently constructed) is the only genuine language and the Germans the only real nation. Having character and being German is the same thing. The Germans alone are capable of independent thought. They alone take life seriously. Only with the Germans is it possible to educate the masses. Only the German “is capable of a true, rational love of his nation”.

¹¹That, to be sure, is being a consistent subjectivist.

5.30 Schelling

¹Schelling is the typical eclectic, hunting ideas and picking up every one he comes across. Always he had to make something new out of them, so that this was never allowed to be this, but had always to be made something else. Ideas were rehashed to make them fit the jargon, and then launched as new brainwaves. He juggled with scientific, logical, teleological, metaphysical, mystical, and aesthetical concepts. Everything was aestheticized and volatilized. He could publish a paper entitled “The Four Cosmic Ages” in which there was not a word said about any cosmic ages. Kierkegaard, who attended his lectures, called him “a formidable windbag”. One is quite aptly reminded of an orator’s effusion: “We are hunting for a shadow, and when we have found this shadow we stand with ashes in our empty hands”. Was it perhaps when reading something of the sort that Goethe found the apposite satire: “Usually man believes that if only he hears words, then there must be something that can be thought”. Lichtenberg could have added that people regard as brilliant what is beyond their power of comprehension. Or, as someone said: “Not that I understand it, but it sounds well.” Those who are capable of feeling indignant at this joking at the expense of the trumpeted “great ones” have certainly never been among the militant souls for whom it has been vital to find reality and who in this frivolous sporting with sacred truths have only found empty words, phrases, quibble.

²Schelling tried to make a system out of his ideas. It all seemed to be, however, quite nebulous and feebly motivated freaks. Of course it was propounded with all the cocksureness of the born

bombast, so that it impressed the undiscerning. But those who refuse to let themselves be taken in are astounded instead at all this sophistry. One can just see how these fictionalists spin themselves up in the cocoons of their own concepts until they mentally pupate. They sit inside with their universe.

³This is not to deny that a lot of it could sound pretty sensible. And there was nothing wrong with his skill at formulations. There were plenty of ingenious aphorisms, such as: “Nature is unconscious spirit, spirit conscious nature”. Under the influence of Schiller’s ideal aesthetics, Schelling coined the phrase: “Beauty is the infinite finitely presented.”

⁴Despite all their attempts to systematize existence, both Fichte and Schelling finally, at least in veiled terms, had to admit defeat and the fact that they really had not grasped a thing. Mankind is slowly beginning to realize that facts are required before anything can be made of either spirit or nature. Thus, Fichte capitulated by saying that theoretical philosophy cannot solve its problems, but leads on to ethics. Then Schelling, in his turn, makes ethics lead on to aesthetics. In truth a meagre result after so much bluster.

5.31 Hegel

¹Philosophers should be studied in their own works and not in any history of philosophy. To know Hegel you must read above all his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Anyone who, in so doing, will not think himself transported to a home for the insane, will be well suited to “be a swine-herd with the Hegelians”, as the saying went. He has found his calling. “On the uncarved paths of the future he can behold the footprints of an ordering hand.” Those interested can study Phalén’s doctor’s dissertation.

²Hegel was very well-read and familiar with contemporary learning, the writings of the philosophers, and history. He knew how to use it all. Historical ignorance has given Hegel credit for most of the ideas that he assimilated, for example, that some sort of reason manifests itself in history, that contrariety is the fulcrum of development; that the past exists in the present; that the ideas constitute a system, are parts of a whole, that in the system they have relative validity even if, as new, they appear absolute, that they are discovered in the course of development; that the ideas can be negated and that also their opposites contain ideas, since the ideas are inclusive and not exclusive as the concepts are; that the goal of unity, towards which philosophy strives through rational comprehension of reality, the religious man tries to reach through emotion and glimpses, and the artist through the discovery of beauty. All these ideas, simple and clear, existed long before they were made abstruse by Hegel, the most extreme of all the subjectivists.

³The idea of evolution was in the air. It appeared with Herder, Goethe, Lamarck, and others. It had often been hinted at by the ancients: Herakleitos, Aristoteles, Plotinos, and others. Hegel decided to make a system out of these ideas, a process of the revelation of spirit, which produced the universe and especially appeared in the history of philosophy, which was the “innermost part of world history”. Hegel’s idea was that the universal process is a logical or dialectical process and that its actual driving force is contradiction.

⁴Even in Kant’s time it was seen that the twelve categories on which he based his conception of reality were untenable. They did not see, however, as did Schopenhauer, how preposterous was the whole of the procedure: thinking one could squeeze reality into artificial pigeon-holes. Instead they went on making new categories.

⁵Hegel made categories of reality, of the history of philosophy, of world history, which he refashioned into a “philosophy of history”. If historical facts would not fit in with his categories,

he would just remake history. Trifles like that do not bother a great mind. Like reality, history had a duty to conform to the paths marked out by Hegel's reason. If reality did not agree with his constructions, so much the worse for reality. If you know what reality should look like, there is no need to ask how it is. The two rational norms, "let this be this" and "accept nothing without sufficient grounds" ("are there facts for it?"), obviously do not apply to "geniuses". The phenomenology of spirit manifested itself in Hegel's reason. In the history of philosophy we can trace the evolutionary process of spirit, or how the dialectical self-activity of the concepts produces the universe, state, religion, and finally, Hegel's absolute reason; all of it purely subjective phenomena, since "objectivity" is an illusion. Hegel's readers have disregarded his absolute subjectivism, but, admittedly, it is well masked.

⁶The dialectical world process worked in accordance with a certain method discovered by Hegel: that of thesis, antithesis, synthesis. Hegel had discovered what the well-known truism says that cultural development appears to proceed by contradictions. This is connected with the succession of generations. The new generation, always dissatisfied with conditions, finds most things wrong, which they really are and, jumping to conclusions, assumes that the opposite will be right. It is age-old insight that there is a core of truth in everything; that the importance and applicability of new (rediscovered) ideas are often overestimated. The idea is gone over from every possible angle, again and again ad nauseam. It is put into every possible context, applied to like and unlike. This leads eventually to a reaction against the exaggerations, the reaction itself to be exaggerated. It takes time before an idea is made relative and put into its correct context. That this is how it must always happen was Hegel's patent, and it was so because that was the way the world spirit worked, but not Napoleon, whom he believed to be the world spirit on horseback. According to Hegel, any change implies a contradiction incarnate. In his sovereign arbitrariness he made the subjective objective and the objective subjective.

⁷Hegelian thesis-antithesis-synthesis dialectic depends either on objective ignorance and thence possible contradictory hypotheses, or on confusion of absolute and relative, or on confusion of the logical and the linguistic modes of expression. We express ourselves in absolute instead of relative statements. If language contained a number of handy relativisms, then the absence of relativization would be seen to be due to objective ignorance. Presumably, logical formalism has retarded the understanding of the general significance of relativity. The criterion of reason is reality. Contradiction implies misapprehension, ignorance. Reason is filled with contradictions because of its faulty working-up of the content of sense. If subjectivity and objectivity contradict each other, the fault is with subjectivity. Our subjectivity combined with our objective ignorance makes reality seem illogical to us, in the same way as the logic of a deeper insight often seems illogical to the simpler logic of ignorance.

⁸By the latter half of the 18th century natural research had definitely started in most branches of science. One discovery followed another in quick succession. Schelling and Hegel attentively followed the research of their day. The thing to do was to pluck together material for systems. They took everything they could lay hands on. Not surmising that research was still in its infancy, they thought it had already reached its utmost limits. Thus they could take its material as it was and make the absolute knowledge system out of it. Hegel went farthest in his sovereign enterprisingness. Not only did he construct a system, but thought that he could prove that this was how things must be and not otherwise. The result was grotesque, of course. For example, he tried to prove that there could not possibly be more than seven planets in the solar system, that iron became heavier when magnetized, that the law of gravity contradicted the law of inertia, and

other follies. When, later, new discoveries were made that revealed his lack of judgement, his system went down with a bang.

⁹And what a crash that was! After the 1830's, any scientist who mentioned the word philosophy was laughed to scorn and regarded as feeble-minded. They too have now become philosophers and begun speculating, which is to be regretted.

¹⁰The philosophical part of Hegel's system was spared this fate, because the philosophers tried to save as much as possible of fictionalism. From originally seeking to solve the enigma of existence, philosophy has actually degenerated into an end in itself. It has become the study of the history of philosophy and then, of course, they are anxious to give it all the appearance of rationality and to gloss over the fictions. By trying to "explain" all the absurdities they increase the confusion of ideas. The esoterician can afford to be more ruthlessly frank and to admit that the whole of philosophy is the imaginative speculation of ignorance, and as such misleading. The Uppsala philosophers, Hedvall, Hägerström, and Phalén, especially Hedvall (of whom Hedenius writes: "Karl Hedvall's brilliant paper on Hume's theory of knowledge is one of the most original and acute dissertations ever to have been debated at a Swedish university."), demonstrated that all philosophic systems constructed up to then were logically untenable. They disapproved of the attempts made by the historians of philosophy to psychologize the principal mistakes away and thereby to make the history of philosophy history, but not philosophy. But not even they realized that mental consciousness cannot solve the problem of reality.

5.32 THE REACTION AGAINST FICTIONALISM

¹The one scientific discovery after the other refuted Hegel's dictatorial assertions and made it clear that reality was something totally different from the imaginative constructions of fictionalist romantics. The reaction against the speculative systems, which up to then dominated all thinking, was of course violent. Not only the natural scientists, but also the educated public, lost faith in philosophy. Instead they turned to the scientists with their superior common sense conception of reality as to the physical world. People thought that they could do without philosophy. Unfortunately, those physicalists who sought to popularize the scientific overall view did not have the requisite capacity, and this only added to disorientation.

²Scrapping the history of philosophy, however, would just amount to repeating the same errors in thinking. The history of philosophy is the history of errors. Philosophy does not help us either to find "the truth" or to explain existence. It shows us how we should not think. It demonstrates the errors in thinking inevitable for the human intellect. And that is important enough. The only rational outlook for exoteric philosophy is to regard as truth what remains when all mistakes have been made. We shall gradually arrive closer at the truth following the path of discarded mistakes. Once the philosophers realize this, they will treat the attempts put forward at solving the philosophic problems in a totally different and more critical manner. The history of philosophy must be ruthless criticism, not attempts to preserve all sorts of fancy. As it is now, it is largely a series of falsifications. The philosophers' absurdities have been glossed over, or omitted on the crucial points, to make the whole of it appear more rational, disregarded the fact that the mistakes often have not even been discovered.

³There are only two rational ways of looking of existence: that of common sense or that of the hylozoic reality system. Karl Hedvall, the Uppsala philosopher, with his eminent logical acuity and common sense, demonstrated not only that the direct, unreflective apprehension of reality by objective sense is the only correct one, but also that subjective reason misleads and that sense,

which can only ascertain facts, is defenceless against the theories of reason. And this defencelessness makes the philosophic mistakes possible.

⁴There is no end to research. There is no possibility for man of arriving at any final result as regards existence. The exoteric "truth", the absolute knowledge system, is the dreamt-of final goal of research. Mankind has still a great deal to do before it has explored the physical world and has discovered all physical laws. To the normal individual, the knowledge of reality is in all essentials a result of natural research. The tasks of philosophy are to be limited to immanent criticism, examinations as to principles, conceptual analysis, and making systems of survey that orient in the results obtained by research. Philosophic criticism shows the faults of the systems, their incorrect bases, inner contradictions, and absurd consequences. This criticism will gradually reveal more and more faults in the systems instead of, as now, trying to gloss them over. In analysing concepts one must proceed cautiously. All human thinking is interspersed with auxiliary concepts, which cannot be dispensed with until they have been replaced with the fundamental facts, either of research or of esoterics. In depriving ourselves of auxiliary concepts we never find the correct concepts, but only deprive ourselves of a necessary material for thought.

⁵We still have to mention four philosophers, each of whom found and emphasized one Platonic idea especially, one agreeing with reality: Schopenhauer, omnipotent blind will; Hartmann, the unconscious; Spencer, the fundamental principle of evolution; and Bergson, intuition. Admitted that the systems which they built on their ideas were failures. But the ideas themselves got their memorials and thus have been preserved for the history of ideas, the heir of philosophy.

⁶Finally, some words about pragmatism, (like semantics) infinitely typical of the aberration of disoriented reason, infinitely typical of the unclear concepts and muddled thinking of modern times. It is the arbitrariness of subjectivism in all its glory. Pragmatism is the philosophic counterpart to theology's jesuitism, which they will vainly try to rehabilitate. Pragmatism is the notion that the end justifies the means dressed up as philosophy. The so-called truth-value of an idea is said to depend on its suitability for achieving a desired end. Lies not only are allowed to be called truth, but are truth, provided they serve a purpose. Nazis and Bolsheviks have also made use of that idea. Pragmatism also includes the attempts to make the scientific hypotheses the basis of the knowledge system. Such attempts are bound to fail since no hypotheses are tenable in the long run. From originally meaning purposeful or fit for life (= true), pragmatism took on an ever wider meaning, something like the philosophy of immanence.

⁷Looking back on the course that European philosophy has taken during its 2500 years (the zodiacal epoch of Pisces), one finds that mankind has been slow to acquire the reality ideas. Mankind has had to work the ideas into fictional systems in order to comprehend them and preserve them for posterity. Step by step people are being unwittingly enticed into reality by replacing their fictions with reality ideas. The individuals' need of mental self-activity has been met in that they have been allowed to build their own imaginative systems more or less logical. With infinite labour the individual has to form new world views and life views for himself using the reality ideas that are gradually revealed, until mankind has seen that the knowledge of reality will be inaccessible to human reason until it has realized the superiority of esoterics as a working hypothesis. It is of these ideas that modern conceptual analysis seeks to deprive mankind.

5.33 Schopenhauer

¹Schopenhauer's realistic upbringing, which made him look upon life and experience as the source of all knowledge, saved him from scholastic juggling with concepts. When studying philosophy, he at once saw the baroqueness of constructing categories and building systems out of empty concepts, empty because lacking the content of the facts of reality. The narrowness of his studies (the Upanishads, exoteric Platon, and Kant) prevented him seeing the falsity of three of Kant's many dogmas: subjectivism, space and time as forms of apprehension, and the division of reality into phenomenon and thing in itself. By accepting these three he ruined his own system. Space is dimension and time is duration. Time is the manner of measuring the succession of events.

²Primordial matter (chaos) is without space. Space arises only with the cosmos. In the cosmos, matter makes the perception of space possible, motion makes the perception of time possible, and the processes of nature make it possible for us to ascertain laws of nature, or causality – all of these things different in different worlds.

³According to esoterics, reality has three aspects: matter, motion, and consciousness. Descartes and Spinoza emphasized the matter and consciousness aspects, Schopenhauer stuck to the motion and consciousness aspects. Since all three aspects are absolute and thus cannot be derived from anything else, any attempt to explain the world which does not take all three into account is bound to fail.

⁴During all his life Schopenhauer wavered between subjectivism and objectivism. In fact, subjectivism was a theory that warred against the whole of his instinct of life and sense of reality; that was why he emphasized so strongly the causality of matter as a substitute for objective matter. No one has been able to portray reality as he did, no one has so stressed the fact that direct experience of reality is the source of all our knowledge. Sometimes reality is maya to him, fallacious appearance, illusion. But mostly reality is just what it pretends to be. "The character of nature is honesty through and through." Here he is almost stumbling over Hedvall's axiom, that it is our theories that mislead us, that our objective sense is defenceless against, at the mercy of, the fictions of our subjective reason with their suggestive power. It was this wavering that made his system replete with contradictions. One understands why Hedvall, to whom all contradiction was an abomination, called him a novelist. Nevertheless, no philosopher of modern times has enunciated so many esoteric truths as did Schopenhauer. Infinitely typically, the greatest philosopher of the 19th century has been the most disdained by the professional philosophers.

⁵Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant and of his epigons is among the most acute ever accomplished. He brilliantly refuted most of Kant's sophisms, the fictitiousness of Kant's both theoretical and practical "pure reason". If he had got the opportunity to remember anew his latent esoteric knowledge, then nothing would have been left of Kant, the physicalist.

⁶It is interesting to note his four distinctions as to man's primary ways of apprehending reality: the cause and effect of physical processes, the ground and consequence of logical thinking, the self-evident axioms of mathematics which do not need proof, the will's lack of freedom in that it is always determined by the strongest motive.

⁷In his doctrine of the will Schopenhauer saw more deeply than any other philosopher. The will, the origin of motion, is the primordial power, eternally blind, dynamic; that is, eternally self-active, inexhaustible, omnipotent. In order to explain how this blind will could produce expedient forms of life, Schopenhauer had recourse to a system of form-furnishing "Platonic ideas". To that extent he has correctly seen that Platon's ideas are living forces, causal elementals with ideas

charged with energy. (According to esoterics, slowly awakening consciousness in ever higher kingdoms acquires an ever greater ability to appropriate the blind dynamic energy of primordial matter, this energy thus becoming will.) His insufficient psychological insight, which made him overlook the fact that emotionality has its own reality, had the result that he could not retain the theory of the absolute blindness of the will. He made the emotions belong to the will, so giving it some sort of consciousness; a confusion of emotionality and will (cf para 3.4.7).

⁸Also as an ethicist Schopenhauer holds an exceptional position. He made it clear that, despite all lecturing, a rational morality has never been put forward, that they have not even been able to agree on its content, principles, or motives. What has been produced is a collection of fictions, whims, taboos, and aprioristic soap-bubbles.

⁹No egoistic motives will do. The only tenable motives are uprightness and sympathy, yet these have never been emphasized in any ethical system, although they can be glimpsed in Rousseau. As is to be regretted, Schopenhauer used that failure, the negative term pity (Mitleid), which aroused Nietzsche's frenzied opposition. Anyone who suffers with another, just adds to the suffering in the world to no purpose, soon becomes a nervous wreck and so himself in need of help instead of being able to provide help for others effectively.

¹⁰Commandments and demands depend on reward and punishment, thus are not categorical, as Kant said, but conditional. Rational and upright action are not necessarily the same thing; what is noble is not necessarily rational, and what is rational is not necessarily noble. Duty and commitment go together. Duties presuppose rights. So-called conscience is a complex of fear, superstition, prejudice, vanity, habits, and other qualities, the proportions varying according to aptitude, upbringing, and influence from the environment.

¹¹Religion also receives its due in an interesting dialogue. One must be able to distinguish between religion, which is man's longing for the world of ideals, and the Church with its ignorance, lack of judgement, and hatred. With its unending damning and condemning, its intolerance and persecution, its torture and burning at the stake, the Church has forfeited all claims to be an authority on truth and justice. These expressions of hatred condemn a Church the task of which was the preach love. One cannot deny, however, that the Church has also done a lot of good. In an age of barbarism it fought against lawlessness, had a refining influence on crude manners and customs, accomplished charitable works, guarded the inheritance of learning, and encouraged art to adorn its temples.

¹²Schopenhauer was psychologically correct in his view that those studying philosophy at the universities were not, as they thought, searching for the truth, but for proof of beliefs they already had.

¹³Schopenhauer thought he could find a common trait in saints of all ages: the killing of the will to live by means of quietism and asceticism. His latent saint's instinct misled him when faced with the suffering in the world. Quite contrarily to his vital, healthy, realistic instinct of life, he was a theoretical pessimist. This was due, as he saw it, to life being the work of blind primordial will and lacking an absolute meaning or a rational goal. The history of the world, being the world's court of justice, shows no development, just an endless repetition of aimlessness and irrationality. But that is what it would do if the human kingdom were the highest natural kingdom.

¹⁴Of course, such a life view has a life-paralysing effect. According to esoterics, life is not suffering. Suffering is bad reaping from bad sowing. The self (monad) incarnates in order to have experiences and to learn from them, get to know reality and life. It does not destroy the tool (the

organism) it needs for this by asceticism and moralism, depressing and devitalizing views. Buddha's nirvana is not the extinction of the self, not the end but the beginning, an entering into a higher natural kingdom. Even physical life will finally become a paradise, once mankind has acquired common sense, uprightness, and the sense of unity, the insight that what is not love is hatred.

¹⁵They have been very annoyed at Schopenhauer's caustic criticism of the three "philosophasters": Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Instead, they should have appreciated that there was one who dared to object to the scandalous nuisance. Indisputably, he was by far their superior in acuity as well as in sense of reality (apart from his theoretical dependence on Kant's original, absolute subjectivism). Some time in the future they will see how right his criticism was.

¹⁶It is characteristic that it is precisely those who have had a very long sojourn in the mental world in between incarnations who are easy prey to the philosophy of illusion (which says that all matter is illusion).

5.34 *Hartmann*

¹Eduard von Hartmann's contribution to the history of philosophy consists in his assertion of the idea that the unconscious is a basic factor in existence and necessary to the understanding of reality. Except for this idea there would be no reason for mentioning him, for he produced nothing else of enduring value. As usual in philosophy, the framework into which he put this idea was an abortive construction. The idea itself was in no way new. It is suggested in the Pythagorean system. (The monads are unconscious to begin with. Their consciousness and consciousness activity develop in the process of manifestation.) Hartmann often had recourse to the unconscious as a mystical basis of explanation when no other explanations were available. One should not do so, of course, although the psychoanalysts do it.

²Despite the fiasco of Kant and Hegel and despite Schopenhauer's annihilating criticism, Hartmann had not seen the preposterousness of constructing categories. As is always the case with the subjectivists, whenever they have to deal with the annoying external world, he started from the scientific ascertainment that matter exists, since this is the only possible basis of explanation. Having thus become able to use the facts of research, the objective was made subjective, as with a wave of the wand, and fitted into pigeon-holes that he had constructed.

³Hartmann is a typical eclectic, collecting all the ideas of his predecessors and trying to make a system out of these ideas. His system impresses the reader by its many-sidedness and wealth of content.

5.35 *Spencer*

¹Herbert Spencer started from the results of natural research and tried to combine ascertained facts into a knowledge system. Through their surveys such systems facilitate orientation in the disciplines. The system shows how far research has advanced. As a matter of principle he refrained from allowing subjective reason to try to judge anything that could not be found in the content of objective sense. He is thus the typical immanence philosopher with the correct instinct that what conflicts with common sense cannot agree with reality. What is absurd is useless as a working hypothesis.

²Even before Charles Darwin, Spencer developed his theory of evolution, according to which evolution is a progressive change from incoherent homogeneity into coherent heterogeneity of structure and function. The idea of development had, of course, begun to be noticed as early as in

the 18th century, by Lamarck in particular. But it was only after Spencer had demonstrated the universality of the law of development and its validity in all spheres of life, especially biology, sociology, and psychology, that it really made headway. His “system of synthetic philosophy” was the summary of contemporary learning. One can object that he made far too much use of the principle of analogy. Society is not a physiological organism. When analogy is pressed too far, it confuses more than it explains.

³Esoterics holds that mechanical events, being in accordance with eternal laws of nature, serve the great cosmic purpose: the development of every atomic consciousness from unconsciousness to omniscience. The experiences of the individual consciousness and the working-up of these are added to that fund of latent experience in the subconscious which is steadily increased throughout the incarnations and makes it possible for the individual to comprehend and understand more and more, to acquire knowledge of reality and life, discover the laws of existence and learn to apply them rationally. Being purposeful, the laws of life make consciousness development possible.

⁴Of course, Spencer did not find favour with the professional philosophers. Otherwise they should have seen that he was really a model philosopher, whose task it should be to orient in reality and supply surveys of the accomplishments of research. Instead, philosophers nowadays actually just concern themselves with their so-called theory of knowledge, the problem of the possibility of knowledge. When the philosophers have elucidated the philosophic pseudo-problems and the errors in thinking of the great thinkers, they will be able to turn their attention to summing up the results of research into reality.

5.36 Bergson

¹Bergson came into contact with esoterics while still being educated. He had the opportunity to acquaint himself with its ideas and later used as many of them as he himself understood or could employ for his exoteric philosophy.

²According to Bergson, space is homogenous and a quantity without quality. That is both right and wrong. Infinite, limitless space, which in itself contains countless cosmoses, is itself homogenous. But at the same time this “space” is the very primordial matter, which possesses all the inexhaustible qualities of life such as they appear in atomized manifestational matter.

³Time lacks dimension. Using a line to symbolize time was a failure, a thoroughly badly chosen simile which has given rise to many misconceptions. Only space has dimension. Time is that unity which links the past to the present and the future. Time is durability, continuous existence, duration. Objective time is always connected with space in a succession of events. It is a measure of processes and therefore can be divided into periods, or time-cycles. Time is both objective and subjective. The cosmos (in primordial matter) consists of manifestational matter and is that which we can term space in which all worlds exists. Time is a way of measuring the total process in which all events occur. Space as well as time can be divided into units however small and, for us, are ways of measuring and grading.

⁴According to Pythagoras, the cosmos is filled with interpenetrating material worlds of different degrees of density, down to the coarsest, the physical world. None of these worlds is unreal, a fallacious reality, an illusion. All have objective material existence. Of course, beings in lower worlds are unable to apprehend objectively matter in higher worlds. But they are able to perceive subjectively the vibrations from those higher worlds, although they are unable to attribute these expressions of life to higher kinds of matter. Only esoterics can give the requisite correct explanations of these phenomena.

⁵The past exists in the present. To a causal self, there is no past of the planetary atomic worlds 47–49, nor is there to a 43-self of the solar systemic atomic worlds 43–49. The monad learns from all its experiences and, therefore, is continually developing. Both the internal world of consciousness and the external world of matter are constantly changing. The concept retains what is universal, characteristic, common in a number of individual things.

⁶The intuitional idea of “creative evolution” was the one Bergson was most successful in formulating. The great cosmic evolution does not work according to a predetermined plan. Only the final goal is laid down: all monads acquiring omniscience about the whole cosmos. What Bergson grasped clearly was that evolution itself creates the conditions and possibilities of its growth. These conditions, however, depend on the individual character of every being, from atoms to planets, solar systems, etc. (Since all matter has consciousness, every material form is a being on a certain level of development.) The past thereby limits the possibilities of the future. A rigid plan would set aside the law of freedom according to which every monad has the right to the freedom (conditioned by insight and ability) it has once acquired and continues to apply lawfully. Evolution feels its way forward along every conceivable path in order to find the one most expedient for each and all.

Another intuitive idea of Bergson appears in his assertion of the possibility of intuition. By teaching this he was going right back to Platon. It is intuition that opens up the world of ideas for us. It is a special organ of knowledge that gives us correct ideas, correct knowledge of reality. Only a few human beings have worked their way up through the different “layers of consciousness” of the mental world and succeeded in conquering the consciousness of intuition. Even most philosophers are still in the lowest two domains of deductive thinking and principle thinking, respectively. One cannot speak of true intuition until the individual has acquired and mastered perspective thinking and system thinking. The “intuition” that Bergson tries to describe, however, is rather the latent synthesis of experiences which constitutes the individual’s self-acquired, unconscious system of thought and spontaneously determines his conception of reality and life.

5.37 Conclusion

¹At the present time mankind is passing through a new period both subjectivist and skeptical. This is the result of the break-down of theological dogmatism, of the dawning insight into the fictitiousness of philosophic speculation, and of nuclear physics splitting the dogmatic concepts of natural science. The older systems have disintegrated in their entirety, it not being possible to put a new exoteric system in their stead. Consistent subjectivism leads to complete disorientation in existence, sovereign arbitrariness, lack of principles, and irresponsibility.

²Since the conception of right comes from the life view, which in its turn is based on the world view, the general disintegration of systems had led to a disintegration of the concepts of right and justice, and thus to general lawlessness. “People often feel profoundly uncertain as to what is right and wrong. They are not even certain whether right and wrong are anything but old superstition.” The theologians are much to blame for this state of affairs, since they have stubbornly opposed the reconciliation of religion and science. They seem unable to free themselves from the illusions and fictions of the prevalent religion.

³Just as there can be only one religion (common to all wise men of all ages, namely, the religion of love and wisdom), there can be only one philosophy (one true system of thought) and one true scientific conception of physical reality. When, eventually, research by induction has been able to construct that system, it will have attained its goal. But this still is a very distant goal.

⁴As long ago as 600 B.C.E., Buddha made it clear that human reason cannot solve the problems of existence, cannot solve the problems of philosophy.

⁵Esoterics is the summary of those basic facts about reality and the meaning and goal of life which have been provided by the planetary hierarchy and have always been available to the élite in secret knowledge orders, but which are nowadays permitted for publication. Without this knowledge people will always be disputing about all the fundamental problems and every thinking man will waste his time on laboriously acquiring his own fictitious conception of existence. Only esoterics constitutes the common basis of religion, philosophy, and science.

⁶Hylozoics compels reason to accept the only “working hypothesis” that agrees with reality and can never be replaced with something better in the future.

⁷The philosophers have always been hunting for what is “universally valid and necessary”, what is logically inevitable. Hylozoics, correctly understood, shows us precisely what is “logically necessary”, logically inevitable.

⁸Neither religion, nor philosophy, nor science can present an unshakable basis on which to build the life view.

SUPPLEMENT

5.38 Contemporary Philosophy

¹Throughout the ages the philosophers have sought – albeit gropingly, instinctively – some kind of explanation of existence, of the meaning and goal of life, sought to answer the three questions of the Sphinx: Whence? How? and Whither? They have not been able to see that this is impossible, since they have been lacking knowledge of reality and the prerequisites of this knowledge. They still do not surmise that visible reality is a tiny fraction of total reality. They are still as certain of their misconceptions as priests and medicine men of all ages.

²Philosophy is limited to physical reality and therefore, physically, all philosophy remains physicalism and, superphysically, subjectivism: speculations without reality content. In order to speak about the superphysical one must have factual knowledge of the superphysical worlds.

³Knowledge of reality consists in a system of subjective reality concepts, based on and agreeing with the facts of objective, material reality. When these facts have been ascertained and put into their correct contexts (historical, logical, psychological, and causal), man will have true knowledge of reality.

⁴The philosophers lack superphysical objective consciousness and thus are unable to ascertain facts in the superphysical worlds. The philosophers are beginning to realize this, which is a great step forward. They realize that what is not susceptible of objective study remains subjectivism. The history of philosophy demonstrates that all philosophy has been subjectivist; imaginative constructions without correspondence in reality. But the conclusion drawn from this common sense insight by the modern philosophers is false. The fact that the philosophers have failed certainly does not prove that there cannot be any knowledge but of the physical.

⁵When thought without facts occupies itself with superphysical things, it remains subjective and is incapable of seeing its own subjectivity. The logical demonstrations of the old philosophers remained wholly within the framework of subjectivity and lacked the criteria of objectivity, and so their speculations never agreed with reality. It is not the fault of logic if it is used improperly.

⁶Science seeks to explore physical but not superphysical reality. It does not know yet that

physical matter is composed of superphysical matter and that the causes of processes are to be sought in superphysical material reality.

⁷Psychologists concern themselves with the consciousness aspect. Lacking superphysical objective consciousness they have to limit themselves to consciousness such as it manifests itself and can be apprehended in the organism.

⁸Modern philosophers have drawn the extreme conclusions from the total fiasco of philosophy or, rather, of subjectivism. They wonder whether the traditional reality concepts are subjectivist abstractions with no counterparts in reality and they have therefore begun to discard all such concepts, not knowing that these reality concepts were obtained from the esoteric knowledge orders. They do not realize that also their new speculation is subjectivism. Indeed, they are trying to discard the concept of “objective reality”.

⁹The inability to judge correctly affects reality. Or what should be said of this profundity?

¹⁰“It is a naïve idea that reality is an objective quantity given once and for all. Three men look at an elephant and each has a different perception of its size. Thus in reality it is three different elephants they see.”

¹¹Apparently people can no longer see that there is a difference between subjective perception and objective reality. The philosophers have thus reverted to the subjectivism and individualism of the sophist Protagoras. Measurement will show that it is a matter of three individual, wrong perceptions of one and the same elephant. There can never be more than one elephant.

¹²In all ages common sense has mistrusted the speculations of the philosophers and this innate instinct for reality (acquired in previous incarnations) has always been proved right. One asks why it is that in all ages philosophers have disdained common sense which, after all, is mankind’s highest sense.

¹³The fact that it is possible to reject that objective perception of reality, which the monads have acquired during their evolution through four natural kingdoms, is sufficient proof of reason’s possibility of error.

¹⁴Just as the culture (literature, art, and music; though not just any kind of literature, art, and music) or our times in all respects has embarked on paths that lead to cultural disintegration, the same is true of modern philosophy.

¹⁵A thinker like Bertrand Russell has managed to keep his common sense as for his life view, but the same cannot be said of his epigons. (It is by no means unimaginable that they could be reincarnations of Greek sophists.) They do not even know what common sense is, believing as they do that the perception of universal human experience is wrong and not surmising the rationality of existence. They believe that they are able to construct a new way of seeing (so-called semantics, a new kind of delusion), thus making the last error bigger than the first. This is to declare philosophy bankrupt. Philosophy has more than ever become the discipline that strives to explain what is self-evident (being the result of mankind’s collected experience) by absurdities. Philosophy, originally the slave of theology, has now become the slave of physical science. Poor mankind!

5.39 *Bertrand Russell*

¹Russell is undoubtedly the best object of study for the esoterician wishing to illustrate the philosophic-scientific world view of our times with its merits and limitations. He is the most suitable one for many other reasons too. He has demonstrated the fictitiousness of the alleged knowledge of theology, philosophy, and science, which mankind has inherited from its ancestors

down the centuries. He has tried to free people from the enormous burden of theological dogmas warring with reason and moral taboos hostile to life, which make it impossible for people to live together without friction. He has shown up the faults of the political ideologies of our times: capitalism, socialism, fascism, Marxism. He has demonstrated the necessity of finding a new basis for life view. In one word, he has tried to work for a reformation in most spheres of human life.

²Russell's influence is quite understandable. His common sense combined with his freedom from traditional dogmas of thought in all spheres of human life, his vast education, his historical and socio-political orientation, his intellectual honesty and passionate truthfulness, have given him an authoritative position in the philosophic and scientific thought of our times.

³From his childhood Lord Russell was, of course, inoculated with the religious and social delusions of British Society. But once an intellect like Russell's is roused to subject these dogmas, mankind's veritable original sin, to logical and factual analysis, not much is left of all that which mankind still accepts as truth. But this calls for more than acuity and analytical ability. It calls above all for courage: courage to think, courage to examine tenability, courage to doubt even what one has oneself accepted, courage to communicate the results of one's work, courage to stand alone, abandoned by everybody, facing an entire world.

⁴The first reactions from his social milieu, academic opinion, the learned, and his friends, were violent. Later, when his criticism hit the political beliefs of the multitude, there were mob riots.

⁵Like all pathfinders in the jungle of illusions and fictions of human ignorance, Russell was held guilty of sacrilege and was persecuted by the mob of all social classes.

⁶It is by no means true, as the Brahmins maintain, that a higher social caste is proof of a higher stage of development. Individuals at all stages of development can incarnate in any caste. It all depends on the law of reaping, the law of destiny, or one's self-chosen life task.

⁷In what follows only two aspects of Russell's production will be dealt with: Russell as a theorist of knowledge and as a social philosopher in a wider sense.

⁸This account of Russell's views is given with a reservation. It stands to reason that a thinker who has throughout a long life of research-work published book after book will also correct opinions previously entertained. Continually increasing insight entails continual modifications. Russell never stopped to ask whether his latest work contradicted what he had previously written. Thus, when statements made in one of his books are criticized, it does not necessarily mean that they will reflect the final views that Russell may have had on the matter.

⁹Russell's endeavour has been to set mankind free from innumerable thought-paralysing dogmas in most spheres of life, not only the historically established ones, but also contemporary fictions proclaimed as great intellectual discoveries.

¹⁰First Russell's world view will be discussed as regards philosophy and science, with particular criticism of pertaining conceptions.

¹¹In a second part his views as to theology, politics, and general social philosophy will be scrutinized.

5.40 WORLD VIEW

¹The thinking man wishing to obtain a conception of existence acquires a world view as regards external, objective, material reality and a life view as to emotional and mental life belonging to internal, subjective consciousness.

²The very material of knowledge is made up of ascertained facts. These are compiled by

science into theories and are explained by hypotheses. Theories can be divided into historical, logical (factual), psychological, and causal. A theory is complete only if all the facts are ascertained about the subject matter in question. This is practically never the case. A hypothesis has to be abandoned when it cannot explain also new facts that may be added. The duration of a hypothesis has been calculated statistically as ten years on the average.

³Scientific research has already filled whole libraries with facts concerning the three aspects of existence: the reality of matter, motion, and consciousness. Chemistry, geology, astronomy, and biology are considered as being the basic sciences of matter; physics as that of motion; and psychology as that of consciousness. The remaining disciplines can be ordered under these headings, with the exception of history which furnishes facts about the past of the pertaining matters.

⁴For a fact to be accepted by science as a fact, it has to be ascertainable to all.

⁵Science as a whole, as a system of knowledge, is a compilation of facts, theories, and hypotheses. It is the scientific system that provides a survey orienting in the results of research.

⁶It could be said that this is the starting-point of the scientist's conception of reality and of natural research.

5.41 *Philosophy*

¹Russell came to logic via mathematics. While still young he became interested in the relation of mathematics and logic on finding that the geometrical axioms could not be proved logically. He examined the nature of mathematical knowledge, attempting to make mathematics a synthetic science and at the same time to give logic a character analogous to that of mathematics. He tried to show that mathematics is a further development of logic, that mathematics is logic applied to quantitative relations. Having reduced mathematics to logic, he found unsolved contradictions in logic itself. He thought that he could solve these by means of symbolic logic and logical types (which are apt to be misleading). He came to the result that the more logic is developed, the less it can prove. The knowledge logic provides consists in stating that "if something is true, then something else is also true". This, however, is what has always been known: that if the premises are correct, then the conclusion drawn from them is correct as well.

²Neither logic nor mathematics are detached sciences that can produce knowledge, but are auxiliaries in dealing with the inexhaustible relations of matter and energy and in solving the pertaining problems. Both logic and mathematics require material to work on. Without facts, the results obtained are mere play with symbols. In connecting logic and mathematics there is always a considerable risk of confusing quality and quantity. Logic has to do with quality, mathematics with quantity.

³At first logic was overestimated, now they are analogously overestimating the importance of mathematics. The essential of all knowledge is ascertaining facts and putting them in correct relations in ever wider interrelated contexts.

⁴From logic Russell moved to philosophy with its pseudo-problems, which nobody has been able to solve, since nobody has been able to formulate the problems correctly. Introduced by Bradley into Hegel's philosophy, Russell soon found the speculations of that romantic untenable.

⁵Russell studied thoroughly the history of European philosophy with its accounts of what the historians have come to know of the speculations of Greeks and Romans about existence and its phenomena, and the results arrived at by the thinkers of the medieval and modern ages with their guesswork.

⁶Having ascertained that no speculation would provide knowledge of reality, Russell was faced

with the inevitable fundamental problem of all subjectivists: is knowledge of existence possible at all? To him it seemed that Hume formulated this question most clearly of all. Russell was no more successful than Hume in finding the logical (objective, or factual) proof of the existence of the external world. He remained an incurable skeptic as regards the theory of knowledge.

⁷When examining the consciousness elements in man's apprehension of material reality, he discovered, as so many subjectivists before him, that these consist of sense perceptions. He did not realize that this is a psychological theory that leads us away from the logical apprehension of objective reality. On the contrary, he regarded his own conception as logicist.

⁸The manner in which an object becomes perceptible through processes in nerve and brain cells may be a physio-psychological problem, but not a logical one. The assertion that "we do not see the object as it is" is logically illegitimate. Into the question of whether objects are what they appear to be the concept of appearance has been introduced incorrectly. Sense apprehends physical objects directly and immediately in their objective materiality. Both logicist and psychologist subjectivists reinterpret experience by theories, which is logically incorrect. In all ages the main tendency of philosophic speculation seems to have been never to "let this be this", but to try to make "this" something else (preferably something very profound) and in so doing they have set aside the law of identity.

⁹Russell's notion of philosophic problems being unsolvable led him to assume that we use words which have no counterparts in reality and that the philosophic problems were caused by faulty use of language. He considered, therefore, that it was his task to write a new history of philosophy.

¹⁰In this he is generally content to account for the views of the different philosophers in connection with the ways of looking at things of their day, though often enough his own skepticism shines through. As for the pre-Sokratean philosophers, he had, of course, to rely on what historical tradition had to tell about them.

¹¹Russell's criticism of modern speculations on the superphysical is good evidence both of his common sense and of his logical acuity. Those were conjectures of ignorance not even deserving to be called hypotheses. Such things cannot be criticized too much, for those freaks have a formidable power to survive, continually to hinder common sense and correct apprehension of reality.

¹²History often does us a disservice by preserving the errors of the past in such a way that life-ignorant injudiciousness goes on accepting them as essential elements of knowledge. The reality ideas are drowned in the whole of this collection of fictions. As the representatives of wisdom, the philosophers must have believed themselves competent to express opinions on everything and explain everything. The unsatisfactory solutions of the problems were improved on with new fictions until the prospect of mankind ever finding its way out of the labyrinth seemed more and more remote.

¹³Russell's merit is that he has helped to set mankind free from a number of philosophic fictions handed down throughout the history of philosophy. An even greater work has been done in this respect and with weightier substantial argument has criticism been voiced by the Uppsala philosophers, Hedvall, Hägerström, and Phalén. They have shown up the logical error of subjectivist thinking. They arrived jointly at the realization, best formulated by Hedvall, that the unreflective apprehension by objective sense of objective reality (as opposed to the reality of subjective reason) is the correct one, that the great deficiency of objective sense, to be regretted, is its defencelessness against the theories of subjective reason, which still dominates philosophic

thought. But, to be sure, they were mocked by the other contemporary philosophers, who wished to keep their beliefs.

¹⁴It is to be regretted that Russell himself departed from his thesis that it is the task of philosophy to ask questions, not to answer them. He sought to solve the problems in his own way. He displayed great ingenuity in substituting new fictions for old. Like all other subjectivists who lack insight into, and understanding of, the universal validity of the apprehension by objective sense of material reality, Russell thought that experience provided only subjective, not objective, certainty.

¹⁵Not knowing that the fundamental reality concepts, which go back to prehistoric times, were misinterpreted by the philosophers, he came to the conclusion that these concepts do not correspond to reality.

¹⁶He tried to replace these age-old, scientifically ascertained, objective reality concepts with subjective concepts determined by sense perceptions. Concepts that could not be traced back to sense perceptions were untenable concepts. Here he showed that he had not learned to see the difference between subjective and objective reality. The conceptual analysts have still not seen that reality concepts require objective knowledge of objective, or material, reality.

¹⁷With the tremendously limited knowledge of our times (science has managed to explore about one millionth part of reality), conceptual analysis is bound to lead to the disintegration of all reality concepts. Even those which are merely temporary auxiliary concepts have to be kept until facts definitively established by research make it possible to replace them with better ones. That is a matter for research, however, not for conceptual analysis.

¹⁸Since he, like Hume, did not succeed in logically demonstrating the existence of the external world, he (not knowing about the logical refutation of subjectivism by the Uppsala philosophers) subscribed to Hume's criticism of the concept of substance. On the other hand, he considered that there was reason for accepting the concept of causality, that discovering laws of nature is the essential thing in natural research, that laws of probability suggest the existence of laws as yet undiscovered. It would not be surprising if a causal objectivist (having the ability to study previous incarnations, thus not a so-called clairvoyant) were to find that Protagoras, Hume, and Russell were incarnations of the same individual.

¹⁹As regards knowledge of superphysical reality, he drew the usual conclusion that, since the philosophers' explanations so far advanced were all patently absurd, we cannot know anything about it. An acute logician, he realized that one cannot, of course, deny the existence of what one knows nothing about.

²⁰In vain he sought to set mankind free from the burden of philosophy. Only an esoterician can do that.

5.42 *Science*

¹Natural science seeks to explore visible, physical reality. This defines its task and at the same time its inevitable limitation. Science is physicalism.

²All knowledge must be based on facts. In assessing the reality value of opinions, one must consider, not their degree of probability, which depends on their agreement with previously existing opinions, but the facts on which these opinions are based. Without facts all opinions are just pure fancy. With insufficient facts, all opinions are misleading. Acuity and profundity, imagination and logic, faith in the saint's patent to omniscience, will not suffice. But the more unfathomably profound it has been possible to make philosophy, the more correct the absurdities

have appeared to the philosophers' disciples. Reverently they have bowed before the incomprehensibly brilliant and in so doing have denied their own common sense, if they had any.

³Science makes its way slowly, advancing step by step, by ascertaining facts. These facts are summed up in theories and are explained by hypotheses. Both theories and hypotheses are continually being changed through newly ascertained facts. Facts, theories, and hypotheses are joined together into a system of thought which is regarded as scientific truth. These temporarily ruling systems of orientation, which show how far research has advanced, are continually being changed because of new facts with new theories and hypotheses. Facts that cannot be fitted into the prevailing systems of theories and hypotheses are regarded as doubtful. Facts that it is not possible to ascertain by the methods of research used by scientists are not regarded as facts. It follows from this that the most important quality of a hypothesis is not its being true, but its being probable: acceptable to science with its tremendously limited ability to explain.

⁴There are also a couple of psychological obstacles to research. One is the all but insurmountable difficulty of abandoning cherished fictional systems acquired at the cost of much labour. The other is the fact that there is always a considerable risk for the scientist that by being too much ahead of his time he will be declared an unreliable, uncritical, unscientific fantast by believing academic opinion – that irremediable guild-system – lagging behind the times, skeptical, mostly scornful, of everything that is new.

⁵Naturally, the scientists have shown themselves capable of being as dogmatic, fanatical, and intolerant as the theologians have been of old. Of course, Russell has a clear perception of this striving after power inherent in human nature. He is afraid, too, that after the political tyranny that succeeded to theological one, we are to experience the scientific tyranny, that the day will come when science will claim the power to regulate everything. Medical science, not least psychiatry, has begun to manifest such a tendency. Doctors already possess the power to set the legal rights of the individual aside and to shut up an undesirable person for the rest of his life, or to release bandits to let them go on with their trade. Energetic measures are needful against all such tendencies. The Board of Health must not be the final court of appeal. We have had enough of the guild spirit. It is not for doctors to be judges. That criminals are irresponsible we know all the same.

⁶Before nuclear physics split the entire dogmatism based on the hypotheses of the indestructibility of matter and energy, most revolutionary discoveries were dismissed out of hand as “conflicting with the laws of nature”. With the realization that not yet one per cent of the laws of nature has been explored, that particular phrase ought to disappear.

⁷Unfortunately, the nuclear physicists do not know that their instruments have enabled them to penetrate into the physical etheric world.

⁸There is every reason for scientists, as the greatest of them now see, to agree with Sokrates the wise, who admitted to limitless ignorance. That time should not be far off when cocksureness, whether dogmatic or skeptical, will be regarded as an evidence of injudiciousness. Science is unusable as a tenable world view.

⁹Russell started as a mathematician. He made no contribution of his own to natural research as such. From mathematics he went on to logic and there he tried to help orient the scientists who, very bewildered after nuclear physics had exploded the fundamental dogmas of science, were even beginning to doubt whether there were any laws of nature at all. Without laws the cosmos would be a chaos, which manifestly it is not. And he demonstrated that “it is in the very nature of the matter theoretically impossible to prove that a series of phenomena is not subject to laws”. He

maintained that it is the task of natural research to ascertain laws and that the requisite knowledge of phenomena will be lacking until the laws governing these have been found.

¹⁰Russell does what he can to combat scientific dogmatism and agrees that the short life of scientific hypotheses is evidence enough of our immense ignorance.

¹¹Russell is a physicalist. That being so, he is unable to see that the ultimate causes of processes lie in the superphysical. He considers that one cannot, of course, express an opinion on the unexplored; only that no facts acceptable to science are extant to prove the existence of the superphysical. For him, that settles the matter for the time being. His endeavour as a scientific logician has been to formulate a logic of facticity that is content to ascertain facts and laws of nature. No explanations are given without esoterics. In this appear Russell's common sense and superior scientific insight.

¹²The most questionable part of Russell's criticism is that he wishes to eliminate those reality concepts which have constituted the basis of the scientific outlook. Here his logic fails him. If logic cannot judge the nature of reality, then it will be in no position to assess the reality content of the fundamental concepts of science either. It is no argument that these concepts have been misinterpreted by philosophers and scientists lacking in knowledge of this very reality. Russell's attempts to substitute his own constructions for the fundamental concepts are likely only to lead still farther away from reality.

¹³Russell's trivial proposition that matter is not what it appears to be is very old "wisdom", but a failure all the same. Matter is always what it appears to be, but in addition something quite different and immensely more than philosophers and scientists can dream of.

5.43 Criticism of the World View

¹The fact that the theory of knowledge, the problem of the possibility of knowledge, that of whether one knows what one knows (which shows that one does not know), has been the central problem occupying Western philosophers for nearly three centuries, is infinitely typical of the mental disorientation of the West.

²That is what happens when, for two thousand years, people accept all sorts of superstitions and theological absurdities as truth or knowledge of reality. As a result, the very principle of reason, the ability to judge, the instinct of reality, has become so idiotized (in pertaining respects) as to be unserviceable. If this is allowed to continue, even the logical law of identity will be doubted. Logic will be used to destroy logic.

³Russell realizes only too well that neither theology, nor philosophy, nor science, has furnished a rational explanation of existence. He has often doubted whether man will ever be able to solve that problem.

⁴To Russell, as to other philosophers and scientists, "visible" reality is the only existing one.

⁵Now theologians à la Anders Nygren believe the same. They believe that the "soul" (apparently the same as the brain consciousness) dies along with the body and that on judgement day god will create a new earth to live on and restore everything that once was. Thus Westerners are physicalists.

⁶Russell as well as all other subjectivists must be what they are: physical beings in the physical world. But they do all they can to doubt the fact, mobilize all arguments of logic and psychology to demonstrate that reality is not real. The attempt to explain external, objective, material reality by sense perceptions is typical of the modern subjectivists, whether they call themselves psychologists or logicians.

⁷If you deprive man of concepts, you deprive him of the ability to comprehend. If you deprive man of understanding of the reality of matter, motion, energy, development, etc., you will contribute to idiotize mankind still more, definitively to destroy its ability to perceive reality.

⁸To doubt the existence of the external world, or that we can perceive it just as it is in its given physical reality, is to doubt one's own common sense and all correct perception of reality.

⁹The fact that there are superphysical material worlds in which we perceive material reality differently, several ever higher states of aggregation of cosmic matter, does not in any way refute the physical perception of reality, the only correct one in the physical world.

¹⁰To be able to judge the correctness of the reality concepts, one must possess knowledge of reality and a knowledge of the structure of matter and the nature of energy which is completely different from that of contemporary science. This is the foundation that the philosophers have always lacked and seem to be trying more and more to avoid getting. That is why the striving of modern conceptual analysts to replace old fictions with new and still more disorienting fictions is just a new form of fictionalism.

¹¹It is most regrettable that Russell never familiarized himself with the rich modern Indian yoga literature published in English. This is an unhappy deficiency in the equipment of anyone setting out to treat critically of the problems of philosophy.

¹²If, in addition, he had had an opportunity to study the old Pythagorean manuscripts, his comments on Pythagoras would have been very different. Unfortunately, he had to rely on what current text-books on the history of philosophy have to say about hylozoics and the pre-Sokratean philosophers. Without understanding of the world view of those thinkers, one will inevitably misinterpret their successors, Platon and Aristoteles, etc., as witnesses Russell's treatment of them.

¹³There is a great deal lacking in the education of the most learned exotericists of our day. It is to be hoped that the tremendously vast esoteric literature will soon be available also to the uninitiated, of course only such parts as could provide the basis for exact conception of reality. This would put European philosophy hitherto in the true light and show it up as the fictionalism it has always been and otherwise will continue to be.

¹⁴Science is totally ignorant of the real composition of matter. It is ignorant of the fact that the "ultimate causes" of physical processes lie in the superphysical.

¹⁵Actually, the word "superphysical" is misleading, since physical matter consists of six molecular kinds (states of aggregation), the higher three of which are unknown to science.

¹⁶There is a faint hope that philosophers and scientists could be awakened to see the need for them to acquire the ability to explore higher worlds. Perhaps the following examples will cause them to give a little thought to this.

¹⁷Nuclear physics is occupied with splitting the "chemical atom". This is really an etheric molecule, which in itself contains forty-nine different layers of matter.

¹⁸When meteorologists come to see that the physical etheric molecular kinds are the true causes of meteorological phenomena, there will be at least some prospect for them of beginning to search for the missing, unknown factors.

¹⁹When doctors see that most causes of disease are to be sought in the physical etheric material envelope of the organism, medical research will enter upon entirely new paths.

²⁰When philosophers have acquired knowledge of the three aspects of reality, they will be in a position to think in accordance with reality and to find the solution of a number of otherwise unsolvable problems.

²¹The philosophers have not yet managed to solve the basic problem of existence: trinity; the three equivalent, inseparable aspects of existence. Ever since the Greek sophists, the whole history of philosophy has been dominated by the subjectivist way of looking at things. When will philosophers learn that “thoughts are things”, “thoughts are energy”, material energy phenomena, that all consciousness expressions have their material counterparts? Until they can ascertain this, there can be no end to philosophic fictionalism, the unending mania for speculation of the ignorance of life.

5.44 LIFE VIEW

¹Although Russell’s conception of reality is a failure, as is all other philosophy, his conception of right with its noble understanding of truly human relations does agree with the knowledge of the meaning and goal of life. It is constantly seen that those who have reached the stage of humanity do not need the esoteric knowledge of the superphysical in order to lead rational, purposeful, and happy lives. Their subconscious instinct enables them to see through the emotional illusions dominating mankind and the mental fictions that go with them, to see that the doctrines that up to now have pretended to be based on the superphysical have been the greatest obstacles to consciousness development through their idiotization of common sense. How long will it be until their latent insight makes itself felt also in world view and they will see the perversity of all speculation?

²Our task is to explore the physical world (but not higher worlds until we have acquired higher sense) and to have the experiences and to acquire the qualities and abilities possible in the physical world, to make the very best possible of our physical lives. Russell as well as all who have reached the stages of culture and humanity has emphasized that in one’s attitude to all people, universal good will and right human relations are the essential things. We must learn to discard all pretexts for friction, not only tolerate but rejoice in the individual (and independent!) conceptions of all as proof of their own judgement at their level. This is quite different from what religious sectarianism has achieved with its fanaticism, moralism, intolerance, criticism, and condemnation, having, on the contrary, contributed in so many respects to the poisoning of human individual communal life.

³Individuals have managed to solve the most important problems of life for themselves through self-acquired qualities and abilities. But mankind has a long way to go yet and, strictly speaking, has not managed to solve even one of its many problems of life. People inherit their illusions and fictions and never think to examine the reality content and life value (importance for life) of those fictions. It was an accusation as terrible as it was justified that Goethe threw against seemingly irremediable listlessness: “Es erben sich Gesetz’ und Rechte wie eine ew’ge Krankheit fort” (Like a disease eternal, laws and rights are passed on by heredity). And Sweden’s Tegnér could add his: “Barbarity alone was once our Fatherland.” That can be said of all nations.

⁴It is obvious that a representative of culture of Russell’s calibre must discover much of the residual barbarism in our much-vaunted civilization. All the more violent, therefore, were his attacks on indolence, inertia, cowardice, aversion to reforms the necessity of which is clearly seen.

⁵The regrettable result of this life-blind egoism has been that the idealists’ ideas of reforms have been taken up by incompetent demagogues who, appealing to the eternal claims of social envy for new but by no means lesser iniquities, by their thoughtless planning and rash reforms, have managed to ruin everything of value that otherwise might have been saved from destruction.

⁶Russell's criticism of traditional attitudes and inhuman conditions, and also of the mistakes of modern dictatorships and democracies, called forth, as always of course, indignant protests. It earned him imprisonment, dismissal from his chair, and loss of his friends. The mob of all social classes have always had to express their hatred, not suspecting how they unmask themselves. Russell was in large measure to experience the wonder that many people have sensed before man's blindness, inability to see, even reluctance to see, the rationality of legitimate criticism. Nietzsche thought that it is part of human nature to take one's habits (including habits of thought) a thousand times more seriously than even one's interests, something to be observed daily. This is a matter to be studied more closely by those educationists who one-sidedly emphasize the importance of "good habits".

⁷It looks as though it would be some time yet before people have seen that ideas are relative and that the right reality value of an idea appears clearly only when it is put in its correct context.

⁸There is something rational in most ideas, but this is stifled by absolutization. There is a relative justification for the different political ideologies, the different religions, the views of the different collectives. There is something that is correct in introspective subjectivism, behaviourism, vitalism, etc. in psychology. What is lacking is the perspective that will show the relative justification of these views.

⁹Russell is one of those who have sought the requisite perspectives for necessary syntheses.

5.45 *Theology*

¹Theology falls within the domain of subjective consciousness, and its dogmas belong to the superphysical. Religion is that feeling, attraction, which has no need for reason, or at any rate is impaired if it is locked up in untenable conceptions of reason.

²Anyone who, like Russell, knows from his own experience the deceptiveness of mere subjectivity, who has examined in history what have been called religious truths, who has ascertained that there is nothing absurd that has not been accepted at some time or other, that what nobleness and common sense must regard as satanic is still preached; cannot be expected to be lenient in his final judgement of such errors.

³One thing that history has made convincingly clear and that our own times have also demonstrated is that mankind's general power of judgement is not greater than that people can be made to believe anything whatever. What is it that is still passed off as the "true, unadulterated word of god"? This: the Jewish Old Testament and the paper popes of the two Jewish sects: the Christians' New Testament and the Moslems' Koran. Buddha made it clear that there are no sacred writings, only those which ignorance calls sacred. And the planetary hierarchy guarantees that there will be no "sacred writings": "Far from our thoughts may it ever be to erect a new hierarchy (rule by authority) for the future oppression of a priest-ridden world."

⁴Russell says of himself that he does not know whether he should call himself an atheist or an agnostic. But he should be able to subscribe to Shaftesbury's saying that "men of sense are really but of one religion", the one true religion, the religion of wisdom and love – the common sense religion. Even though this religion has always had its representatives in all sects, there has never been a sect that has had the right to make the same claim.

⁵In historical times these sects have distinguished themselves by their intolerance, fanaticism, and mania for persecution, with religious wars, murders, torture, and burning at the stake – all of it to the glory of god. They still proclaim doctrines that are hostile to life and knowledge, that war with divine love, common sense, and the facts definitively ascertained by research. If the Church

were to regain the power it once had, we would experience such ghastly times anew.

⁶It is apparent that in criticizing the dogmas of theology, Russell imposed on himself a restraint unusual for him. He was largely content to scrutinize some of the innumerable superstitions which in days past it was considered godless to doubt.

⁷As for the concept of sin – on which the entire theological dogmatic system is based, the real basis of Church power, thanks to which the Church has been able to maintain its iron grip on people’s minds – Russell has been content to be jovially sarcastic. A nature dissimilar to his chilly intellect would perhaps have given violent expression to the indignation that every noble mind must be tempted to feel about the satanic lie of “sin as a crime against an infinite being who exacts infinite punishment in an everlasting hell” – this ghastly blasphemy out of hatred of the divinity of all existence. What is more, the theologians have thought up support for this satanism in the form of an equally blasphemous dogma of hatred, that of “god’s punitive righteousness”.

⁸After these horrible lies it does one good to remember Buddha’s and Christos’ doctrine of the law of sowing and reaping. This means that the mistakes that we have made, because of our ignorance and incompetence, as to the laws of nature and life are causes the effects of which we shall have to experience, are the ways in which we learn the necessary lessons of life.

⁹Russell points out that in the struggle that has been going on ever since the days of Copernicus and Galilei, science has always triumphed, refuting one theological absurdity after the other. He has no doubt that in the end the Church will be compelled to abandon its dogma of the infallible authority of the Bible, that book of legends, hate teachings, and absurdities. It is, too, a gladdening sign of the times that more and more people are getting sufficient and independent discrimination to dare to doubt these complexes, inoculated all but ineradicably in childhood, of a horrifying, wrathful, spiteful, vindictive god who, because of that quality of hatred, self-righteousness, cannot forgive without having his only son slaughtered. That evil deed surely must be the worst of all.

¹⁰Russell scrutinized a number of superstitions, which theologians have been preaching for centuries and which, although after a long struggle against reason and science, they have been compelled to keep to themselves.

¹¹It would seem, however, that Russell is far too optimistic about the outcome of the criticism and struggle of science and common sense. Information alone will have little effect if people do not think they will be able to profit from it personally. Besides, it is a fact that at the present stage of its development, mankind as to emotional life is still within the spheres of repulsive emotions. At this stage, reason is of secondary importance, is often indeed a troublesome element of unrest. These people take their emotions for their true being. And the emotional world with its hatred (48:5-7) and love (48:2-4) is the world of religion. Emotionality vitalizes, affords life and power. Hatred is mankind’s elixir of life.

¹²Presumably, Russell’s optimism was based on the historical experience that man’s ever-growing need of, and longing for, “more light” will always be satisfied.

5.46 *Morality*

¹Also Russell has pointed out that the terms “morality” (from Latin) and “ethics” (from Greek) through ignorance’s abuse of words have lost their true sense of conception of right and problems of social life.

²Schopenhauer was the first one to demonstrate that up to then no philosopher had succeeded in making morality a science or in establishing any tenable grounds for claiming that there are

absolute or objective norms. His disciple, Nietzsche, went a step further, asserting that traditional moral attitudes were useless in life, not to say hostile to life.

³This was the definitive emancipation of morality from moral theology, and at long last it became a subject that could be publicly discussed. A number of thinkers then explained the subjectivity of morality (the conception of right is determined by the level of development), not its illusoriness as prophets of platitudes have expounded the matter. Hägerström demonstrated that one cannot speak of a science of ethics, only of a history of ethics.

⁴Nobody has contested the fact that certain rules (societal laws) are necessary if people are to live together without friction, and that without these there would be a war of all against all and an ordered society would be impossible; such rules as not to murder, steal, cheat, slander, etc. The simplest summary of these is the age-old rule of reciprocity: treat others as you want them to treat you. The esoterician ascertains fatal mistakes as to the laws of freedom and unity.

⁵It was not against these self-evident insights that criticism was levelled. There are moral philosophers who have not even seen this! It was levelled against the multitude of taboos and arbitrary conventions without rational meaning, which have increased general bewilderment, made it more difficult for people to live together, and increased seemingly ineradicable hatred with its eternal damning and condemning. Helplessly self-blind, the moralists notice neither hypocrisy nor hatred.

⁶Examination of the bases of the conception of right and wrong shows that they depend on the individual's conception of the meaning and goal of life. It is always a matter for the individual whether he will concur with any one of the many collective conceptions or take his own standing. We cannot hope for a unitary conception of the best way to realize the meaning of life until mankind has managed to solve the problems of existence. Until then, there will always be different conceptions of what is right and wrong in political, social, and cultural matters, and in a general life sense, and considerable danger of the resulting antagonisms poisoning people's minds, hindering understanding, and counteracting rational human relations.

⁷The result of all these traditional, purposeless prohibitions is a universally accepted cult of appearances the hostility to life of which the moralists seem quite unable to understand. They share in the hypocrisy and cynically condemn those who refuse to make a fetish of so-called decency. It was against the whole of this hypocrisy, this irremediable cult of lies, which he regarded as the cause of evil hardest to get at, that Russell levelled his annihilating satire. It is worth pointing out that the only things Jeshu condemned were hypocrisy, phariseism, and moralism. Absolute honesty in his attitude to the conventions of hypocrisy was a matter of conscience for Russell, and it cost him most of his friends. It could not be helped if he had "the whole world against him". That is precisely what every pioneer has to expect. Schopenhauer's saying, that what the individual knows himself to be is of greater importance for his happiness than what he is considered to be, applies to independent natures. That this annoyed some people was their own fault. Besides, at mankind's present stage of development, just assessment of other people is absolutely out of the question. And people are ignorant even of the simplest prerequisites of assessment.

⁸As regards the individual's attitude to himself, Russell saw that it largely depends on upbringing whether one will succeed in dissolving all the negative, inhibitory value complexes, opinion complexes, habit complexes (to mention but a few), that life forces on us. The positive, life-promoting complexes do not involve problems equally difficult.

⁹What Russell has to say in pertaining matters is evidence of his common sense, freedom of

prejudice, goodwill, tolerance, humanity, and humour – a group of qualities rarely met with. Seldom, too, the individual's divine right to freedom has been so brilliantly illustrated: his right to think, feel, say, and do as he thinks fit, within the framework of the equal right of all to that same inviolable freedom. That freedom is of fundamental significance for a happy personal life and thus also for a happy society. It is the opposite of that primitivity which by freedom understands the right to self-will and arbitrariness, ruthlessness and contempt for the right of others.

¹⁰As social beings we have to choose between respecting the equal right of all or accepting the war of all against all.

5.47 The Problems of Upbringing and Education

¹The many problems of life that Russell tried to elucidate with exceedingly sensible, always noteworthy ideas, include the political, social, and educational problems.

²His opinions in the matters of marriage, sex, birth control, etc. evince a freedom of prejudice coming from a professor, lord, etc. that must shock the moralists.

³In government administration, nomination to the highest posts generally follows the ingenious principle saying that to whom god gives an office, to him he will also give the competence to discharge it. And we know what things look like.

⁴As for bringing children into the world, public opinion, thoughtless as usual, would seem to think that those to whom god gives children, he will also give the competence to look after them and bring them up. It does not seem fair to put all the blame on the deity, it is altogether too indolent to ask god to do what we ought to be able to do for ourselves.

⁵When people pick up a new idea, it very soon becomes unrecognizable. A professor wrote something about complexes, and at once all the "psychologists" knew what it was. It was the inferiority complex and the most dangerous of all dangerous things. No professor had said anything about fostering a superiority complex, self-will complex, arbitrariness complex, ruthlessness complex, lawlessness complex, so none of the clever experts would know about these.

⁶From his own experience Russell agrees with the view that the child's upbringing should be finished before it is one year old and in any case before it is three. During this period the child cannot develop other complexes than that of self-assertion. The treatment is incredibly simple but impracticable for undiscerning sentimentality: the child is never to have its way in any respect. Beside this unwavering firmness, the child needs kindness, tenderness, and care. The child must never, however, be made to feel that it is the object of general interest in its important self.

⁷The purpose of education is to give knowledge and skills. Desirable knowledge includes what makes it possible to understand the physical world and physical life as it is today: nature and how it works, mankind with its races and nations, society with its institutions and functions, all that is necessary for people to live together without friction. Knowledge surveying how all this has come about provides perspectives on development, understanding of the fact that all life is change.

⁸Research ascertains facts and puts them into scientific systems. The suitable method of education is the opposite of this. It starts from the system's orienting survey, so demonstrating the importance of facts. Overloading memory with facts that are readily available in reference books counteracts the overall view, clarity, meaning, and thus comprehension; for comprehension goes from universals to the particulars. The task of the school is to teach principles, methods, and systems, and only as many facts as are necessary to grasp these. This facilitates the acquisition of

perspective consciousness.

⁹It is to be regretted that higher education has disregarded the psychological problems of life. Yet they are of tremendous importance. Most people are helplessly left to themselves to solve their own problems of life, with conflicts between innate, subconscious instincts of life and the endeavour of waking consciousness to orient itself. In our times this conflict has increased the number of neuroses. Not everyone is able to solve these problems and find their own way out of the labyrinth, as Russell has sovereignly done. The conflict is often aggravated by the “struggle for souls” of competing ideologies, especially when this leads to tension in relations with relatives and friends. Individuals who, though they may not know it, have reached the stages of culture and humanity, consider most of it perverse, are regarded by others and in the end by themselves as odd and unfit for life, and put the blame for this on themselves.

¹⁰Desirable skills also include knowing an international cultural language. In most cases this is sufficient for all who are not going in for philology or historical research. Russell wholly shares the spreading insight that Latin and Greek are by no means as important as has been thought hitherto. Their study not only implies an overloading of the memory, but also a tremendous waste of life’s most important years. The study of these languages does not result in real understanding of the pertaining literatures. Most of it is forgotten after a few years. Moreover, all this literature has already been translated into all the cultural languages by better translators than those trained in school. And, finally, the understanding of life that this literature has given us has been absorbed by later cultures during a couple of centuries. Thinking for oneself is better than quoting. “Classical” metaphors met with in literature can be collected and explained in a special book, “Living Latin”, as it were.

¹¹The same is on the whole true of the compulsory study of other dead languages. How capable are the clergy of reading the unpunctuated text of the Old Testament? It is quite enough for them to be given a description of the unvocalized written language and to be informed that the learned will always dispute about which vowels are correct. Is the historian of religions better able to interpret the symbolism of Sanskrit texts than skilled orientalists with their attempted translations, apart from the interpretation about which the most learned Indians dispute and at which esotericians knowing Sanskrit can but smile? With such learning one will acquire the apparent knowledge of conceit and the chance of impressing the undiscerning.

¹²Russell’s books are teeming with statements that shed light in a flash on problems of this kind. One only wishes that they were read by all who want to broaden their horizon and deepen their understanding of life. Without exaggeration they can be said to be part of today’s general education in matters of life view.

5.48 The Problem of Democracy

¹Just as dictatorship is a problem of power, democracy is a problem of freedom.

²Nobody has as yet been able to elucidate satisfactorily what is meant by freedom, how freedom is possible, how to achieve it, how to keep it. It has not yet been clearly seen that freedom and power are the same thing. What distinguishes them is the limits to freedom and power. Freedom has been thought of as the right to be master of oneself and power as the right to be master of others.

³Freedom requires not only the right to be oneself, but also the ability to be it. “Knowledge is power” if it affords ability. Unfortunately, there is ability without knowledge and it is this ability which abuses power.

⁴Freedom is the right of the individual to think, feel, say, and do as he thinks fit, within the limits of the equal right of all. Abuse of freedom has often entailed dictatorship. Freedom requires that everybody acknowledges these limits, that everybody knows these limits, that everybody is able to keep within these limits. Do people know? Can they without power over themselves?

⁵Freedom is still an unsolved problem. The question is whether it can be solved at mankind's present stage of development.

⁶There are many problems connected with the problem of democracy, all unsolved, some unsolvable. Among the unsolved problems are the right of the minority, restraint of the abuses of power, prevention of brainless legislation.

⁷In what follows it will in brevity be shown that democracy is a pseudo-problem, since there can be no classless society and no perfect justice. And this because nature's seeming injustices make this impossible.

⁸The problem of justice and the problem of social classes are intimately connected.

⁹Equality and the principle of equal pay are part of justice. From the principle of equal pay (equal pay for equivalent work) follows: different pay for different work, more pay for more work, more advantages for greater ability to serve the community, more rights for more duties. What is the attitude of social envy to this?

¹⁰The demand at the French Revolution of "equality" only meant: abolition of all class privileges (the prevailing social and political ones, commonly regarded as unjust), equality before the law, the right to be judged by capability alone.

¹¹But there was never any question of everyone having the same social, political, etc. influence.

¹²Nature's inequalities consist in differences in ability to comprehend, see, understand, acquire knowledge, in differences in talent and ability to work. No education can replace innate aptitude, talent, genius.

¹³The utmost that can be achieved is that everyone shall be respected as a human being. We have a long way to go yet before we have achieved the conditions of universal brotherhood. We will have to be content if we succeed in realizing universal goodwill towards all without exception and right human relations.

¹⁴The general misuse of the word "justice" makes it clear that people do not know what they are speaking about. People will quite simply never be able to grasp it. That is also clear from the contention that life is unjust.

¹⁵There cannot be such a thing as a classless society. The simplest intellect should suffice to see that. Russia and Yugoslavia have even had to admit as much in practice.

¹⁶Belonging to a class is the natural order of things, is determined by the individual's qualities and abilities, his quality, capacity, and calibre, quite independently of his opportunities of upbringing and education.

¹⁷It was this inequality that Platon, hitherto completely misunderstood, was hinting at when he outlined his ideal republic with its social classes. It was this inequality that Rousseau saw clearly when he said that a true democracy cannot possibly exist.

¹⁸In state and society with all their organizations, there must be superiors and inferiors grouped according to capacity, and herein lie class distinctions.

¹⁹In a state governed rationally, all having equal knowledge and understanding of the problems of state, society, economy, and supranational issues, ought to have equal political influence.

²⁰It was a disaster that from the start the franchise was made to depend on economy. That

injustice had to be abolished. In its place special examinations for franchise (with a voters' school) and eligibility ought to have been introduced. It is preposterous that even the most ignorant, who can only vote as and when persuaded, should have the same power as others. The result is demagoguery, not democracy.

²¹It is obvious that Russell was keenly aware of these problems.

²²It is with democracy as with the other political ideologies. There is something rational in every one. And it is the synthesis of the pertaining ideas that will make a real ideology possible, which some time in the future will produce the rational state.

5.49 *The Problem of Dictatorship*

¹The problem of dictatorship is a problem of power. Russell's book, *Power*, is a brilliant historico-politico-sociologico-psychological study revealing extensive reading, psychological understanding, and analytical capacity.

²Strangely enough, the problem of power, so vitally important for mankind, has attracted but little attention. Russell with his keen insight has shown up the abuses of the urge to power in most human relations.

³He justly asserts that "of the infinite desires of man, the chief are the desires for power and glory". He also clearly sees that "It is only by realizing that love of power is the cause of the activities that are important in social affairs that history, whether ancient or modern, can be rightly interpreted". He takes pains to demonstrate that "the fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy is the fundamental concept in physics. Like energy, power has many forms ..." and "the laws of social dynamics are laws which can only be stated in terms of power, not in terms of this or that form of power".

⁴The problem of power includes not only the basic urge in the individuals, but also the different kinds of organizations (state, society, political parties, and associations in their endless variety) and, last but not least, the power of illusions and fictions.

⁵In eighteen chapters Russell analyses the different forms of power, power philosophies, ethics of power, moral norms, and, finally, the different measures that can be envisaged to prevent the abuse of power. Nobody could be in any doubt after reading this book that such measures are necessary, should he not have seen this before.

⁶"To suppose that irresponsible power, just because it is called Socialist or Communist, will be freed miraculously from the bad qualities of all arbitrary power in the past, is mere childish nursery psychology."

⁷In the final chapter he tries to solve the problem "of insuring that government shall be less terrible than tigers". He examines the problem in four sections devoted to political, economic, propagandistic, and psychological and educational conditions.

⁸It is not clear whether Russell really believes in the possibility of preventing the abuse of power. Time will show whether this is a problem that can be solved before at least a considerable, decisive minority of mankind has reached the stage of culture. The majority is still at or near the stage of barbarism.

⁹All power implies abuse of power, at best through ignorance of life. Thus the ideal will never be achieved. But the degree of abuse will be least when people realize that power coincides with both freedom and law (without law no freedom), when power is used primarily to defend freedom.

5.50 Socialism

¹Russell is no advocate of unrealistic state socialism which, even at its best, must hamper private initiative. The individual will never have a say. When the state is the employer, it cannot be forced by strikes, etc. to make concessions, as is the case with the private employer.

²In the socialist state, no writer who expresses views that the rulers dislike will have his works published. An inventor with a seemingly impossible idea, as all revolutionary ideas are, will not get support.

³The socialist state will tolerate no opposition, no freedom of expression, no free press. And who will decide what the individual may think?

⁴When discussing politics in general, Russell makes the noteworthy remark, hopelessly of course, that political problems are too important to be solved along any party lines.

⁵Of all the politico-economic systems Russell prefers syndicalism: all who work in an enterprise ought to own it jointly, thus intellectual workers as well as labourers.

⁶There is much belonging to the mysteries of socialist sophistry:

⁷For example, that only labourers, with highly paid work and short hours, are entitled to the honorary title of worker, but not studying intellectual workers, who put in unlimited hours unpaid. When people see that it pays better to be a labourer, there will soon be a shortage of research-workers, scientists, teachers, etc. When schoolmasters have no rights against youthful gangsters, nobody will want to teach in schools. That is already a problem in the U.S.A., but not in Russia.

⁸For example, that people cannot see that unjustified wage claims will soon have made all private enterprise impossible.

⁹For example, that those are called “blood-suckers” who at great risks, with worry, and while being taxed to the point of ruin, still help to provide for their country and maintain its culture.

¹⁰For example, that they connive at all sorts of incorrigibility, arbitrariness, self-will, lawlessness, but obstruct honest people in most matters.

¹¹One understands those who wonder whether the scourge of dictatorship is the only way of bringing people to their senses.

¹²Socialists believe that ownership holds the key to all problems, overlooking the essential thing, disposition, which gives still greater power. If those ruling Russia owned things, then their power would really be much less than it is now.

¹³Social democrats wear a false label. A democrat cannot be a socialist and a socialist is no democrat.

5.51 Marxism

¹The prophet of Russian communism, the German Karl Marx, Russell dismisses fairly summarily. He did not consider it worth spending time refuting this primitive physicalist conception of history, absurd sociology, and grotesque political economic theory. He clearly saw the perversity of all this hate propaganda, which corresponds to the emotional thinking of the lower emotional stage, meeting the pertaining needs of illusions: envy and other expressions of hatred.

²The question is, however, whether it would not be worthwhile to study the pertaining illusionism and fictionalism psychologically. At all events it confirms Platon’s saying that “ideas rule the world”.

³That this self-evident fact has not been generally recognized is as good an indication as any other as to the current intellectual standard. What unspeakable suffering has mankind had to

endure because of religious and moral ideas! What do the ideas of mad nationalism cost us today! When ideas actuate the driving force of emotion, they lead to action. When emotions are aroused at the lower emotional stage (the repulsive stage), the result is the deeds of hatred. But the essential thing is that we realize that madness is mad ideas, that the idea is the initial impulse. And that is why ignorance is the root of evil.

⁴The conquests of Marxism refute the hypothesis of Marx himself that man's only needs are physical ones. Even at the lowest stage of development he has need of emotional illusions and mental fictions. Their power is often greater than physical needs. One of the proofs of this is the Russian people among others.

⁵As for the illusion of the "dictatorship of the Soviet proletariat", Russell is content with the laconic remark that by this is evidently meant the Communist Party. It is fantastic that workers in many countries let themselves be duped by the obvious lies of bolshevik agitation, blind to the new slavery that has deprived the workers of their human rights. Mankind has not progressed further than both Russia and China being ruled by bandits.

⁶What condemns the Soviet system is partly its inhumanity, its barbarous contempt of the individual's divine right to integrity, partly its tyranny of opinion. It is sheer parody that this power is allowed to take part in the United Nations work for mankind just in order to destroy this very work, this power more terrible than that of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, this power the aim of which is to wipe out all nations, to make all men slaves physically and spiritually, and by its satanic methods to try to stifle every endeavour to find and proclaim the truth.

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