



*More than
A Touch of Mystery*

Harrie Buiting



The writer, Harrie Buiting, graduated in physics and studied theology for a number of years at the end of his career.

Over the years he explored all kinds of side paths to natural philosophy, religion and philosophy of life, accompanied in the background by the dimly ever-present question of being that surrounds man and matter.

It became a search for the essence of man who is aware of himself within his material existence.

In the end, the search turned out to be a path to an abyss without access, without a bottom, without a horizon, ... but with an indefinable view of an indefinable Mystery.

On the edge of the abyss this Mystery can be suspected.

This essay describes the path to the edge of the abyss.

The title of this essay originated during a very worldly event that is not usually associated with questions of beings. Evidently, even in very prosaic matters, a touch of Mystery can be felt.

This history is described on the back cover.

*Death is a dialogue between
The spirit and the dust.
"Dissolve," says Death. The Spirit, "Sir,
I have another trust."*

*Death doubts it, argues from the ground.
The Spirit turns away,
Just laying off, for evidence,
An overcoat of clay.*

Emily Dickinson

To Pauline
Back to the Source

Theme

What does life entail, what does it mean? What is the meaning of it? Is this all there is? Almost everyone asks oneself that question sometimes.

The common 'scientific' answer to this quintessential question is very simple; Well, actually, life doesn't mean anything at all. This whole life, everything we see and experience around us, just came about by chance from something like nothingness. In the end, there is no meaning at all. Everything is an accumulation of coincidences.

This basic attitude is deeply interwoven in the fibers of today's (Western) man and society.

But there is also a mysterious sense of being: knowing that you exist. This is a realization that evades rational explanations. It has a nature of its own and is the basis of conscious human being-there. It's what makes a human an actual human.

This essay gives voice to this mystery by emphasizing that the sense of being cannot be grasped by humans. Conscious insightful human action transcends matter and betrays a transcendent spiritual component through the wondrous results of that action in the world around us.

The above conclusion contradicts generally accepted beliefs. For example, it is usually assumed that all human action is scientifically /evolutionarily explainable. This essay argues that this position is far from demonstrated. It is an assumption, rather a dogma, that natural selection is sufficiently explanatory.

The Mystery itself meanwhile lets experience itself unperturbed. Time and again.

This essay is available in English and Dutch. Both versions can be downloaded via www.harriebuiting.nl and are also available in book form.

Het Thema

Wat behelst het leven, wat houdt het in. Wat betekent het eigenlijk? Is dit alles wat er is? Vrijwel iedereen stelt zichzelf weleens die vraag.

Het gangbare 'wetenschappelijke' antwoord op deze wezensvraag is heel erg eenvoudig; Nou, eigenlijk houdt het leven helemaal niets in. Dit hele leven, alles wat we om ons heen zien en ervaren, is gewoon zo door toeval uit zoiets als niets ontstaan. Uiteindelijk is er helemaal geen betekenis. Alles is een opeenhoping van toevalligheden.

Deze grondhouding is diep verweven in de vezels van de huidige (westerse) mens en maatschappij.

Maar ook is er een mysterieus zijnsbesef: het weten dat je er bent. Dit is een besef dat zich onttrekt aan rationele verklaringen. Het is van een heel eigen aard en is de basis van het bewuste menselijk zijn. Het is wat een mens tot mens maakt.

Dit essay geeft een stem aan dit mysterie door te benadrukken dat het zijnsbesef niet door mensen te vatten is. Bewust inzichtelijk menselijk handelen is materie-overstijgend en verraadt een transcendente geestelijke component door de bijzondere resultaten van dat handelen in de wereld om ons heen.

Bovenstaande conclusie is in tegenspraak met algemeen geaccepteerde overtuigingen. Zo wordt gewoonlijk verondersteld dat al het menselijk handelen natuurwetenschappelijk /evolutionair verklaarbaar is. Dit essay argumenteert dat deze stellingname verre van aangetoond is.

Het is een aanname, eerder een dogma, dat natuurlijke selectie voldoende verklarend is.

Het Mysterie zelf laat zich inmiddels onverstoort ervaren. Steeds weer.

Dit essay is in het Engels en Nederlands beschikbaar. Beide versies kunnen worden gedownload via www.harriebuiting.nl en zijn ook in boekvorm verkrijgbaar.

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I. Prologue: To the Source of human spirit

The most fundamental and the most elusive aspect of existence is knowing the presence of existence. The mystery of the being of being, of the reality of awareness. The mystery of the Source of awareness. That mystery is incomprehensible. At the same time, it is also the most ordinary and the most near to people. It is the cause of everyday human behavior that is as self-evident as it is miraculous.

This essay is an ode to that mystery. It gives the mystery the space it deserves.

Although the terminology may suggest otherwise (Source, spirit, transcendence, awareness), this is not a theological treatise. Nor is it primarily a philosophical exposition. The natural sciences are leading. The line of thought is based on observations of cascades of events, of scenarios, that are specific to human behavior. This behavior is not fully scientifically explainable. The scope of the natural sciences is limited. When boundaries come into view, or are crossed, the terminology adapts.

The line of thought is broadly shown below.

*Perceiving is Meta-Movement is
Transcending Seeing, is the other and the self
Is Insight and Awareness*

*Observe and Previsé
Decide and Perform
Is targeted control of Matter*

*Targeted control of Matter
Matter that transcends itself : Is like the Baron von Münchhausen : Is not
There is acting spirit, Known in Awareness
Spirit precedes, spirit leads matter*

*Spirit has a cause
No particular cause
One cause
Source
Source of human spirit*

In the above condensed train of thought, outside natural influence is included in the phrase '*targeted control of Matter*'. Physical law is incapable of explaining consequences of human Insight, insight through being aware. In addition to physical law, there is another influence. This other influence is referred to as '*acting spirit*' and is every moment potentially present in being aware.

All Human awareness has its origin in a Source. One Source. Source of human spirit.

II. Introduction

Although the awareness mystery is always present for everyone, it is not usually seen as a mystery in everyday life. Sometimes there is even outright denial: there is no mystery at all. Perhaps this is sometimes experienced that way because awareness is simply always there, for free and for nothing, normal, common, effortless and natural, it is simply there.

The purpose of this essay is to unveil the mystery as a mystery. The mystery is not solved, but its inevitability is brought to the fore.

Through experiencing awareness, people have special gifts.

1. People can oversee a situation, which creates insight into such a situation.
And as a result,
2. It is possible to consider future scenarios and to make a choice from possible scenarios, and
3. Then realize this choice.

Insight and awareness are necessary for these abilities. In the sections V "Human Perception: A Unique Human Ability" these qualities are placed in a broader context, in which human perception is central. These two sections are philosophical in character.

The fact that empirically scientifically established law appears to be insufficiently explanatory and that the efficacy of 'spirit' is demonstrable, has consequences for the vision on man and the world in their mutual relationship. The sections VII "Spirit, Matter and Computer" and VIII "Spirit and Science" have this as their topic. These two sections have a more scientific approach.

Nothing arises from Nothing: Being has a Source. In section IX "The Human Being in View: Source" the origin of awareness is discussed. It is argued that all awareness has its origin in one Source: Source of human spirit.

Man is essentially Spirit. In X the "Conclusion and Discussion" section, this finding is the starting point for an overview of possible answers to the question of the essence of man. What is man?

In the next section III entitled "Man Who Sees", the very special character of human acting is highlighted on the basis of four human-specific scenarios. Scenarios that seem so obvious to people turn out not to be so obvious at all when looked at from a purely physical point of view.

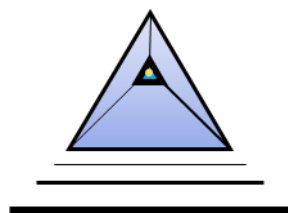
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An encounter: An impossible prediction of the future

Take the daily occurrence that two people meet. They have not seen and spoken each other for some time and make an appointment to have dinner at a specific place, e.g., a restaurant somewhere in a city, in a week's time. This seems so simple, a daily occurrence. But this is actually very strange.

No one can predict the future. There is no computer that can predict what the world will look like in a week's time and it is not a strange thought to assume that such a computer will never exist. The world may evolve inescapably deterministic in a certain direction or perhaps there is also chance involved, in both cases a prediction for a week from now is completely impossible. Let alone when it is decided to have dinner 2 months from now.

Nevertheless, the two individuals know with great probability that they will both be in a specific place on the agreed date at the agreed time. How is that possible? How is it possible that apparently, despite the enormous complexity of the world, such a prediction can still be made? The computer says it's unpredictable. Those two people say: well, we are pretty sure that we will be there.

An obvious reaction will be; But that's what they agreed on, didn't they? Absolutely. But it is precisely in that agreement, the possibility of agreeing that, that is precisely where the punchline lies. How is it possible to agree on such a thing and thereby set a date that is a long way in the future and then also ensure that the agreement is fulfilled. And all this while from a broader 'worldly' point of view there is nothing to indicate that such a meeting will actually take place. And such a thing cannot be calculated at all from that 'worldly' point of view. It is by no means self-evident that the agreement can actually be realized. For the time being, everything only takes place in the minds of those two people.

The appointment is in fact a prediction of the future. That's the key that there's actually something really special going on here. There is a prediction for the future and that prediction can only be fulfilled by influencing matter in a targeted manner¹.

People 'routinely' make plans for the future all the time. This varies from determining the time and day of grocery shopping to performing complex tasks that require complex actions, such as entering computer instructions. And all these future plans have a high probability of actually coming true. The mysterious thing is that continuously deliberately somehow, somewhere, at some time in the brain matter is put ready to realize predictions, predictions for which there was no indication at all shortly before.

In Appendix II, the enigma of this scenario is looked at in more detail.

A fairy tale: An impossible journey

Once upon a time there was a planet with an atmosphere of about 100 km. A single moon orbited the planet about 300,000 km away. The surface of the planet consisted mainly of rocks, water and stones that had weathered into sandy soil here and there. The moon consisted only of rocks and had no atmosphere.

One day a rock rose from the planet and made a more than 300,000 km long journey through space after which the rock, carefully maneuvering, landed unscathed on the moon. After a

¹ In Ref [x] p. 7 't Hooft makes the following remark: "It is easy to argue that, even the best conceivable computer, cannot compute ahead of time what Mr. Conway will do, simply because Nature does her own calculations much faster than any man-made construction, made out of parts existing in Nature, can ever do. There is no need to demand for more free will than that." 19

But, Mr. Conway himself constantly makes predictions about his future. And such predictions usually all come true. Sometimes they are complex agreements in which many others are involved. Such predictions, too, usually all come true.

stay of several days on the moon, the rock rose all by itself from the moon and landed, after another journey of more than 300,000 km through space, unharmed on the planet without being scorched and disintegrated by the atmosphere.

It is truly a fairy tale. In reality, of course, such a thing could never have happened. There is no natural physical process imaginable that can explain or cause such behavior. And yet it happened. And not just once, but actually several times in a row. The fairy tale has become reality.

The rock in question here is the material part of a space capsule, including the astronauts, who completed the return journey to the moon unscathed. From a purely material point of view, from a certain distance, a particularly unlikely sequence of events takes place here. From a distant point of view, the probability borders on zero. When physical-material law is seen as leading, the described process is simply unthinkable. Physical law has been broken one way or another. Or at least bended. A cascade of almost impossible events must have taken place through very specific control. How is that possible?

A lunar journey seems like an extreme example. But it's not. Exactly the same reasoning can be applied for very fragile material, like an extremely delicate thin porcelain cup, which is moved unharmed from one place to another. And that doesn't have to be more than a meter of displacement. Or even less. Any displacement of such a fragile object, when viewed from a natural materialistic standpoint, is actually quite puzzling.

An invention: A whole new meaning

Once there might have been a stick in the ground somewhere. Someone noticed that that stick cast a shadow and that that shadow indicated how far the day had already progressed. The stick with shadow was given the meaning of day indication and could gradually grow into a precise sundial. The stick and its shadow have therefore been given extra meaning over time. The attribution of time indication as an extra meaning to the stick and its shadow could of course happen because the stick was always perceived as part of its environment, and could therefore be associated with the new aspect of shadow as a time indication, hey it is later in the day now.

This again sounds like a natural; it is not that difficult to make a good estimate of the time of day from the direction of a shadow. But could a computer do such a thing all by itself without having code that is already prepared in advance, and is executed at an appropriate time, to make such an inference? A computer will only add something if it is already somehow part of its pre-programmed capabilities. To independently add a whole new meaning, a meaning that has nothing to do with meanings that have already been programmed in some way, is an impossibility for a computer. But for people, it is as natural as day and night.

From sundial to clock: Insight, Foresight and Execution

In this subsection, a rhetorical question is asked. In that question, the term 'material event' is used, or 'material process' or 'nature-only'. This refers to a (natural) phenomenon that is solely subject to scientific law.

The rhetorical question:

Is nature, nature in the sense of a purely material event, able to independently find the ingredients together, ingredients that each have their own meaning, with the intention of merging them to create a truly new different functionality, a completely different meaning, without a procedure to achieve it having already been set up in advance?

This is an impossibility even when the ingredients are already part of such a material event.

Man Who Sees

This may sound a bit cryptic and puzzling. An example: Can a material process that contains a description of a harmonic pendulum, a dial, a spring, a large hand and a small hand, a gear and everything necessary to make a clock, fabric a blueprint of such a clock?

This is totally unthinkable without any form of exaggeration.

Such a material process will not be possible because such a process does not perceive the necessary parts in their meaning-giving environment and therefore cannot acquire the insight to merge those parts in the right way.

To make a clock, human insight is indispensable. No material process has the insight to invent a clock. No material process takes the initiative to do so on its own.

But what about evolution?

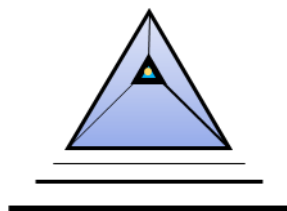
The evolutionary process is a different story. During evolution, the 'parts' are created organically together during a very long-time process. Nothing new is made from existing parts, let alone that some parts are specifically manufactured for the intended purpose. A goal that is not there in the Darwinian-evolutionary process anyway. Darwinian evolution has no intentions, it is assumed to be blind.

There are, however, questions to be raised against the Darwinian evolutionary process. In section VIII "Spirit and Science" this is discussed further.

An Aside:

This scenario shows that Darwinian evolution cannot manufacture an artificial inanimate watch. A blind watchmaker, that is, a watchmaker who is not capable of insightful Seeing-Foreseeing-Deciding-Executing, will not be able to manufacture such a watch either. A blind watchmaker does not exist. And this result has been obtained with strictly empirical, logical, argumentation. See also the section hereafter: "Human acts".

IV. Human acts



Human acts

The pressing question now is why the four situations outlined, (1) an encounter, (2) a fairy tale, (3) an invention and (4) from sundial to clock, are so totally incomprehensible when viewed from a nature-only point of view, but at the same time so obvious, or at least have proved possible, for humans?

A purely material description will not provide the answer. Such a description is determined by physical law and this law does not exclude the phenomena that have been described, otherwise they could not have happened at all, but makes them, precisely because of that law, extremely unlikely. So unlikely, that there must be something else going on.

Matter is seen here as that which can be described by physics formulas so that the behavior is, at least in principle, calculable. The human brain is believed to determine human behavior. It turns out that the most essential thing about the human brain is not of such a material nature.

In order to be able to realize human-specific scenarios as described in the previous section, something extra is needed in addition to matter. Those extras are not of a physical nature. They are not objects. You can't hold them. They are 'spiritual extras' that:

1. Provide Insight into the meaning, into the functioning of objects
2. Make it possible to see (new) meanings and applications by looking ahead, and
3. Enable the realization of such applications by somehow controlling the movements of matter.

These extras lend a naturalness that is absolutely not there from a purely material standpoint. And these extras are not only reserved for more or less special situations such as a moon trip. These extras are the basis of all conscious human action, ranging from the prehistoric hunter who carefully and insightfully prepares a spear for the upcoming hunt to today's man who gathers clothing for an upcoming event.

Human actions can be seen as a continuous succession of (1) insightful seeing and prevision, (2) making a balanced decision and (3) the targeted implementation of such a decision. These three acts are unique to humans. All people have the immaterial 'spiritual extra' that is necessary to allow material reality to move in such a way that the three activities become reality. This sounds like circular reasoning: It's only reserved for people because only humans can. That it is not circular reasoning follows from the four human-specific scenarios described in the previous section.

The immaterial 'spiritual extra' that is inherent in people cannot reasonably be denied.

That immaterial 'spiritual extra' cannot be understood naturalistically

That immaterial 'spiritual extra' is the mystery.

Hereafter, these findings are highlighted and deepened from an ever-changing perspective. This ultimately leads to the 'discovery' of an in itself unknowable Source of human awareness.

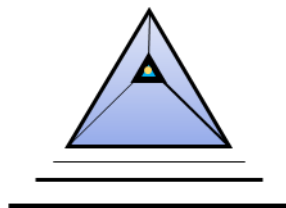
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A beginning of insight into the 'spiritual extra' of people can be obtained by examining how people perceive. Perceiving is meant here in a broad sense. It is the total of impressions gained through the senses.

Human perception turns out to be a transcending 'seeing' and is connected with the attribution of meaning and with the separation of the other from oneself. The separation of the other from oneself that is contained in perceiving in a transcending way, is inextricably linked to the experience of awareness.

The activities (1) transcending 'seeing', (2) assigning meaning and (3) separating the self from the other are different facets of an underlying specific human characteristic.

That specifically human quality is the subject of the next subsection. What is so special about human perception so that the 'spiritual extra' takes shape?

Meta-movement: Transcending and Separating

When a thing, an object, is observed, much of what can be associated with that object is also observed. If someone is recognized, for example, you immediately know where you know that person from, the name, the place of birth, the education, you know all kinds of details. You put the person in a certain context. And that context is filled with all kinds of objects, facts and events. And all those entities are not only connected to the person, but are also interconnected and are also known to you, the observer.

In addition to the object-of-perception, the whole of what is related to that object is also observed at the same time.

That whole complex of object-of-perception with all its connections gives meaning to that object.

By seeing a person, or any other object, in its meaningful context, you create proximity, but at the same time you also create distance. Seeing an object in the broader context also means that that object is somewhere else than where you are now. It's outside of you. The distance you create means that overview is obtained. Overview of the specific environment, overview of the context that is specific to that object. You rise, as it were, a bit above the mere perception of object and context. You go meta, move up to an overarching context. Seeing is always overseeing. There is the meta-movement².

And if you perceive in that transcending way, then, because you create distance, you are also aware of yourself as separate from the other. You detach yourself from the environment. To perceive the outside, or the other, means to have a sense of yourself at the same time. The outside, or the other is there, and you are there too, separately, separated from the rest. There is in the perception an experience of a personal, own, awareness.

Meta-movement and Meaning

By knowing a perceived 'object' outside yourself and seeing it in its context, it becomes more than just 'that object'. It is an interplay of object with its connections and that interplay is transcended, it is seen from 'above'. The observer shifts the object of perception to an overarching 'meta' context.

The observer moves 'up'. There is the meta-movement.

Through this meta-movement, hidden connections can become visible and extra meaning can be assigned.

In order to 'control' the multitude of meanings, to make them manageable, part of the attribution of meaning is also a form of 'categorization'. The object is classified, as it were. It's a chair, it's a house, an animal, a rabbit or a fish. This is a form of abstraction that is connected to the

² The description of the meta-movement in relation to awareness is partly based on an analysis by Karl Rahner (Ref [15], Chapter I).

way in which people assign meaning. Assigning a number to an observation, there are five dogs, there are five fish, is part of that abstracting ability.

By discerning meaning, disentangling it, grasping it, understanding it, seeing it, meaning is detached from the phenomena from which such a meaning is initially part. The meaning takes on the character of a concept. It is its own and is therefore applicable to new unexpected, unsuspected combinations of phenomena. And there is no limit to such applications. Concepts can be applied without limits and freely. In this sense, man is unlimited and free. It is this unlimited freedom that is used in particular in examples 2 to 4 in section III "Man Who Sees".

The meaning attribution is always there and is flexible. The meaning is not fixed, but changes as the context changes, and because you also become aware of yourself in the perception, yourself with all your individualities, there is your own input. There is interaction. The meaning is always in motion. And often the meaning grows through combination and integration of new impressions and events. It's a growing, creative process. It is an ongoing process of assigning meaning. Again and again, with every observation in every situation. It's always there. Human perception cannot do without. A person makes the meta-movement with every perception. All the time. Man wants to see extra context. Man always seeks context. Man is always looking for meaning.

The meta-movement is not a process that takes time. You see e.g., not first the other and then the context, then the meaning and then yourself. In one meta-movement, everything takes place at the same time. There is no sequence of events in the meta-movement. The meta-movement is the first sensation. It is a uniquely human quality. That first sensation can then be worked out by consciously thinking and be used accordingly.

Meta-movement and Consciousness

Awareness is inherent in the meta-movement. This knowing of one's own existence takes shape in daily consciousness. A sense of being there that is always there. If someone is conscious, then that person knows about itself and its environment. Through consciousness, conscious attention can be paid.

In the foregoing, perceiving is conscious perception. There is also a form of perception that remains unconscious. An observation remains unconscious when, for example, there is an unevenness in the sidewalk that, if there is not too much distraction, you automatically step over. Or when you wave away a twig that blows in your face.

In this essay, the meta-movement is associated with conscious perception of objects. As a result, especially the possibility to understand, the insight-giving, the meaning-giving and the prevision character of consciousness are discussed here. Human consciousness involves much more. Consciousness is also the judgmental and the interpretive. Consciousness has to do with good and evil, with beautiful and ugly. Consciousness makes art possible. Without consciousness there is no good and evil, no beautiful or ugly and there is no art. Without consciousness, there is no love that transcends all material survival instincts.

The human mind is immeasurably richer in content and power than just the somewhat scanty characteristics attributed to consciousness in this essay. But even those scanty characteristics alone are sufficient to demonstrate the mysterious character of immaterial consciousness, the mysterious character of the human mind.

Meta-movement and Thinking

In addition to consciousness-reaching perception that is almost an autonomous process, there is thought, the reasoning mind. Reason is directed one way or another, there is a form of will. And of meaningful perception, a meta-movement, of what is already 'in the head', including awareness itself. The modes of thinking and perceiving may be intertwined.

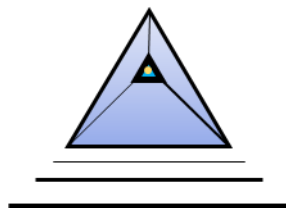
Human Perception: A Unique Human Ability

Logic seems to have more to do with thinking than with perceiving. And poetry? That is associative thinking, and language, especially language of course. Linking images together and linking them to words. And other art? It quickly gets complicated. But both modes, conscious perception and conscious thinking, are intrinsically associated with attributing meaning.

VI. The Human Being in View: The Human Spirit

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People ask questions about everything. People question everything. And the horizon of questioning is infinite. If a person convinces himself that that horizon is finite, then infinity is contained in that observation. Knowing that something is finite implies infinity. Finiteness can only be determined within a framework of an even more distant horizon that has no end. The answer to each question gives rise to new questions within the wingspan of an ever-expanding horizon.

In questioning, man affirms himself as the one who asks the question, and as such he experiences himself as necessarily preceding and more original than the object of the question. Man transcends what is questioned.

This also applies when man questions himself. Why am I aware as I am aware. Why do I feel the way I feel. Man precedes himself.

Man is himself a question mark

Man experiences himself as finite, but at the same time he reaches from that finiteness to infinity and rises above, transcends that finiteness. From the finiteness he experiences himself as a spirit. Spirit that is immaterial.

But man is not the unquestioned, ultimate infinite reality that has enough of himself and does not ask questions. Man is the acting spirit that is not only spirit, and therefore also experiences and questions himself as a spirit. From the experience of finiteness, man experiences spirit. From the knowledge of finiteness, man sees infinity. A transcendence, a spirit that experiences finiteness within ever-receding finiteness is itself a question, a question to which because of the ever-fleeing horizon never a complete answer can be provided.

In every question, especially fundamental questions, there is awareness. Man not only asks a question, but is also always the subject of that question. Personal awareness is the ultimate basis of every question and is ultimately what is questioned. Who am I, what am I? In every question, the quest for himself resounds.

Spirit and Matter

The matter transcending essence of the human spirit is expressed in the miraculous acting of man. External matter is influenced by physical human action in such a way that events, which from a purely material point of view are extremely unlikely, nevertheless take place. This transcending movement is not of a material nature. Matter does not rise above itself. It would be like the Baron von Münchhausen pulling himself up from the swamp by his hair. Matter that obeys physical law is incapable of doing so.

The starting point of the cascade of improbability lies in the human brain. In the chain of looking, pre-seeing, making decisions and acting, is a transcendence that takes the brain beyond the natural sciences.

The proposition that the awareness of being in connection with the meta-movement leads to transcendence of matter is the fundamental assumption in this essay. Internal matter in the human brain forms in harmony with the self-transcending human being such that through human action external matter can follow extremely unlikely paths.

The self-transcending human is acting spirit. This raises the question of how matter and spirit relate to each other. This essay breathes the 'spirit' of dualism. Matter and spirit are two separate entities that can exist independently of each other³. This tendency to dualism is reinforced by the premise that there are inanimate objects, objects that are subject to physical law only. This conclusion is in line with and follows implicitly from the

³ The meaning of dualism is explained in, for example: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dualism>.

observation that there are objects, in this case humans, that are not only subject to physical law and have a spiritual component also.

Now, if there are objects that consist solely of matter, such as bricks, for example, but also dead plants, animals and humans, it is not too big a step to assume that there are also 'objects' that consist solely of spirit.

This view is emphasized in section IX "The Human Being in View: Source". The observation that spirit can precede matter and somehow has an origin, leads to the notion of a 'spiritual' Source of human spirit

Nevertheless, the line of thought in this essay does not exclude (neutral) monism⁴. Nor does (neutral) monism seem to contradict the existence of a Source. Anyhow, also in (neutral) monism the natural sciences provide an incomplete description of reality and is the complete description shrouded in mystery.

In section IV "Human acts", matter is defined as that which can be described by physical formulas and is therefore, at least in principle, calculable.

Humans are not just a lump of matter. Humans have the ability to make conscious observations. In every conscious observation of any kind, humans make a meta-movement within which awareness is experienced.

Being aware is absolutely (in all senses of the word) primary. Without awareness there is nothing or there might as well have been nothing. There would be nothing without awareness. All that is, is only there through awareness.

Awareness gives everything existence. No single observation is meaningful if being aware is not explicitly involved.

Being aware 'sees', interprets, categorizes, assesses and gives meaning to 'the phenomena'.

Awareness as such is not a phenomenon among other phenomena. Awareness is not a material object among other material objects or a combination of those objects. Awareness is not a derivative of objects. Awareness is a 'being' of a meta order that precedes every 'made of objects'. If awareness were made by material objects, then awareness would be limited by those objects. But awareness is not limited. There is always the background of infinity. No material object contains awareness.

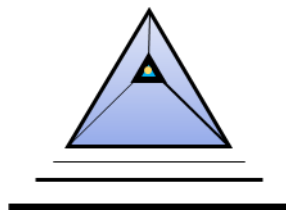
Because awareness cannot be derived from matter, awareness is not strictly bound by material-physical law. Material cause and effect, time and space do not completely determine awareness.

Man is not just a material object. Man contains more than matter can contain.

That which makes man different from a material object is spirit. Matter is finite. Spirit is infinite. Spirit precedes matter. People are therefore in nature and being first of all spirit. It is spirit that realizes conscious perception. It is spirit that enables the meta-movement. It is spirit that precedes every conscious action.

⁴ For a definition of (neutral) monism see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutral_monism_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutral_monism_(philosophy)).

VII. Spirit, Matter and Computer



The four scenarios in section III “Man Who Sees” are (almost) self-evident for human beings because of the very special character of human perception as it is embedded in the meta-movement. See section V “Human Perception: A Unique Human Ability”.

The scenarios cannot be explained when solely material physical law is taken as the only guideline. Matter in any composition assigns no meaning in the elastic and boundless way humans can. Matter cannot cause awareness. Matter finds no hidden trails to bridge a series of great improbabilities.

This section highlights the inevitability of this conclusion by comparing the human brain to contemporary computers. Then the human spirit reappears on the scene. A human trait that a computer can in no way lay claim to. The properties of a computer are in virtually nothing like the almost limitless possibilities of people. While the computer is in fact no more than a lump of matter in controlled motion, the human brain possesses extraordinary capacities, which allow sensation of itself and the other.

The controlled movements that give the computer its pseudo-brain behavior is by the way in all cases devised by a human mind.

Since the dawn of the computer age, roughly in the 1970s, the functioning of the human brain has been compared to the functioning of a computer. The ability of a computer to perform calculations that can lead to useful results and the ability of a computer to store all kinds of data that can somehow be made visible and further processed, led to the assumption that the functioning of the human brain could be very similar to the operation of a computer.

Why shouldn't a computer, at least in principle, perform the same as the human brain?

Today's computers, no matter how fast and how targeted they may be, are not able to fully independently recognize really new meaning and to apply it into its operations.

But should that always be the case? Wouldn't computers ever be able to perform human tasks, perhaps even much better than humans can, if they become even faster and more complex?

To find an answer to this question, one can once again look at what is so essential about human perception.

The most striking aspect of human perception is the movement away from the observed phenomenon, which makes such a phenomenon seen as part of its environment. Every observed phenomenon is never seen all alone, completely separate from everything, but always in context, although that context can be limited and hazy. And that context is not fixed. The movement shifts the context and increases it. The horizon of the context is indeterminate and flexible. There is no limit to be determined. It is always possible by new impressions, or a new combination of impressions, to push the boundary of perception. The perception is basically unlimited. An object perceived by a human being is perceived against the background of limitlessness.

A computer, on the contrary, is fundamentally bound by the specific scope of the possible calculations, of the algorithms, which are determined during the manufacture of the software and which the computer then runs blindly, ruthlessly.

This also applies to AI training, to which artificially 'intelligent' machines are exposed. This is no more than a specific form of coding. Through targeted feedback during operational use (the so-called 'self-learning'), that coding process is sometimes extended a bit. But it remains code, it remains instructions, it remains limited. All the intelligence that the machine seemingly displays is actually the real intelligence of the human behind the buttons who has thought of everything in advance. The man who tells the machine exactly how 'he' should behave. This applies to the manufacture phase of the machine and it applies to the behavior in the execution phase.

A computer cannot find concepts. A computer has no knowledge of meanings.

A computer can make calculations and can look for patterns in data if there is targeted code for it, but a computer is not able to assign meaning to those patterns in such a way that such patterns are applicable to completely different areas, unless, again, specific code is written that allows the computer to do this.

More than a touch of Mystery

A computer cannot find patterns that have not been coded for in some way, and cannot apply its palette of found patterns at its own 'discretion'.

Code limits the scope of the search area and the scope of patterns. Connections that do not directly or indirectly belong to the prescribed procedure cannot be found. The code of the machine is always limited and means that the field of application remains limited. A computer cannot reach above itself. It is forever within the unshakable walls of its very specific predetermined context. The fact that a programmer ultimately does not always have access to the specific code that a computer executes at a certain moment is irrelevant. It does not change the predetermined specific context. The computer machine continues to execute its code meaninglessly and without understanding. A computer is not aware of itself and understands nothing, nothing at all. He sees nothing and knows nothing.

As the computers get faster and faster, and can hold more and more data, the context will grow. But even then, the computer remains trapped forever within a given specific context. The computer machine is fundamentally bound.

An example is the observation that a computer does not play chess (a quote, read somewhere). The computer performs calculations that a human then interprets as chess. Hey, he plays chess. The machine itself knows nothing and sees nothing, it does nothing but perform prescribed calculations. The same applies to the GO computer of course. Likewise, the computer that detects potential fraudsters. In all cases, it is the person behind the machine who is in control, or has devised the whole thing by foresight.

The difference between a hunter's spear and a computer is immeasurably small compared to the almost infinite difference between a computer and a real human being.

A human is also spirit. The computer has no spirit. A computer does not experience anything.

The computer is matter. The computer can only run computer-specific scenarios, and those scenarios are riveted in pre-determined material movements, also called computer software. And pre-prescribed material movements, or the execution of such movements, do not impregnate spirit. Just as a spear in action can be interpreted as an expression of a man's acting spirit, so a computer in action can be interpreted as a man's acting spirit. In either case, the acting human mind manifests itself in a very limited, restricted area.

VIII. Spirit and Science

Worldviews 22

Worldview: Complete Determinism 22

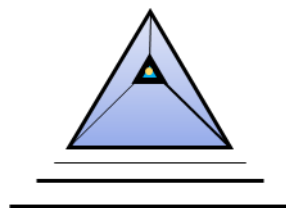
Worldview: Everything is Coincidence 23

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Seeing, prevising, deciding and execution are demonstrable, knowable signs of the spirit. In this section, these characteristics are weighed against material behavior that finds its expression in concepts such as physics, determinism, chance and evolution. The conclusion of this essay that man is primarily spirit and immaterial is both starting point and subject of discussion here.

Worldviews

Man is not alone in the world. Man is part of the structure, of the fabric of the universe⁵. With regard to the fabric of the universe, different worldviews are possible. The worldviews (1) Complete Determinism, (2) Everything is Coincidence and (3) Immaterial Steering are discussed here.

For a proper understanding of these worldviews, a foray into determinism and chance in the (current) natural sciences is relevant.

Determinism implies that matter in the world follows one inevitable path. The course of all that there is in the world is unshakably fixed⁶. If chance, uncertainty, plays a role, the way in which the world develops is not completely fixed but is then somehow influenced by chance occurrences⁷.

With one exception, physical law as described by current physics is completely deterministic. The exception is Quantum Mechanics (QM). Within QM, there is fundamental uncertainty regarding the location where a matter particle can be found. QM assigns to each location a specific probability that a certain particle of matter can be found there. Because of this QM property, the universe develops in a fundamentally unpredictable random way. If two universes are exactly the same at a certain time and then develop further, they will follow other paths due to an accumulation of small differences.

QM evades unshakable determinism and works with probabilities. Thus, by specifically influencing the outcome of the QM probabilities, like a cheater manipulates dice, the course of things can be influenced. How this could work, no one knows, but as only QM-probability theory offers the possibility of avoiding an inexorable course, 'QM-cheating' is the only way in which an immaterial reality could influence the material reality⁸.

The fundamental QM uncertainty is almost universally accepted, but some people still have the intuition that nature inescapably fills in the outcome of the 'chances' (then the 'so-called chances') in a predetermined way, so that the world would again be deterministic⁹.

Worldview: Complete Determinism

This worldview is not a logical impossibility. Current physics may be incomplete. But it does lead to some strange consequences. In scenario "An encounter" in section III "Man Who Sees", for example, both the encounter and the consequences, where and when to meet again, are fully

⁵ An entertaining physical digression on this connection can be found in Barrow & Tipler (Ref [1]).

⁶ This does not have to be explicit causal determinism. Determinism here means that the world follows one unshakable path. For an explanation of determinism see e.g., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Determinism>

⁷ For a definition of chance, randomness, see e.g., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Randomness>

⁸ See Suarez Ref [17] 'Quantum randomness can be controlled by free will - a consequence of the before-before experiment'. The abstract states: "The before-before experiment demonstrates that quantum randomness can be controlled by influences from outside spacetime, and therefore by immaterial free will. Rather than looking at quantum physics as the model for explaining free will, one should look at free will as a primitive principle for explaining why the laws of Nature are quantum."

See also Polkinghorne (Ref [14] pp. 86-87).

These publications may be subject to criticism. But they show that influence by an immaterial reality need not be ruled out in advance.

See e.g., Polkinghorne (Ref [14] pp. 86-87)

⁹ Well-known examples are 't Hooft (Ref [20]), Einstein and also, from earlier times, Spinoza. All great minds, though.

determined in advance. There is no degree of freedom whatsoever. And the appearance that has been deliberated in complete freedom is then in reality only illusion, it only seems so. And all this including the corresponding thoughts, feelings and considerations. The thoughts, the decision and the corresponding execution, everything is already pre-determined.

It is not strictly impossible. But the inference that everything has been staged in advance by something or someone is hard to avoid then. Then there is mystery too. Who or what determined all that? Even all thinking about this has already been determined. There has already been thought for us. This essay was already written before it will have been written. If all the thinking leads to something, then the 'maker' has determined it that way.

Determinism is crossed out in this essay because a degree of freedom of thought and action is presupposed. Perhaps wrongly so. After all, determinism is not a logical impossibility.

Worldview: Everything is Coincidence

In this worldview, everything is first and foremost a coincidence. What is there has come about by chance. There is physical law, but the precise nature of that law is so determined by chance. There is matter, but the nature of matter is also determined by chance. And apart from that matter, there is nothing else at all. The Everything-is-Coincidence worldview is a materialistic worldview.

As indicated above, (current) physics contains a random component in the form of QM-uncertainty. In this worldview, there is nothing that can influence the outcome of that QM-uncertainty in a given material configuration.

Because of the scenarios in section III "Man Who Sees", this worldview can also be crossed out.

Only chance as a source of influence on the (semi)deterministic matter movements is incompatible with the predictions and the resulting coordinated actions that make the scenarios reality. How could mere chance lead to the two people being able to see each other again in a week at the agreed time and place? How could mere chance cause a space capsule to make the journey to the moon and back again? Chance is instantaneous, and does not look ahead. The two aspects, the decision and the prediction of the execution, are from a material point of view only dependent on physical law. There is no valid argument to indicate how (semi)chance based physical law can lead from a decision to a correct execution sometime later.

It might be argued here that the continuous inescapable influence of (Darwinian) evolution can indeed bring about complexity that makes the scenarios explainable. This is not the case. In subsection "Darwinian evolution and acting spirit" of section VIII "Spirit and Science" and in Appendix II this is elaborated on.

The remark '(semi)chance based physical law' deserves explanation. It can be argued that the QM uncertainty must be limited because otherwise dominant randomness would lead to chaos. There is uncertainty, but in its effect only within such narrow confines that the world is virtually deterministic in reality.

But this inevitably leads to the conclusion formulated for the worldview Full-Determinism.

Everything is then staged, all thoughts are illusions, there is no form of freedom and, a 'maker' enters the picture once again. For the materialist an abomination.

But while determinism is a logical possibility because current physics could be incomplete, chance is a logical impossibility. If only chance were to work together with a deterministic component, scenarios as described in Section III "The Man Who Sees" with their predictive power and their physically extremely unlikely outcomes are virtually impossible.

The conclusion with regard to the worldviews Full-Determinism and Everything-is-Coincidence is that these worldviews are incorrect unless a 'maker' is accepted. The worldview everything is coincidence is a logical impossibility unless this worldview can be considered deterministic in the way it plays out.

Worldview: Immaterial Steering

If then the worldviews Full-Determinism and All-is-Coincidence are rejected, then the conclusion is inescapable that in the here and now material reality can be driven by an immaterial reality that transcends matter. Man is able to consciously influence his environment. This conscious influence of matter finds its starting point in the brain and can then be transferred to the external environment by means of human physicality.

Within the limits of physical law, man is free to act. Man can consciously influence his environment through his physicality. As a rule, this influence is supported by increasingly complex tools that at their turn are also manufactured by humans.

The possibility of consciously influencing matter in the brain, and consequently of external matter in the outside world, is the most important and essential aspect of man.

Man is essentially spirit.

Can consciousness be an emergent phenomenon

When chance is considered the source of all that is, there is no place for such a thing as an immaterial spirit exerting influence. That which appears as spirit or awareness is then a new phenomenon that arises from already existing material structures by chance and a global 'self-organizing' process such as 'survival of the fittest'.

Such a new phenomenon is then called an emergent phenomenon. On Wikipedia, emergence is defined as follows¹⁰.

*"An **emergent** phenomenon emerges (emerge = shows up, suddenly appear) due to mutual interaction of components under favorable conditions. The emergent phenomenon is characterized by the fact that it has different properties than the components that make it up."*

An example is the functioning of a blade of grass. A blade of grass cannot be understood by only looking at grass cells. A blade of grass is what it is due to the complex coherence of its constituent parts.

The Wikipedia definition of emergence leaves open the nature of which are the components that make up the emergent phenomenon. If an immaterial component is allowed, the Wikipedia definition applies. That is not the issue here. Among the supporters of emergence, it is implicitly assumed that the components are brain structures of a material nature. Emergence is connected to material law.

If experiencing awareness, if consciousness, would be emergent, then that experience is entirely due to a mutual interaction of its constituent parts. And those constituent parts are all of a material nature then. And therefore, subject to physical law. Thus, consciousness would be of a material nature.

This is not the case.

The scenarios in section III "Man Who Sees" show that physical material law cannot explain human intervention in daily reality. Physical law alone cannot make reliable longer-term predictions comparable to the almost certainty of scenario "An encounter", and cannot by itself bring about extremely improbable events such as the manufacture of a clock.

Darwinian evolution and acting spirit

The proponents of emergence may argue that the 'self-organizing' principle of Darwinian evolution can indeed create such complex structures that the scenarios in section III "Man Who Sees" can still be explained

¹⁰ See e.g., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emergence>

This is by no means self-evident.

Darwinian evolution – see the subsection “Darwinian evolution and matter” hereafter – builds (perhaps) very complex structures like humans and their environment, but from those structures, complex as they may be, the goat paths necessary to realize typical human scenarios cannot be effectuated without acting spirit. The reason for this is that Darwinian evolution is primarily a long process of becoming from the past to the present. But the perhaps Darwinian origin of man within his environment from the past offers no prediction for the future. Darwinian evolution is based on the existing and on random variations of that existing, and sees no future. This is a cornerstone of Darwinism. Present and chance do not predict the future. A favorable effect for the present does not guarantee the future, and Darwinism does not anticipate on a desired outcome. The scenarios in section III “Man Who Sees” are -also- based on brain structures and human environment of today, but they are very specific, relatively short-term and above all, future-oriented.

Before a chain of Seeing, Prevision and Decision-making is set in motion, predictions with regard to specific scenarios are of course impossible, if only because at such a moment such scenarios are usually not yet known to anyone. But after the See, Previs and Decide chain has been completed, such predictions are perfectly possible. Suddenly it turns out that reliable predictions can be made about events that no one could have suspected of shortly before. Within the chain See, Previs and Decision Making, matter is miraculously manipulated in such a way that predictions come true and scenarios are realized.

Why is this miraculous? Why can't you just say: ‘Well, this is by coincidence driven this way. Because of for instance a chance encounter, a cascade of events has been set in motion in both brains that caused brain matter to be organized such that the prediction will become reality with a high degree of certainty. Where is the enigmatic thing here? Where is the Baron (a reference to section I, “Prologue: To the Source of human spirit”)’?

The miraculous is perceptible because no such material causal relationship between the initial situation (no prediction) and the end situation (a prediction) can exist. A material causal relationship would mean that in the brain for all possible scenarios there would be a short cut, an inside door, to a future state that is incalculable by all material standards. There is no such all-purpose inside door. There the Baron von Münchhausen pulls himself up from the swamp by his hair.

In Appendix II this is elaborated on from various angles.

Conscious human action is not of material origin and therefore cannot be the result of a Darwinian evolutionary process, a process that only acts on material structures. This means that the scope of Darwinian evolution, like the scope of physical law, is limited. Boundaries of Darwinian evolution are explicitly indicated in Appendix I for mathematical thought.

The argument used here can be considered as a proof by contradiction. The standard naturalistic explanation is demonstrably inadequate. Only a transcending quality is capable of explaining the observed phenomena.

The expressiveness of the transcendent point of view can be emphasized by seeing man and his environment as a whole, with man being the foreground and the relevant environment the background. The background is the part of the worldly reality with which man interacts and can be the subject of direct observation. Man controls such an environment and that environment in turn influences man.

If now from an observation position that is sufficiently far removed from the event, that is, not involved in the interaction in any way, it is found that, based on natural law, extremely improbable events are taking place in the background, then it follows that in the foreground extremely unlikely events of the same order must take place, provided that man is subject to the same natural law.

Man is the initiator in the interaction between foreground and background. The foreground controls the background. Man controls his environment. Observed events in the background are, on the basis of natural law alone, so improbable that a material cause only on the side of the initiator, which is the human being, can be properly excluded. A telling example is scenario "A fairy tale" in section III "Man Who Sees".

Appendix II contains a Darwinian approach to the phenomenon of man acting. This alternative approach yields a similar outcome. Darwinism cannot explain the scenarios.

The image of man as foreground against the background of his physical environment is taken from Escher's work. In some of his graphics, foreground and background are interchangeable, such as in the picture below. Foreground and background are intertwined. An occurrence in the background has equivalent consequences for the foreground.



Escher – The Sky of Mine Dante

Darwinian evolution and matter

Darwinian evolution, together with physical law, forms the natural scientific law. It is not possible to describe the coming into existence of human life solely on the basis of natural scientific law.

Before going into this further, a digression about evolution is in order. Dutch Wikipedia gives two definitions¹¹: (1) "*Evolution is the biological concept that describes the process of change in all forms of life from generation to generation.*" And (2) "*Evolution can be defined as the gradual change in populations through inheritance of characteristics and traits with their variation and natural selection.*"

The first definition defines evolution in a general sense.

Evolution in this general sense has been irrefutably established.

The second definition is a starting point for defining Darwinian evolution. What is missing is the extra addition that variation is accidental and blind. There is nothing but random variation and natural selection that drives Darwinian evolution. Darwinian evolution applies to the development from 'first' cell to the present life forms. This development is explained by the continual action of the Darwinian evolutionary principle on aimless changes in increasingly complex material life forms.

¹¹ See [https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolutie_\(biologie\)](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolutie_(biologie))

Darwinian evolution has not been irrefutably established. For long-term Darwinian evolution (the so-called. macroevolution) is no direct evidence. There is no physical model that makes this plausible. Darwinian evolution is not a physico-mathematical theory. All arguments are of a qualitative nature and are in fact no more than seductive but unproven stories that are supposed to demonstrate inevitability. Quantitative calculations very quickly lead to large improbabilities¹². Dawkins and Dennett too provide no valid arguments for the validity of Darwinian macroevolution¹³. All the examples that are given make use of the typically human skills, seeing, prevision, deciding and successful execution. Those are the distinctive characteristics of acting spirit and therefore of immaterial origin.

Perhaps the evolutionary path to the present human when considered from purely scientific principals only is at least as unlikely as scenario "A fairy tale" in the section III "Man Who Sees". That could be an indication of the existence of an immaterial Source. In section IX "The Human Being in View: Source" below, such a Source is hypothesized as the origin of awareness. That Source could then have influenced the evolutionary process of man becoming.

More or less implicitly, it is assumed that Darwinian evolution affects life forms that are of a purely material nature. The origin and especially the functioning of consciousness escapes this material approach. If the workings of consciousness cannot be explained from matter, the becoming of consciousness cannot be explained from matter either.

Darwinian processes alone do not explain the evolution from 'first cell' to the spiritual man. From the moment man appears on the scene, there is more than just blind evolution anyway. To a certain extent, man seems to have taken control of his own evolution. This is an outgrowth of the observation that man, with the help of his physique, consciously influences matter outside of man, thus enabling the scenarios in the section "Man Who Sees" to be realized. Man can also apply this influence to his own material composition and thereby help shape his own biological development.

In addition to the long-term macroevolution, there is the so-called microevolution. This evolution, which can be observed on a daily basis, acts on already existing life forms such as micro-organisms. In accordance with the possibilities embedded in those life forms, such organisms can mutate through 'copy' errors during their usually rapid multiplication and then may, or may not, flourish depending on the specific environment. All the possibilities, already potentially present, can thus be tried out almost exhaustively. But the answer to the question of how this could give rise to more complex life forms lies outside the scope of this mutation process.

A striking example of micro evolution is presented in a column by Maarten Keulemans in the Volkskrant¹⁴ dd. 9-Feb-2022. The ups and downs of the Covid Corona virus are discussed in that column in the light of accidental variations in whether or not helpful inner-human environmental conditions. But this does not change the specific character of the Corona virus. The Corona virus remains the Corona virus.

In multicellular organisms, the path to more complexity and additional functionality is even more difficult to indicate, because then the time is lacking to try out all the possibilities¹⁵.

This does not show that Darwinian evolution is untrue in the sense that the phenomenon does not occur. What has been shown is that there are very good reasons to relativize the assumption that Darwinian evolution alone has sufficient explanatory power for the evolution from first cell to material man. This assumption is a dogma of the materialistic scientific worldview rather

¹² See e.g., Berlinsky (Ref [2] pp. 41-64), Barrow and Tipler (Ref [1] Chapter 8), and Ronald Meester (Ref [9], pp. 101-120).

¹³ See Ref [3] and Ref [4]. All the examples given presuppose, explicitly or not, specifically human skills.

¹⁴ Dutch newspaper

¹⁵ See Saris (Ref [16] page 125) and Ronald Meester (Ref [9] Chapter 5)

than an irrefutable proven fact¹⁶. The proponents of Darwinian evolution have demonstrated their position far from convincingly.

An Aside

The dogmatic character of Darwinism is clearly reflected in two essays, one by Ernst Mayr¹⁷, and one by Klaas Landsman¹⁸.

The quotes below from Mayr's essay illustrate the intellectual climate in which Darwinism takes shape.

1:

"Darwin's accomplishments were so many and so diverse that it is useful to distinguish three fields to which he made major contributions: evolutionary biology; the philosophy of science; and the modern zeitgeist."

2:

"Darwinism is now almost unanimously accepted by knowledgeable evolutionists."

3:

"... and by showing that theories in evolutionary biology are based on concepts rather than laws."

4:

"... contribution—he developed a set of new principles that influence the thinking of every person: the living world, through evolution, can be explained without recourse to supernaturalism..."

5:

"... cosmic teleology, an intrinsic process leading life automatically to ever greater perfection, is fallacious, with all seemingly teleological phenomena explicable by purely material processes; and determinism is thus repudiated, which places our fate squarely in our own evolved hands."

The following remarks can be made here:

Ad 1:

The comment about the 'zeitgeist' is remarkable. How could scientific insights depend on the 'zeitgeist'. The only thing that is scientifically relevant is an explanation of observations. The 'zeitgeist' makes no observations and does not explain anything. The reference to the 'zeitgeist' is an expression of bias.

Ad 2:

A reader who is not convinced of Darwinism can conclude from this that you are not counted among the guild of 'knowledgeable evolutionists' and therefore have no right to speak, if you do not accept Darwinism.

This hints at a form of exclusion.

Ad 3:

If concepts take precedence over theoretically described laws, as a result of which falsification / verification are snowed under, the suspicion is lurking that 'dogmatic belief' has won over a critical attitude.

¹⁶ Martinus Veltman (Nobel laureate in physics) states: "Nowadays, most people believe in Darwin's theory of evolution. That's a gigantic, wonderful theory, but in my opinion there's one big problem with it, it's simply fantastically unlikely." And, "The existence of a human being with a brain, with a computer in his head, I find difficult to accept from the point of view of blind evolution. That's like the question: what are the chances that, if you pile up a bunch of old rust, a computer will come out? The probability that molecules will arrange themselves in the desired way, driven by circumstances, is enormously small." See Ref [21].²¹ This statement is not further elaborated by Veltman in Ref [21]. But let the Darwinists take up this gauntlet for once!

¹⁷ "Ernst Walter Mayr was one of the 20th century's leading evolutionary biologists. He was also a renowned taxonomist, tropical explorer, ornithologist, philosopher of biology, and historian of science." [Wikipedia](#) For his contribution in Scientific American see Ref [8].

¹⁸ See https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klaas_Landsman. For Landsman's essay see Ref [7].

More than a touch of Mystery

Ad 4:

This quote suggests that there is a hidden agenda here. It seems more important that 'Supernaturalism' is fought than that truth-finding is pursued. Is Darwinism really a conclusive explanation? Mayr does not elaborate on that.

Ad 5:

This remark supports the commentary on quote 4. Teleological reasons should be explained away; Man has his destiny in his own hands, man is his own measure. Mayr seems convinced of that. Incidentally, the remark about *the deterministic character* of evolution is (also) questionable on other grounds. Deterministic evolution does not necessarily preclude Darwinism. Perhaps Mayr sees in determinism the hand of God. And that, as has already been shown, is unacceptable to Mayr.

These statements by Mayr, which seem to be fairly generally supported by naturalists, show that Darwinism shows characteristics of a 'belief', a dogma. Terms like "zeitgeist" and concepts, and the negative comments about supernaturalism and teleology clearly point in that direction. Mayr's article does not contain any reference to (model-based) scientific research into natural selection. This is not considered necessary. The observation of the evolutionary process is apparently sufficient explanation. Natural selection as such is not up for debate.

This attitude is also strongly reflected in Landsman's essay That essay was written in response to the Dutch National Research Agenda (NWA) whereby everybody ('the public') could ask questions to Dutch scientists. Among other questions, the following came up:

1. *Does science exclude the existence of God?*
 2. *Can we prove the existence of God?*
 3. *Are God and science opposites or can they also complement each other?*
 4. *Why should everything be explained? Why do you want to have hard evidence for everything?*
- These questions have been put forward to Landsman, among others, by the organization of the NWA as a representative of a secular scientist.

Landsman's essay addresses briefly a large number of topics. The remarks most applicable to the discussion of Darwinism are listed below.

Landsman starts on a positive note

1:

Now too there is a reason that God and science are not mutually exclusive, there is a reason that God and science are not mutually exclusive, and that is that science, unlike a belief, has no dogmas, not even negative ones. ... A scientist (at least as a scientist) does not believe anything at all in principle. ... Contrary to what the public assumes, the spirit of science is as important as its product: it is just as much about the open-mindedness, the primacy of criticism, and giving in to the unforeseen, however disturbing and new that may be. The idea of an ultimate and unassailable truth, of a "reality" waiting around the corner for us to be unveiled, was long ago abandoned by science. Scientists now know that they have to be satisfied with the incomplete and the temporary. Nothing is more dangerous than the certainty that one is right." (This paragraph is a quote from François Jacob).

And,

2:

"... but for the present question, the crucial point is that since Darwin, God is no longer the only possible explanation for the indeed extraordinary world around us."

But then,

"Nothing in the Bible reflects the scientific insight (originally from Darwin and later elaborated by, among others, the Dutch biologists Niko Tinbergen and Frans de Waal) that humans are animals and conversely a striking number of animals have human-like traits: not only primates but also pigs, for example, are social and intelligent, and have emotions (including fear of death). In 2007, an orangutan defeated singer Bonnie St. Claire in an IQ test."

Suddenly, Darwin's scientific insight is seen as the only and irrefutable explanation. Suddenly there is no longer any question of "a possible explanation" that can be the subject of scientific research. The comment on Bonnie St. Clair correctly and accurately reflects the questionable nature of this paragraph.

In the sequel, Landsman continues on this path undauntedly.

3:

"Not only man has consciousness (as was long thought and recently claimed in the newspaper Trouw), but all vertebrates have that (so in addition to mammals also fish, amphibians, reptiles and birds)."

The fact that this discussion is about meaning-giving consciousness escapes Landsman completely. An animal is only humanoid if a lasting expression (such as a petroglyph) is produced that is not immediately neglected, but which the humanoid assigns meaning-giving value to and is cherished.

Landsman informs us that:

4:

"... it is one of the triumphs of modern science that at least in principle biology follows from chemistry, and this again from physics. The three theories mentioned are mathematically formulated and therefore everything can be calculated in them."

But he forgets to mention here that natural selection has not been shown to follow from chemistry through physics. Natural selection is a concept and does not follow from calculable physical law. See Mayr (footnote 17).

Finally, Landsman notes:

5:

"In addition, no matter how deeply we can always ask questions (and we must continue to do this!), we happen to be animals created by evolution and, like all other animals, have intellectual disabilities that we better accept."

According to Landsman, everything is subject to investigation (see quote 1). But as a matter of course, research into the scope of natural selection (see quotes 2 to 5) is excluded. Natural selection is not a subject of scientific research per dogma.

This is also the actual portee of Mayr's article.

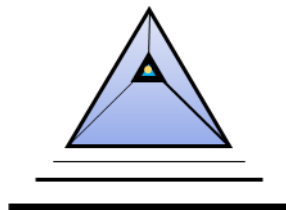
In addition to the standard model, there is also a standard attitude. Darwin is placed on a pedestal, fence around it with a sign in front of it: Do not enter. If you do dare, you are required to provide irrefutable evidence. The fact that the worshippers of the statue, of the obelisk, are themselves empty-handed in terms of evidence is apparently not so relevant.

Darwinian evolution offers no conclusive explanation for the complexity of the human body and completely ignores the coming into existence of awareness.

It can perhaps be argued that Darwinism never provides an explanation for an impetus for authentically new emergent functionality. After all, such a functionality has not yet manifested itself. But once such an authentic new functionality has emerged, for example through an absurd coincidence, or by a 'fruitful' combination of circumstances, Darwinism can perfect it further through 'standard' Darwinian principles.

IX. The Human Being in View: Source

Source and free will 34



Awareness is known to every human being. And like any other known phenomenon, this phenomenon too is investigated. Man questions everything. When an object is investigated, such an object is often dissected. One tries to reduce the object to its parts in order to gain insight into its functioning.

This method cannot be applied to awareness. Awareness is not an object. There are no parts of awareness. Awareness is not reducible. It's all there, or it's not there at all.

Of course, this does not stop people from investigating awareness. If the answer cannot be found by looking at constituent parts, one can look at what precedes awareness. What could have given rise to it. It is possible to search for the origin. What causes awareness?

Awareness has an origin too. Nothing can just arise from Nothingness. Nothing produces nothing. Nothing has no qualities that an experience of awareness can bring about. There is a reason for awareness.

As has already been shown, awareness cannot be explained by physical law. There is no matter causing it. Physical law is incapable of explaining the wondrous human course of action: seeing, prevising, decision-making and acting-in-the-world.

Just like awareness, the origin of awareness must also be immaterial and as such cannot be subject to physical law.

Like awareness, in principle the origin of awareness can be investigated. But it is not possible to look beyond the origin of awareness. The origin of awareness is the last one questioned. The ground of awareness is the last cause. The 'last cause' is also the 'first cause'. It is the Source of being. Everything that precedes the Source is contained in the Source. There is no origin of Source. The Source precedes itself. It's mystery. Born of itself.

The Source has undertones of infinity. Should the Source be understood in terms of cause-and-effect, then there is an infinite cause-and-effect chain, an infinite regression. And that infinite regression is instantaneous, in the now. A timeless fathomlessness.

The Source brings instantaneous infinity, known as awareness, in the here and now.

It is the Source that gives man his unlimitedness within material limits through awareness. It is the Source that makes man human.

Source of human spirit.

Is there a source for each person individually, its own unquestioned source of spirit or is there one Source that precedes all human spirit?

There are reasons to assume that there is one Source of being.

(1) Parapsychological experiments suggest that extrasensory communication between people is possible¹⁹. The results are not unambiguous, but they cannot be completely ignored either. This may indicate that aspects of human spirit overlap.

(2) There is a Platonic inspired answer.

Mathematical knowledge is discovered rather than invented. The law of Pythagoras was already there before its discovery. At a certain moment that law was formulated and people realized that it is of all times, and is true at all times. This is not only true of the Pythagorean theorem; this is true of all mathematics. Mathematics is discovered as if drawing from a well that has always been there. As if there is a mathematical space that contains mathematical truths and is discovered and judged as true by earthly mortals, and from which sometimes not quite pure earthly forms are made. That mathematical space can be denoted by the term Platonic Space.

There is only one Platonic Space and it is the same for everyone. There is one mathematical truth, one mathematical answer and that one mathematical answer is there for everyone. See also Appendix I.

There is no reason to believe that this property applies exclusively and only to mathematics.

Every meaningful question is also a quest regarding the awareness of one's existence. Answers to such a quest point to one and the same thing. Those answers are never invented, but always

¹⁹ See Jolij (Ref [5] Chapter 7).

discovered. The terminus is the same for everyone. There is one answer to all ultimate questions. And that one answer is there for everyone.

There is one Source for all awareness. One Origin

(3) A third argument is an argument of simplicity and is an application of Ockham's razor principle. The law of thrift points to the existence of one Source. One and the same principle, one and the same root is the cause of all awareness.

If there were no common Source, there would be an independent origin for every human being. An origin that would then be completely independent of everything else that exists. Every human being a world in itself. This is not compatible with a coherence that is noticeable in this world, and is also reflected in the natural sciences.

And finally,

(4) Contemporary physical insights lead to the conclusion that all matter is the result of one event, the Big Bang. It is therefore obvious to assume that all awareness also has one Source.

These four arguments together (extrasensory perception, the Platonic argument, the principle of Ockham and the analogy of the Big Bang) point to the one Source of all Being, the First Being.

This First Being cannot be questioned, because this 'Being' is hidden behind the horizon of individual awareness. It is the abyss without bottom, without view and without access. It reveals itself as the Source of awareness.

Although there must be a cause of awareness, nothing arises from Nothing, and there are reasonable indications for the existence of one Source, the reality of that one Source is not unambiguously established. This is contrary to the meta-movement with all its consequences, which is indeed unmistakably present. It is precisely the inclusion of a number of different reasons for the existence of the Source that can be seen as an indication that the existence of one Source of being does not have to be completely uncontroversial.

Perhaps the one Source assumption can be seen as the bridge, in the form of 'dogma' support, to metaphysics and religion. It certainly sounds plausible, but there is no certainty. In that sense, it remains a 'leap of faith', an 'act of faith'.

Maybe a fifth argument can be added to the four arguments for the existence of one Source. Awareness and therefore also the Source of awareness is immaterial. Time and space are for immaterial entities of a different order than for material entities. Material serial time exists by the grace of moving matter such as a harmonic pendulum. And matter takes up space, if only because of the measurable force field that surrounds matter. It is not possible to relate space and time to immaterial entities this way. So, it seems pointless to assign material location and time to an immaterial Source of awareness. This can also indicate one presence.

Of course, the same reasoning can be used for awareness itself, while awareness is nevertheless undisputedly present in multiple locations. It can be argued against this that awareness is indeed immaterial, but manifests itself from material finiteness. See section VI "The Human Being in View: The Human Spirit".

It is questionable whether these are meaningful observations. It does not change the fact that the existence of one Source of awareness has not been conclusively established. A scientific proof for this cannot be provided anyway, precisely because the immaterial evades scientific law. The immaterial is, perhaps with the exception of the fact that it actually is there, not susceptible to empirical repeatable experiments. The experiment that, regardless of time and place, always provides the same answer.

The Source is the first being. Within the scientific-materialistic worldview, the elementary material building blocks may be considered to be the first things existing. Returning to the Source then means a disintegration into the same unstructured inanimate matter from which life has been formed over time by (Darwinian) evolution.

When the immaterial One Source is considered to be the first Being, then 'Back to the Source' means a return to the ultimate immaterial conscious Being. The Source of all that is, will be and has been.

Source and free will

A well-known statement by Schopenhauer is: You can do what you want, but not want what you want. The Schopenhauer thesis implies that there is a will that precedes conscious human will. There would then be a first will that people obey and have no control over.

The meta-movement leads to conscious seeing, prevising, deciding and finally a realization. In this list of activities, the act of will is in particular in the decision. Conscious decision-making presupposes foresight and is therefore connected to the meta-movement. Human will as such has an immaterial component, even if calculations are performed in the final decision. Man's will is not based solely on matter.

That first will, the will that precedes the human will, can therefore logically not only be of material origin either.

In the 'spirit' of this essay, that first will is connected to Source of awareness. It would then be (the) spirit of the Source. The Acting Source. Just as awareness springs from the Source, so the human will, which finds its expression in human action, comes from the Source.

The human state of awareness is not equal to the Source of awareness. Likewise, the human spirit, the acting human, is not equal to the acting spirit of the Source.

It is by no means necessary to presuppose that man has no personal contribution to the ultimate will as expressed in his actions. It is not inconceivable that, for example, moral considerations associated with awareness also underly human action.

Man's mind could be free.

Conscious human will, human spirit, can steer matter. This is reflected in the examples in section III "Man Who Sees". This may imply a degree of freedom. The freedom to make an individual choice, despite the limitations imposed by material reality and despite the limitations associated with the mental state of each individual.

Human will is not necessarily unfree. There is reason to put Schopenhauer's statement into perspective.

X. Conclusion and Discussion

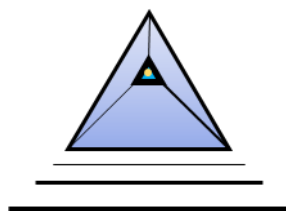
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Man is matter 36

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Conclusion: The existence of mystery

Awareness is mystery. And that mystery gives man special freedom. Because of awareness humans are, within physical limits, able to willfully influence material movements and can freely create and apply meaning. The mystery shows up in future-oriented human actions. The nature of the mystery can be judged by anyone as seen fit. Then other areas are entered. For instance, the idea can be cherished that the mystery can be discovered in the created world, in that which can be known. Or that the mystery could reveal itself.

Here the, perhaps premature, observation is that one immaterial Source precedes all awareness.

In the present era, the sequence cause and effect is greatly valued. According to this perspective, everything can be explained from the past, everything has a reason. The motives of people, the situations in which one may find oneself, it is in principle all explainable and understandable from the psychological and / or sociological past as long as the right information is available. There need be no riddles. There is no need and there is no room for elusive notions such as mystery, or spirit. In principle, man is an open book.

But the presence of mystery is undeniable.

In this essay a number of worldly events have been described that show that reality is more complex than can be described by materialistic scientific methodology alone. There is a reality that is unattainable for the scientific method, but nevertheless constitutes the most essential and the most incomprehensible aspect of people.

That reality is mystery. The essence of people is mystery. This leaves room for a different interpretation. Not everything has to be explainable from a material point of view.

Perhaps some aspects of the behavior of people are simply incomprehensible when looking solely through the lens of cause and effect.

This essay shows that it is possible to look in a different way, so that the incomprehensible, the mystery, can get the place it deserves in everyday life.

Discussion: What is man

The answer to the question of what is man is:

Man is essentially spirit. The Source of awareness is the origin of human spirit.

This answer, this conclusion, is thought of very differently.

A number of opinions are listed here and briefly discussed. Opinions vary from a purely material approach to an increasingly spiritual perspective.

Man is matter

There is a school of thought that sees man as not more than a product of complex material processes. This is the 'mainstream' point of view. Dennett and Dawkins hold this view. Dutch protagonists of this point of view are the professors Dick Swaab²⁰ and Piet Borst²¹. Yet also these professors should be willing, or able, to indicate how, from a scientific point of view, it is possible that such an extremely unlikely series of events as described in scenario "A fairy tale" could have taken place. And that indicating should then entail more than just a statement like: "Evolution, Darwinian evolution. Discussion closed.". That indicating should then contain traces of evidence.

²⁰ Ref [18]

²¹ Opinion Columns in NRC (Dutch newspaper)

For the time being it looks like that, for instance, Prof. Swaab (Ref [18]) uses his human transcendent capabilities, his ability to perceive objects in a conscious transcending context, to deny the existence of those same capacities.

A quote from Rahner²² may apply here:

“At this point we do not yet have the opportunity to go into this peculiarity of man’s self-interpretation, namely, that what is most basic and original and most self-evident can also be what is most able to be overlooked and is most able to be suppressed. Here we must only call attention to the possibility of existentially not wanting something to be true, so that what is to be said about man’s personhood and subjectivity does not confront an unwillingness to see from the outset.”

The fact that this quote, like other references, stems from a religious context, obviously does not diminish the truthfulness and expressiveness. Rejecting references and quotations for that reason alone would surely be a grotesque prejudice.

Rahner mentions a number of reasons for the "*unwillingness to see from the outset*"²³. Another reason for such an attitude may be that man today does not accept ultimate authority outside of himself. One wants to be one's own master. There is then no room for mystery that may need to be taken into account. Mystery that matters, that is important.

It may also be argued that a mystery is not scientific. It can be argued against this that the very science with regard to the human-specific scenarios in section III "Man Who Sees" has so little to say.

Yet another and probably not the least reason for not wanting to accept mystery is the undertone of religion, of metaphysics, that is associated with mystery. Life is experienced as that of a trapeze worker without a safety net. Fate can strike at any time. Illness and misfortune can affect anyone, and there is no indication that a religious belief or religious act can avert or mitigate it. And there is no higher power that prevents or stops even the most heinous human acts. Worldly history shows this convincingly time and again. There can, by human standards, be no meaningful reason for the existence of this world. Accepting mystery can offer (false) hope and comfort. Hope and comfort that is then dismissed as weak and characterless. And besides, we may not be our physical brain, but where our brain is, there we are. And if that brain is damaged, it can have serious consequences for the experience of consciousness. A basic attitude in which only chance and matter are acknowledged without any form of religion, metaphysics and mystery is then very self-evident.

The question of how nature and being of people can be reconciled with ill fate and evil human intent is of a different order. For some, religion provides a meaningful perspective. For others, such an attitude is unthinkable. This is irrelevant to the existence of Mystery. Mystery in the form of awareness and acting human spirit cannot be denied. And this mystery doesn't come out of nowhere. There is a Source of conscious acting.

Rejecting mystery just to keep religion out is a sign of easiness, of a certainty that is immune against all criticism.

If the mystery of existence is rejected, well-founded reasons for doing so should be provided.

Twilight area.

In the twilight zone it is assumed that the current natural sciences cannot explain consciousness, but the origin of consciousness is not the main subject of reflection. The supremacy of the scientific-materialistic worldview is questioned without considering metaphysical consequences. Writer and opinion columnist Bert Keizer²⁴ seems to be a typical representative.

²² Ref [15] p. 29

²³ Ref [15] p. 32-33

²⁴ Ref [6]

Conclusion and Discussion

Keizer is of the opinion that material reduction cannot cause a 'spiritual life' but does not care in any way about the cause of that 'spiritual life'. He is averse to religion and to the thought of an 'eternal life' and sticks to a 'not knowing'.

Mathematical physicist Roger Penrose and philosopher Thomas Nagel may also fall in this category.

Both do not believe that the current natural sciences explain 'everything', at the same time both have pinned their hopes on a new physics.

Thomas Nagel²⁵ envisions a physics with foreseeing abilities in which the variant with the most variety of possibilities is realized, roughly in reverse analogy with the theory of thermodynamics, which teaches that globally matter moves towards ever greater disorder because globally the (future) chance of disorder is very much greater than the chance of order.

Penrose²⁶ considers a physics with a non-computable component. A component that cannot be expressed in mathematical formulas.

Neither provides an indication how such a new physics in concrete terms might look like.

Perhaps Jolij (Ref [5] Chapter 9) also falls into this category. Jolij speculates, by analogy with QM outcomes, on a space that contains elements of consciousness that may or may not be realized.

In the twilight zone point of view, 'matter' actually consists of two components. There is matter that is subject to physical law and there is somehow a quality that gives rise to consciousness.

The fact that the second component comes with awareness and thus makes people into people, is reason to assign primacy to it.

That is why in the twilight vision the human being is first and foremost spirit.

Man is Spirit

The statement 'man is Spirit' in this essay means that no attempts are made to describe the human spirit in scientific terms such as 'dimensions', '(in)computability', '(im)probability' or time and space'. Awareness is of a fundamentally different order.

This opens up the possibility that 'cosmic consciousness' of an unknowable nature interacts with matter by manipulating that matter.

Representatives of this vision include Kurt Gödel²⁷, John Polkinghorne and of course Karl Rahner.

The conclusions in this essay are most in line with the position that man is spirit because it is argued that for the conscious human mind no material law and no material origin can be indicated, while nevertheless this mind can consciously influence the external environment through directed physical control.

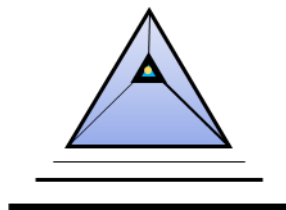
This control is not in scientifically measurable contradiction with physical law, but cumulatively leads to very unlikely outcomes. A consciously foreseen path is followed.

²⁵ Ref [10] pp. 90-93

²⁶ Ref [11]

²⁷ For a description of Gödel's Religious and Philosophical Ideas see [Kurt Gödel - Wikipedia](#)

XI. Epilogue: The Source of human spirit



Epilogue: The Source of human spirit

Human action cannot be described by physical law alone. The awareness of being with the consequence of conscious human action leads to events that are inexplicable from a scientific perspective.

As the ultimate cause for such human behavior, the Source of human spirit has been perceived. Nature and essence of the Source remain veiled because it is hidden behind the awareness of being. Underlying awareness, there is the abyss without bottom, without horizon and without access. The Source is mystery.

Notwithstanding this inaccessibility, it may still be possible to make statements about the Source with some degree of confidence.

The Source leads to human awareness. If there were no awareness, there would be no experience and no knowing. Then there might as well have been nothing. Then there was nothing. Therefore, the underlying Source is first and last. The Source precedes everything. Nothing surpasses the Source. The Source is largest and smallest. The Source is fathomless. The Source of awareness is within and above all that is, there is nothing outside.

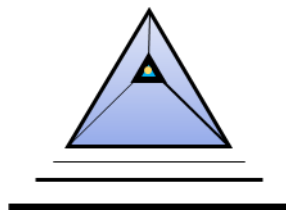
The Source is through conscious human activities the cause of scientifically inexplicable events. As such, The Source evades physical law. Concepts such as cause and effect and time and space as they apply in the material world, have no or a completely different meaning for Source. This puts linear time and specific place into unknown perspective which is expressed in poetic statements such as "was, is and will be: what is true has always been and always will be." Here and now is of all time and place.

The Source cannot be known and therefore cannot be called by name in a way that implies human meaning. In that sense, even the name Source is 'idolization'. So, there is reason to omit the vowel in accordance with Hebrew custom and to indicate the Source with Src. A meaninglessness that encompasses all meaning.

The existence of Source is a conjecture. Because of awareness, a Source of awareness can be sensed.

If that presumption is trusted, the essence of man is contained in the Source. In poetic terms: "the Way, the Truth and the Life".

Appendix I: Meta-movement in Thought: Mathematics



In section V “Human Perception: A Unique Human Ability” it was found that during an observation the observed is transcended, whereby the observer becomes aware of himself and a context dependent meaning is assigned to what is seen. The meta-movement underlies every conscious perception.

In this section, the emphasis is on thinking. On perceiving thought. Does a similar meta principle play a role during deliberate thinking? Deliberate thinking is here limited to mathematical thinking. A lot of thought has already been spent on mathematical thinking. Roger Penrose in particular has published extensively about this²⁸. In the paper²⁹ Penrose sets out his main conclusions. The mathematical argumentation in that paper is technical and is based on Gödel's incompleteness theorems for formal systems. But Penrose's intuition, his conviction, is actually another. Penrose is convinced that mathematical insight is necessary for practicing mathematics and that awareness is the basis for this.

This belief is consistent with the implications of the meta-movement.

It is not a prerequisite to be an active mathematician in order to draw conclusions about aspects of mathematical thinking. It suffices to look at the arsenal of tools and strategies that mathematicians have developed over time³⁰.

Practicing mathematics can be considered a human internal scenario. So here too the question can be asked whether a purely material process can underlie this.

In subsection “Meta-movement and Meaning” of section V “Human Perception: A Unique Human Ability” the notion ‘concept’ is presented as meaning detached from the entities with which it was initially associated. Perhaps mathematics can be defined as a game of notions and concepts involving numbers and structures of all kinds.

A multitude of meanings and concepts can be assigned to combinations of numbers and structures. By deepening and broadening the context, the mathematical meaning piles on meaning on meaning and concept upon concept, so that other, often deeper insights are discovered. In (almost) every concrete case, the mathematician finds a solution through insight into the problem. This is an ongoing process of mathematical 'meta going', in accordance with the meta-movement in other types of conscious perception.

A material process cannot be the basis of this. If the mathematical meta-motion could be computed, it would be algorithmic. With those algorithms evidence constructions could then be found for just about every concrete mathematical problem that could ever arise. This presupposes a material foresight that is incompatible with the material-scientific worldview. In this worldview nothing is foreseen but only physical law is followed. This cannot provide a generic proof factory. Such a proof factory, as demonstrated by Gödel's incompleteness theorems, is not possible for finite systems anyway.

The conclusion is that the mathematical-meta-movement cannot be computable.

This conclusion is reinforced by the observation that insight into the subject of study, insight into the solution strategy, precedes the formulation of that strategy. It has been seen before it is written out. The insight precedes the communication of the result. The mathematical communication specifies and formalizes the result of insight. Just as a hormone substance is not the experience, the mathematical formulation is not the mathematical insight.

And, mathematical insights are discovered as if drawing from an inexhaustible source of mathematical truths. And those insights are the same for every mathematician, as are the corresponding truth claims. There are no two truths for one and the same insight. Finite inanimate causally moving matter is incapable of producing unassailable truth claims. This is also a consequence of Gödel's incompleteness theorems.

²⁸ Refs [11], [12] and [13]

²⁹ Ref [11]

³⁰ To get an impression of the multitude of problems and the diversity in solution strategies, see site: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_theorems.

More than a touch of Mystery

Doing mathematics means consciously thinking, thereby gaining meaningful insight into a myriad of shapes of numbers and structures. The Meta-movement in its capacity to provide inexhaustible transcendent insight is a necessary condition for this.

There are many forms of conscious thinking. Mathematical thinking is structured and can therefore be the subject of analysis. Other forms of conscious mental activity, such as writing texts, composing music or producing paintings and sculptures, are less suitable for analyses. But then too the meta-movement is an indispensable condition, because for all creative thinking, for all creative activity, a meaningful transcending insight is required.

Appendix II: Naturalism versus Transcendence

Appendix II: Naturalism versus Transcendence

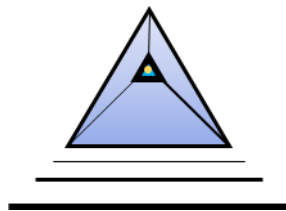
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Naturalism versus Transcendence in scenario: "An encounter".

In order to establish starting points and assumptions, a number of terms are first defined

= **Matter** is defined as follows (the sign == represents an equivalence):

Matter == material physical law == physical law == that part of all that exists that can be described by mathematical equations.

= **The naturalistic explanation of scenario "An encounter"** is understood here as:

Evolution has stacked complexity upon complexity. Scenario "An encounter" is within that multiform complex an interactive event between two 'entities', two persons, that for both leads to an assembly of (brain) matter that functions modelically as a computer program and is stored in the brain. That 'program' is carried out at the desired time for instance because of the expiry of an 'alarm clock', which subsequently leads to the meeting.

The result, the eventual meeting, seems bizarre but is completely explainable from this model-based 'program' vision.

The experience of conscious influence that accompanies the encounter is an illusion in this view.

== **The transcendent point of view** regarding scenario "An encounter" is:

In scenario "An encounter" matter is influenced by immaterial spirit.

The next two subsections provide arguments for the transcendental and naturalistic viewpoints.

An argumentation for the transcendent point of view:

In human action there are the stages of Seeing, Prevision, Decision and Execution.

During all these stages, man 'oversees', transcends matter. During all these stages, brain states ('states of mind') are realized that are inexplicable if only material physical law is taken into account.

This can be argued as follows:

= For the stages Seeing and Prevision, the general phenomenon of meta-movement is sufficient argumentation. In every perception, a person goes meta. Man always perceives an object in overview, in a transcending context. There are no limits set for this context and meaning can be flexibly assigned at will. This is a human quality that everyone possesses and that is constantly applied. In section V "Human Perception: A Unique Human Ability" the meta-movement is described in detail.

The meta-movement cannot have a material origin. When there is only material physical law, it is not possible to realize meaningful transcending context for all possible observations that could ever occur. Material physical law has no notion of context, concept and meaning, but is trapped within the strict limits set by those rules.

In every sensation, a state is reached that interprets the observed. In knowing context and meaning, the brain transcends matter.

So: In the stages Seeing and Prevision immaterial reality affects matter.

= The Decision stage piggybacks on the previous observations because this stage combines elements of the Seeing and Prevision stages with all kinds of other connotations and considerations.

An Aside:

Darwinism plays no role in this argumentation. Today's human brain is simply taken as a given. The foregoing is a transcendent description of the way the brain works in the here and now. See also section "Darwinian evolution and acting spirit" for additional explanation.

The argumentation based on the meta-movement is a denial of the assumption that a problem disappears by dividing it into very small steps that would each be self-evident. Dawkins uses this assumption in his well-known metaphor of the gradually climbing hill to the seemingly unbridgeable abyss 'on the other side'.

The inadequacy of this assumption is evident from the human capacity for thinking and the associated attributing of meaning. The 'creations' that people bring forth through thinking power, through their mental powers, cannot be sub-divided. Every small step in thinking is a miracle in itself.

= The transcendent argument for the Execution Phase is based on the ability to predict, to foresee, and then act accordingly in a targeted manner. Man mentally jumps to a point in the future and then ensures that such a point is actually reached by properly setting (brain) matter in motion.

Material law does not make any predictions of its own accord. Any prediction for a future time must be explicitly calculated from the present material state. Such a calculation is in general an impossible task within a physical material framework.

There are two reasons for this.

(1) When looking at the general, complete reality of today and not at very specific special cases, such as physical collision experiments, the shifting of tectonic plates and weather forecasts, it is impossible to perform such a calculation with any degree of precision, especially when the time for which a prediction is made is far in the future.

(2) The second reason is more fundamental. A calculation for the future affects that future in a way that cannot be foreseen by that calculation itself. Such a calculation rearranges the material state of the moment of start of calculation in a way that is unknown at the time of calculation. Put in another way: The calculation itself is a dynamic part of what is calculated. A calculation cannot take that into account.

The conclusion can only be that within a material worldview a prediction like the one made in the scenario "An encounter" is actually impossible.

People make such predictions on a daily basis with a high degree of probability.

A materially oriented worldview cannot therefore be a model of reality.

An argumentation to support the naturalistic point of view:

The argumentation in favor of the transcendent point of view is very general. It does not apply specifically to scenario "An encounter".

The naturalistic explanation of the "An encounter" scenario is specific and relates to the Execution Phase. A model-based 'execution program' is presented here for that Execution Phase.

To structure the naturalistic argument, some points of time are defined:

At time $T_{\text{Start-Execution}}$ the implementation of the decision to meet after a certain time T starts. In computer terms: Timer(T) 'expires'. At time $T_{\text{End-Execution}}$ the meeting actually takes place. Because a timer T (with all kinds of relevant data) has been introduced, the value of T is not important.

The interesting time window is: $T_{\text{End-Execution}} - T_{\text{Start-Execution}}$. How the plan could have come about is not considered here. That is the terrain of the prior stages Seeing, Prevising and Deciding. The situation at time $T_{\text{Start-Execution}}$ is as it is.

Within the naturalistic point of view, it can be argued that a 'brain program', which takes shape at, or from time $T_{\text{Start-Execution}}$ on, takes care of the actual realization of the meeting without the need for something 'strange' happening.

Such an argument might look like this:

1. In the brains of both participants of the encounter a complex 'program' is available at $T_{\text{Start-Execution}}$, with in it a complete picture of the relevant brain parts and a full understanding of actions to be performed in the outside world at the relevant points in time.
2. The outside world has no knowledge of this and is blind to any 'brain program', but it does have the handles to make the meeting succeed, at least in principle.
3. In order for the meeting to succeed, the handles must be set in motion at the right time and in the right way.
4. This is specific matter in motion and finds its starting point in the brain. The right matter in the brain is set in motion by the 'brain program'.
5. So, if the 'brain program' has an exact picture of the execution capacities of the brain and knows the handles of the outside world, the meeting can be realized.

Given this model-based design, there seems to be nothing mysterious going on.

A refutation of the naturalistic point of view

In this model, the mysterious is noticeable during the composition phase of the 'brain program'. The prediction that something should happen at time $T_{\text{End-Execution}}$ is taken before time $T_{\text{Start-Execution}}$. In that earlier phase, matter is (indeed) influenced in a targeted way. Brain matter must be specifically manipulated during that earlier composition phase such that the right 'brain program' comes into existence.

'Somewhere' during this shaping process, matter rises above itself to conform to the desired result.

Because:

The implementation program knows the ropes. But the implementation program is 'told' so by some 'program' that shapes that implementation program. How does that shaping program 'know' what needs to be done? Yet another brain program? No specific earlier 'brain program' can precede the previously described shaping 'program'. Such a reasoning leads to an infinite regression as described in the Aside hereafter.

A general shaping 'program' is also not conceivable. How could such a program, a program that has the special property of implementing the right brain program for all possible future human scenarios, exist? How could such a program know about the future? See in this regard also subsection "Darwinian evolution and acting spirit" in section VIII "Spirit and Science".

Where, and how, is the decision taken to start the realization of the meeting at time $T_{\text{Start Execution}}$. Not right now, now in the present, but only later, at that later time. And the actual realization at that later point in time is very probable.

Somewhere lurks mystery.

Proponents of Darwinism might argue that decision-making is inherent in the unimaginably great complexity of the brain. This complex brain contains, among other things, an image of the world and is triggered by the unexpected event of the encounter. As a result, brain structures are activated and that activity leads to the decision to have a meeting and, in due course, to the activation of brain parts that direct appropriate body parts.

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This reasoning is based on physical law. Within a deterministic framework in which all future is fixed and conscious human considerations are an illusion, this reasoning makes sense. But it is not at all clear in advance, perhaps it is even impossible, that this reasoning is applicable when the world is not deterministic and chance plays a role. If the chance component consists of unstructured noise, maybe physical law is also sufficiently explanatory, but then too there is no influence of conscious human considerations and is the world in fact deterministic or has an 'Everything is Coincidence' character. See section VIII "Spirit and Science".

If the world is not deterministic and is not of an 'Everything is Coincidence' character, matter must in some way rise above itself to make future-predicting human scenarios possible. In accordance with the fundamental assumption in this essay, a meta-movement with corresponding awareness is a necessary condition to make this transcendence happen. See subsection "Spirit and Matter" in section VI "The Human Being in View: The Human Spirit".

Incidentally, also if the world is deterministic, it is strange that scenario-specific future predictions can be made. But those predictions are then ingrained in the deterministic trajectory, including all the associated human considerations.

An Aside:

The comprehensiveness, the real scope, the depth, of the essential question 'how does prescient human action come about?' emerges in the question-and-answer chain below.

== How can you predict a future event with certainty?
By knowing what the outcome is.

== How do you know for sure what the outcome will be?
By determining the outcome in advance.

== How do you determine the outcome?
By performing the actions that determine the outcome.

== How do you perform the actions that determine the outcome?
By performing the right actions in the outside world.

== How do you perform the right actions in the outside world?
Biology: There is brain matter that knows the ins and outs. This brain matter, the controlling complex, sends nerve pulses at the desired moment to muscles in limbs that can influence the outside world. And that complex does this in such a way that everything runs exactly as desired.
To put it another way: Matter in the brain has been put into a state such that the right things are done at the right time.

== How does that brain matter get into that state?
There is other, or the same, brain matter that puts the controlling complex into the right state.

== How does that 'other, or the same, brain matter' get the information to do that?
There is preceding other, or the same, brain matter which the 'other, or the same, brain matter' provides that information.

== How does that "preceding other, or the same, brain matter which provides the 'other, or the same, brain matter' that information" get the information to do that?
There is preceding other, or the same, brain matter which the "preceding other, or the same, brain matter which provides the 'other, or the same, brain matter' that information" provides that information.

Appendix II: Naturalism versus Transcendence

== How does that "preceding other, or the same, brain matter which the "preceding other, or the same, brain matter which provides the 'other, or the same, brain matter' that information" provides that information" get the information to do that?
There is,... There is.... Ad Infinitum

This seems to never end. This chain of deductions indicates that, within a material framework, it may be an impossible task to give a decision procedure, an act of will, a physical place.

It looks like it is not, or never, possible to indicate exactly where, how and when the right information to take action will become available.

In human acting there seems to be an infinite chain that arises instantaneously and incomprehensibly comes to a solution at the same time. An instantaneous 'Droste effect' that leads to results. An infinite regression, not back in time but at this very moment.

The future is being looked at. A decision is made. That decision should be implemented. It seems impossible to shape such a trajectory within a purely material environment. Unless there are 'a priori' structures in the brain that implement such a procedure. But how can such structures exist for future situations that have no counterpart in the here and now. How can such structures exist for a realization in the future for which in the present in some cases there are not even words available yet. How can such structures be found for paths that are not known to anyone in advance before they are implemented as, for example, in the case of a discovery by a mathematician.

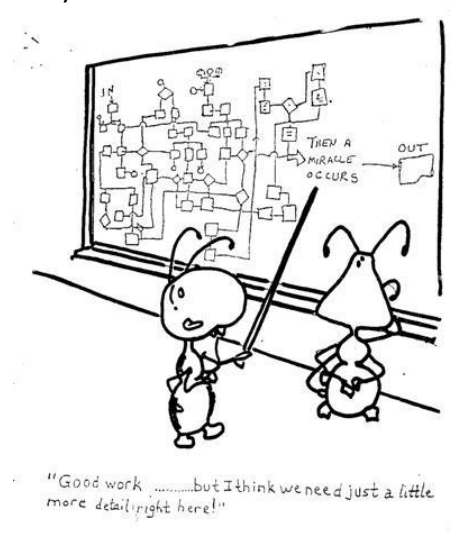
The weakness in this line of reasoning is, of course, that a model is used, and then debunked, which possibly is supported by almost nobody that way.

This is certainly possible.

Yet this observation is not the last word. If the above arguments do not hold water, it is up to the defenders of naturalism to indicate, or at least make plausible, what a valid model then might look like.

The 'transcendentist' maintains that such a model does not exist, cannot exist.

This is expressed in the cartoon below. The 'miracle' of the brain is not at the end though, but lies in the process in a way that cannot be described in a material-mechanistical way.



Naturalism versus Transcendence

Nevertheless, the question remains as to why such a 'meta-brain program/structure' could not exist.

The ultimate answer can only be that such a mechanistic description can never answer typically human qualities such as the ability to experience, the ability to see meaning and to assign meaning,

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the ability to handle concepts, the ability to think of the future, and the ability to judge, good and evil, beautiful and ugly, reasonable and unreasonable.

For each concrete individual case there will always be an, often very unlikely, goat path to be found. But in general, no description of a mechanistic 'meta-brain program/structure' can be given. A mechanistic program can never describe a human being.

However, this brief naturalistic analysis also shows that this conclusion, which, by all reasonable standards, is inescapable, cannot be inferred conclusively from a naturalistic analysis itself.

If one wants to defend transcendent reality, it is not wise to engage exclusively in purely physical material procedures.

The answer to the question: "How could such a program, a program that has the special property of implementing the right 'brain program' for all possible human scenarios, including future scenarios, exist?" will then simply be: Evolution. Darwinian evolution. Done.

That everything that is exclusively human is then disregarded and that in some way the adage that Darwinism is blind and does not look to the future is somehow ignored then, will not bother the materialist. That is then part of extraordinary complexity and 'deep time', a consequence of evolution, Darwinian evolution. All the so-called human qualities mentioned, then bubble up automatically, all by itself. According to the materialist.

To demonstrate mystery in human action, a specific human helicopter view is necessary. A helicopter view that is only reserved for people. Getting lost in physical material detail is a swamp from which it proves difficult to escape.

Emily Dickinson summarizes this in her poem:

The naturalist reasons from the ground up, from an assumed basis. That basis says that evolution has brought us this far, to this world, to our reality. A reality that unfolds further from the here and now in accordance with physical law.

However, true reality transcends physical law. This is unequivocally demonstrated in section III "Man Who Sees".

Transcendence leads to predictive power, while the essence of naturalism is chance.

Within naturalism there is no foresight and no realization of foreseen future events.

The capacity of people to know - in the broadest sense of the word - inevitably implies transcendence.

Naturalism versus Transcendence might be a choice as reflected in the ambiguous picture below: What do you want to see? The old woman (Transcendence) or the young woman (Darwinism, naturalism).



The old woman is wise, the young woman seductive.

Appendix II: Naturalism versus Transcendence

But: Darwinism is unproven and may be disproved. Transcendence cannot be refuted. Transcendence is inescapable.

Definitions

This section defines a number of concepts that can be associated with man, matter and mystery.

Awareness	Awareness is a state of knowing one's own personal existence. There is no computable <i>matter</i> underlying it.
Brain	The brain is the physical organ in the skull that houses the ability to think and decide. The brain combines all stimuli, both internal and external, into a coherent whole. <i>Consciousness</i> is believed to be in the brain.
Consciousness	Man is conscious when a state of <i>awareness</i> , whether or not in combination with conscious thinking or acting (<i>spirit</i>), is experienced.
Matter	Matter is that which can be described by means of mathematical equations. Matter is therefore in principle computable.
Source	The Source is 'Being' that precedes all private <i>awareness</i> . There is no calculable <i>material</i> substance underlying it.
Spirit	Spirit is the component of acting ability for which no <i>material</i> basis can be found. The spirit, unlike awareness, is thinking and acting . As in "he is inspired".

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This essay is about a mystery. And this essay has a purpose. The goal is to make room for the inexplicable mystery of conscious existence. Science cannot explain away that mystery, even though science often pretends that it can. The mystery is there and thus opens up a view, a view of another reality. This essay attempts to highlight that reality, the truthfulness of the Mystery.

Some time ago, in a café in Delft, the conversation turned to whether Darwinism is capable of explaining the complexity and depth of reality, in particular the reality of human existence. At one point I was asked: " How do you feel about it then?". My answer: "A touch of Mystery seems to surround it somehow" There was a moment of silence, a moment of attention. As if that Mystery revealed itself for a moment. As if doubt arose.

Doubt about the supremacy of the natural sciences. Doubt about the absoluteness of the material worldview that is currently so predominant in the (Western) world. Doubt because a touch of Mystery was sensed.

If this essay raises this doubt among skeptics, it is a continuation of the discussion that once took place in that café in Delft and the essay has then achieved its goal. And that's what I'm hoping for.

