Spiritual Objectivity

A systematic expansion of the body-mind-problem[1]

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Abstract

The article develops the thesis that spiritual objectivity constitutes an independent class of phenomena besides the physical and the mental. The concept of spiritual objectivity presents a solution for the mediation between the bodily and the conscious by further developing the insight of critical monism that individual action can neither be subsumed under the phenomena of the bodily outer world nor under the phenomena of the mental inner world. Referring to Gottlob Frege's thesis that what distinguishes a thought from other phenomena is its capability of being true, the article develops the argument that the thought in its spiritual objectivity should be distinguished from the psychic inner world of ideas as well as from the physical exterior world of material objects. The possibility of rational recognition is dependent upon this genuinely spiritual mediation of inner and outer world, and its objective truth must be distinguished from the constitutive subjectivity of psychic phenomena. This specified concept of the spiritual is not intended to enlarge the substance dualism between the bodily and the mental once again but makes it possible to determine the in itself differentiated unity of the bodily and the mental, namely as spiritual unity of body and mind.

I Introduction

The following considerations are meant to make a contribution to the mind-body-problem, by questioning an important presupposition of the ongoing discussion of the problem. The presupposition consists in the belief that the contrasting difference between "bodily" and "conscious" represents a *complete* distinction. In other words: All phenomena can be classified as either "physi-

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cal" or as "mental" – tertium non datur.[2] Contrary to this idea this paper will show that *spiritual objectivity* constitutes an independent class of phenomena besides the physical and the mental.[3] This is so, because the spiritual possesses an objective logic of its own that is specifically different from that of bodily and conscious phenomena. If this is true, then there are good reasons for introducing the as of yet excluded third into the debate, which will then not only be systematically expanded, but fundamentally redefined.

This opening seems at first only to complicate and add to the confusion of the mind-body-problem, as one can now additionally expect to be confronted with both a body-spirit-problem and a mind-spirit-problem. This paper will, therefore, attempt to show that the body-mind-problem is not burdened with additional problems, when attention is directed at the specific logic of spiritual objectivity, but that instead this view can offer a solution. This is so, because the spiritual taken objectively, this being the central thesis, is exactly what establishes the mediation between the bodily and conscious phenomena and this addresses the crucial theme of the body-mind-problem. In this way the spiritual is not a numerical third in constrast to the physical and the mental, but a third in the sense of their unity, and only as such – as their unity – is it a third in constrast to the elements that are mediated through the unity.

The spiritual, as it is understood here, differs from the mental in the sense of a subjective inner world just as it differs from the bodily in the sense of an objective outer world. Should it be possible to characterize the concept of spiritual objectivity in the above mentioned way, then the concepts of the bodily and the mental would become more concise and gain in clarity. So, singular elements of the spiritual, which as of yet are not acknowledged and understood as qualitatively independent, must, unknowingly, be included in the understanding of the bodily and the conscious, as long as one assumes that the separation of the bodily and the mental is a complete distinction, meaning that all phenomena must be classified according to it. In this way the suggested systematic expansion of the central conceptual constellation would benefit all

2. Peter Bieri has summarized the point in the following way: 'The intuitive contrast between mental and physical [...] has universal validity. If one were to expand upon this allusion to our confident dealings with the differentiation, it would go to say that we can classify *every* phenomenon, with which we are faced, in the following way: Every phenomenon is either mental or physical' (Bieri 1997, p. 3).

3. Why the concept of 'spiritual objectivity' was chosen for the third class of phenomena can only be explained and justified through the following argumentation.

the concepts, since the concepts within the constellation border on to each other and therefore illuminate each other reciprocally.[4]

Arising from this, the individual steps in the argumentation are presented. However, at certain points they have to proceed in a somewhat fragmented and provisionary manner, in order to accomplish its goal within the given framework. At first I shall point out in detail what the real problem of the mind-body-problem consists of (II). Then I will give a comprehensive presentation of a classical position within the discussion, namely that of Peter Strawson (III), because it comes quite close to the solution envisioned here (although without specific mentioning of the concept of the spiritual). From there a justified objection against Strawson's suggestion will be considered and the proposal will be modified (IV). The following step will expose the as of yet unnoticed peculiarity of the spiritual (V). Finally, I will show that the introduction of the spiritual does not destroy the modified proposal of Strawson, but rather deepens it, because thereby it is possible to give an adequate determination of the unity of bodily and conscious that he envisioned (VI).

II. The opposition between dualism and monism

From a purely formal point of view one is faced with a proper systematic problem, as soon as one has good reasons to accept at least two differing claims, which contradict each other mutually.[5] Now, the *problem* of the mind-body-problem consists first and foremost in the plausibility of two fundamental intuitions or leading motives of thought, which at first appear to contradict each other. For the purpose of this discussion these motives will be presented as the "dualistic" intuition and the "monistic" counterintuition.

The fundamental "dualistic" intuition is elucidated by departing from firmly established differentiations that are found in our everyday language. As such

4. Once one has become aware of the question of the independence of the spiritual from the bodily and mental, one encounters several hints that point in that direction within the ongoing discussion of the body-mind-problem. Richard Rorty claims that the so-called 'Identity Theory' states 'that sensations (*not* thoughts) are identical with certain brain-processes'. And Rorty adds: 'I include only sensations in the scope of the theory because the inclusion of thoughts would raise a host of separate problems [...] and because the form of the Identity Theory, which has been most discussed in the recent literature restricts itself to a consideration of sensations' (Rorty 1965, p. 25 and p. 25, note 1, my abbreviations).

5. This characterization is oriented toward the Antithetic of pure Reason as in Kant 'The antithetic does not, therefore, deal with one-sided assertions. It treats only of the conflict of the doctrines of reason with one another and the causes of this conflict' (KrV A421/B448).

the sentence ‘something is lying on the ground’ is clearly differing from the sentence ‘someone is lying on the ground’ (cf., Spaemann 1996). For the expressions ‘something’ and ‘someone’, though indefinite, make it clear in a very determinate way that their difference in meaning is neither gradual nor superficial, but rather a deeply rooted qualitative opposition. Of course it is a common intuition that such an opposition is quite obvious. However, it is the particular essence of such an intuition that it is not nearly as easy to conceptualize exactly *what* it is that is so obvious, as it is to establish *that* it is.

In a preliminary attempt at an approach it appears that we are intuitively convinced that the specific “subjective” perspective of conscious experience is principally different from any event or object that is available through an “objective” description, whereby the way of being of the subjective inner world is never fully in agreement with the way of being of the objective outer world.[6] Wittgenstein argues in the same manner: ‘The kernel of our proposistion that that which has pains or sees or thinks is of a mental nature is only that the word “I” in “I have pains” does not denote a particular body, for we can’t substitute for “I” a description of a body’ (Wittgenstein 1958, p. 74).

Therefore pebbles or the neurophysiologic processes of the brain are clearly physical phenomena, whereas sensations of pain or the feelings of someone in love just as clearly belong to the mental realm of phenomena. What is justified in this position should here with some caution be termed a *descriptive* dualism between bodily and mental predicates. However, such a dualism quite clearly establishes the systematic condition which ensures that it is meaningful at all to speak of a body-mind-problem. For without appeal to a descriptive dualism one cannot even approach the problem, as the consideration of a body-body-problem or a mind-mind-problem makes no sense at all.

The fundamental intuition contrary to this is the motive of unity or a “monistic” intuition. It is founded in the conviction that everything we call “reality” in the end must be *one*. If one acknowledges the justification of this conviction, then it is immediately implied that the dualism between bodily and mental outlined above can under no circumstance be reified as an ontological dualism of substance in which the bodily reality is radically separated from the mental. Still, the rejection of a dualistic notion of reality motivated by monism leaves it open to question of how the descriptive (non-ontological) dualism of objective outer world and subjective inner world is to be judged. Here we are

6. Thomas Nagel is a prominent advocate of this argument (cf. Nagel 1974).

faced with a fundamental alternative that enables us to distinguish between a dogmatic and a critical monism.

Dogmatic monism understands the unity of reality as something immediately given. Therefore it usually takes the form of naturalism, since reality is more impressive when it is understood as the naturally given and empirically comprehensible objects.[7] The simple conclusion therefore is: since bodily objects are real and since reality is *one*, it follows that reality consists of bodily objects.[8] Consequently, the descriptive dualism of bodily and mental can only be given a very low systematic value from this point on. If it is certain from the outset that everything real, without exception, takes the form of a body, then the only reality that can be ascribed to mental phenomena is that of a (more or less interesting) illusion. Thus, the body-mind-problem is really just a deception, which only appears when unjustified importance is granted to the descriptive dualism. Dogmatic monism, therefore, "solves" the body-mind-problem by depriving it of its validity of being considered a genuine problem.

Contrary to this, critical monism finds the descriptive dualism to be justified in exactly the sense that the body-mind-problem is taken to be a genuine problem. It rejects letting the difference between physical and mental evaporate into a mere illusion and thus shares the viewpoint of descriptive dualism, which allows for a specific independent meaning of the inner world of the subject. Against this dualism, however, it makes the critical point that it cannot be justified to limit the I to the pure world of human self-experience. For a human being understands himself first and foremost as someone who *acts*, as an agent, and interestingly no action conceived *as* action (however one chooses to understand it) can clearly be subsumed under the phenomena of the bodily outer world, nor under the phenomena of the mental inner world.

The following considerations are meant to further develop this insight of critical monism. The core problem of the body-mind-problem is accordingly found to consist in the following dilemma: without the dualism of mind and

7. The systematic mirror image of dogmatically founded naturalism of an absolutely posited bodily outer world is the dogmatically founded mentalism of an absolutely posited inner world of mind.

8. Plato has described those who take this stand in a classic way: they 'drag down everything from heaven and the invisible to earth, actually grasping rocks and trees with their hands; for they lay their hands on all such things and maintain stoutly that that alone exists which can be touched and handled; for they define existence and body, or matter, as identical, and if anyone says that anything else, which has no body, exists, they despise him utterly, and will not listen to any other theory than their own' (Plato 1928, 246a).

body it is impossible to genuinely consider the question posed by the problem, and with the dualism one cannot give an answer to the question, since human self-experience includes phenomena, which cannot be captured by the clean differentiation between bodily and mental. In this way, however, a general structure is prefigured, to which any possible solution must conform: it must take the shape of a mediated monism that is of *a unity of unity and difference*. In other words: it must clarify a unity of body and mind, in which unity is not established in spite of, but rather founded on, the internal differentiation.

III. Personal unity

The position developed by Peter Strawson in his *Individuals* (1959) is a position in the recent discussion of the body-mind-problem that comes quite close to this prescribed structure. The in itself differentiated unity of bodily and mental sought for is conceptualized as "person" by Strawson. He says of a person: 'What I mean by the concept of a person is the concept of a type of entity such that both predicates ascribing states of consciousness and predicates ascribing corporeal characteristics, a physical situation etc. are equally applicable to a single individual of that single type' (Strawson 1959, p. 102). Another way of saying this would be that it is not only always possible to ascribe two different kinds of predicates to a person, but that it is always necessary to do so. The first kind includes the predicates that are correctly used of material bodies. These are called "M-predicates" by Strawson; they include predicates such as "weighs 5 kg" or "lies on the floor". The second kind includes all other predicates, which we use for persons, meaning predicates such as "plays tennis" or "suffers pain". Strawson refers to these as "P-predicates".

The real point of this approach, however, is Strawson's terming the in itself differentiated unity of a person logically "primitive" or "primary".[9] It is important to note here that Strawson's claim that the concept of a person is logically primitive should not be misunderstood to implicate that the concept of a person cannot or may not be divided into parts. This exactly contradicts what Strawson himself demonstrates with his division in M- and P-predicates, namely that the concept of a person contains an internal division, which is crucial for the adequacy of his analysis. In Strawson's thought, the expression *logical* "primitivity" should therefore be understood in the sense of an *epistemic*

9. Therefore Strawson stresses that '[i]t is important to realize the full extent of the acknowledgement one is making in acknowledging the logical primitiveness of the concept of a person' (Strawson 1959, p. 103–104).

priority. A primitivity understood in this sense includes the possibility to analyze the primary concept of the person and find partial moments later on, e.g. bodily or mental phenomena. However, the idea that the concept of a person could be composed of parts, which were more fundamental than the concept of the person itself is ruled out. For the partial aspects of persons can, thus goes Strawson's central thought, only be recognized when persons as such have been recognized beforehand.

Thus, the crucial point in Strawson's thesis of the logical "primitivity" of the concept of a person only becomes quite clear, when one understands the logical "primitivity" in the sense of an epistemic priority. For in this case it becomes unmistakably clear, why the reality of a person should not be understood as 'secondary to two primary sorts of entities', i.e. as secondary to 'a particular consciousness and a particular human body' (Strawson 1959, p. 105). From this mistake, namely, the Cartesian mistake of a dualism of substance between the thinking and the extensional would arise. Therefore, the concept of a person should not be analyzed as 'that of an animated body or of an embodied anima' (Strawson 1959, p. 103), since the unity in the concept of a person in this way can only appear as something composed and in this sense secondary. Thereby, the original unity of the person is missed because it requires that the relation between body and soul that is endemic to personal unity is given *epistemic priority* over that which is connected and at the same time divided in the relation.

What follows from these beginnings may at first sight seem surprising, but nonetheless it is a strictly inferred consequence that the concept of a person is also 'logically prior to that of an individual consciousness' (Strawson 1959, p. 103). The concept of a purely subjective consciousness does therefore not offer any adequate point of orientation, from which the concept of a person could be explained and analyzed. 'It can exist only, if at all, as a secondary non-primitive concept, which itself is to be explained, analyzed, in terms of the concept of a person' (Strawson 1959, p. 102–103). Following on this the widely spread conviction that each individual consciousness disposes of a private, exclusive access to itself, in which the consciousness can always grasp itself adequately and completely seems misguided. For if the purely individual inner world is epistemically secondary to the person, which represents a primary unity of outer- and inner world, then the retreat into the inner is a retreat to something that is merely a partial aspect of the original and basic personhood.

If one wants to clarify these not entirely simple thoughts by means of examples, it is worth considering the P-predicates that designate an action, which on the one hand presupposes an intention or at least a consciousness in general

and on the other hand is realized in a characteristic type of bodily movement. Good candidates for such P-predicates could be "to go for a walk", "to wind a rope", "to play ball" or "to write a letter". For these predicates, according to Strawson, make clear the interesting peculiarity of many P-predicates "that one does not, in general, ascribe them to oneself on the strength of observation, whereas one does ascribe them to others on the strength of observation' (Strawson 1959, p. 111). Nonetheless, no one would deny that it is *one and the same thing*, which is being ascribed in two different ways – once from the inside and once from the outside.

Another, less simple example should make the implications of Strawson's beginnings completely clear. We say – taking a perspective from the outside – that a person can *behave* in a depressed manner, and we also say – taking a perspective from the inside – that a person can *feel* depressed. It is often tempting to argue, says Strawson, 'that feelings can be felt but not observed, and behaviour can be observed but not felt, and that therefore there must be room here to drive in a logical wedge' (Strawson 1959, p. 108). Considering the argument so far, however, it becomes clear that the correctly understood concept of being depressed exactly connects to that place, into which one wanted to drive the wedge of a consolidated dualism. For depression is always the depression of a particular person and not the depression of a pure, bodiless consciousness. In order for it to be at all possible that there is a concept like that of a person's depression, the concept must cover *both*: that which is felt by the person in question, but not being observed, *and* that which is observed by other persons, but cannot be felt. The depression of one particular individual person is therefore only that which it is, if it is an in itself differentiated unity, i.e. *one and the same*, which on the one hand can be felt from the inside, and on the other can be observed from the outside.

I believe that Strawson's work towards establishing an original unity of the physical and psychological that is differentiated in itself, is a very plausible beginning of a solution of the mind-body problem. For the impression of the impossibility of resolving this problem is indeed springing from the fact that the structure of personal unity of body and mind, which has been presented above, is not understood. In this way it is overlooked that the P-predicates could not have any of the two aspects of their use – neither the ascription to oneself, nor the ascription to others – if they did not *simultaneously* have the other. This mostly implies that one of the two aspects in the "logically primitive" unity of the personhood is being isolated and considered as independent, whereby the other aspect must appear as problematic and "unreal". And so, thinking oscillates between a skepticism that puts the existence of the outer world in doubt

on the basis of a primary inner world, and a behaviourism that questions the existence of a subjective inner world on the basis of a primary outer world. But neither can the exit strategy of substance dualism, which conceives both partial aspects as equally independent and substantial, lead us out of the dilemma, since here too the personal, in itself differentiated unity of body and mind, is missed and the interaction between them becomes unthinkable.

Following on from this discussion the attempt at establishing an epistemically primary unity of body and mind seems to be the only option, which at the same time gives good reasons to oppose an eliminative materialism, as well as an eliminative mentalism; furthermore, however, these reasons are also valid against the fortification of the descriptive difference between bodily and mental predicates to a substance dualism.

IV. Liveliness and personality

At this point, however, an important objection to Strawson's work must be considered – as it was discussed in the introduction. The objection stems from Harry Frankfurt, who contrary to Strawson asserts that besides the human being 'there are a lot of other entities that have mental as well as physical capabilities'. The identification of the in itself differentiated unity of body and mind with human personhood can thus not entirely convince us, because the concept of the person is too exclusive for the elucidation of the basic structure that Strawson has made topical, while the basic structure on the other hand is too unspecific for the proper understanding of being a person. 'It does violence to our language,' says Frankfurt, 'to endorse the application of the term 'person' to those numerous creatures which do have both psychological and material properties but which are manifestly not persons in any normal sense of the word' (Frankfurt 1971, p. 5).

Frankfurt's objection makes a crucial point: Strawson's "primary" unity of M- and P- predicates is in fact not specific enough to decide on the question of personhood. From this, however, it certainly does not follow that the this initial work should just be discarded. Rather, taking the justified criticism of Frankfurt into consideration can lead to a modification and further development of Strawson's beginnings in two respects: firstly, the general structure of unity as such must be defined in its own right, without taking the specifics of personhood into accout; secondly, on this conceptual background, the specific structure governing personhood must be decided, something which will be achieved by pulling forward a central moment of personality that has not been taken into consideration so far.

If the in itself differentiated unity of M- and P- predicates that has been analyzed by Strawson is not exclusively a characteristic of personhood, then it must be characteristic for a much wider realm. The in itself differentiated unity of the bodily and the mental, outside and inside perspectives, can namely be considered as the central characteristic of the *living*. For every single living cell already realizes the very peculiar structure of an in itself differentiated unity of outer and inner spaces. This is at the same time the precondition and the result of an inner expediency of every living creature that concretely manifests itself in the capability of an ordered, life-preserving exchange with the outside world.

In this sense, life can basically be understood as an active realization in which inner and outer moments constitute a necessary and "primitive" unity, which is (epistemically) primary and at the basis of the moments, so that we can only win the concepts of an outer environment and an inner expediency from the starting point of a logically primary concept of life. Or put in another way: Everywhere, where there is self preservation (i.e. life), there is also at the very least a weak and rudimentarily developed self, which is to be sustained and in this way differentiates itself as an "inner" from an "outer" that confronts it. In this differentiation, however, that which preserves itself at the same time relates to its environment, since a living being can only sustain itself, when it is at the same time interwoven with and separated from its environment.

Life thus conceived as expedient activity of self preservation also contains a tendency to development, in which the internally differentiated unity continuously becomes more differentiated; at the same time, however, as the growing differentiation develops, the synthetic moment of unity also distinguishes itself more strongly. The evolution of the living thus realizes itself in between two borderlines: between the world, in which there is as yet no inner unity of the differentiated, the reality of the inorganic, and the world, where the inner unity of life comes to consciousness of itself – what can be considered as the personal reality of the human being.

The transference from livelihood to personality could provisionally, as Robert Spaemann explicates it, be understood as an 'increased form of interiority'. 'As reflection, on the basis of which human beings can relate to their own vital interiority' (Spaemann 1996, p. 191). This understanding, however, as Spaemann emphasizes, does not fit the specific reality of personhood, since it can only determine its reflexive self relationship as interiority. The person is, as it were, 'neither inside nor outside'. For the form of reality specific to it 'transcends the difference between inside and outside that is constitutive for

everything psychic' (Spaemann 1996, p. 48). The specific dignity of the person thus emanates from the unity of the living, but it is not exhausted in it.

This insight shows the way ahead for the following line of thought. For just as well as the living *in itself* can be understood as a differentiated unity of physical outer- and psychic inner world, it remains *for itself* bound to the psychic inner perspective of its vital point of view and thereby to the difference between self and environment, which is in the end constitutive for life. The possibility of *reflection* on the living, however, marks the specific essence of personality, which always already must have transcended that to which it is able to relate itself understandingly. Still, life represents the basis of personhood. It must therefore be decided more specifically, how much of the differentiated unity, which we designate exclusively with the concept of a person, can stand out from the general unity, which can be described – as it was suggested here – by the concept of living activity.

Persons possess an ability, which at first grows in them as a result of their livelihood: they can value. The measure for the valuations of the living is ultimately self-preservation, on which each singular valuation bases itself: vital valuations are therefore made possible through the "inner perspective" of the interest of life in question and thus remain "relative" – related to the particular need in question. Accordingly, persons have a consciousness of the fact that their valuation, their praise and blame[10], often has a "subjective" or "partial" character, in which their particular individual point of view and interests are expressed. Obviously, the person knows that its point of view is a particular one, as long as it only describes a perspective that is always subjective. This reflective knowledge, however, implies a rational moment of reason, which transcends the subjective inner world, a moment, which ultimately makes the person what it is, and which in the following will be discussed as the moment of spiritual objectivity.[11]

The concept "spiritual objectivity" is particularly adequate, because the rational moment of personhood now in question obviously represents a third class of phenomena in relation to the bodily and the mental phenomena, al-

10. Strawson has effectively pointed to the fact that persons are primarily characterized by their evaluative and at the same time participatory attitude towards other persons, in comparison to which a distanced and "value free" attitude, through which other persons are factualized and objectified, can always only have a secondary significance (Strawson 2003).

11. In the philosophical tradition, the moment of rationality has been characteristic for the concept of a person from the beginning, like when the "classical" definition by Boethius shows, which understands the person as *naturae rationalibis individual substantia*.

though this third class also unites important features of the two other classes of phenomena in it. For on the one hand, the spiritual distinguishes itself from the inner world of the psychic in as much as a general, over-individual validity is available to it – somewhat in analogy to the inter-subjectively accessible world of bodily objects – so that the person, which relates itself rationally to something spiritual, transcends the boundaries of a merely subjective interiority. On the other hand, this objectivity of the spiritual is also different from the presence of bodily objects, since the spiritual is always also thought to display a normative character, which – somewhat in analogy to mental phenomena – cannot be grasped as an object, but only in a subjective carrying-out. Therefore, the objectivity of the spiritual can also be characterized with Hegel as the being in and for itself, which differentiates itself from the *being in itself* of bodily phenomena, as well as from the *being for itself* of mental phenomena, because it unites both moments in it.

V. Truth

The further consideration of this concept of spiritual objectivity will again be informed by a classical position of the 20th century, in this case from Gottlob Frege's article 'The Thought: A Logical Inquiry' (1956).[12] Frege takes as his starting point a positive and a negative determination. He argues positively that the thought is different from other phenomena therein that it is *capable of being true*. This, however, only gains its systematic profile by being connected to the negative thesis that the moment of truth in the thought or in logic is not to be described in conformity with psychological laws. One could, as it were, according to Frege, 'come to believe that logic deals with the mental process of thinking and the psychological laws in accordance with which it takes place. This would be a misunderstanding of the task of logic, for truth has not been given the place which is its due here. Error and superstition have causes just as much as geniune knowledge' (Frege 1956, pp. 289–290).

With this initial consideration, Frege has already marked the qualitative difference between psychological phenomena on the one hand and phenomena of thought or logic on the other: 'The assertion both of what is false and of what is true takes place in accordance with psychological laws. A derivation from these and an explanation of a mental process that terminates in an assertion can never take the place of a proof of what it asserted' (Frege 1956, p. 290). The specific logic of thinking as such – exactly "logic" – thereby (on

12. Originally published in *Beiträge zur Philosophie des Deutschen Idealismus* in 1918.

the basis of its specific validity, the truth of which cannot for principal reasons be traced back to mental processes), constitutes the autonomous particularity of the spiritual.

One should therefore distinguish very carefully between that which is the content of consciousness, i.e. an *idea* [Vorstellung], and that which is the object of thinking, i.e. that which is thought or simply the *thought*. The spiritual objectivity of the thought should thus be outlined more carefully in two aspects. Firstly, in a foundational step, the thought in its spiritual *objectivity* should be distinguished from the psychic interior world of the ideas. The next step is to distinguish the thought in its *spiritual* objectivity from the physical exterior world of physical objects.

Ideas are not physical objects: they 'cannot be seen or touched, cannot be smelled, nor tasted, nor heard' (Frege 1956, p. 299). If, for instance, I see something green, then I have a visual experience, the visual impression of green. I *have* it, but I do not *see* it. In this sense, ideas are something you have, but are not something which you sensually grasp. In the same way, you have sensations, feelings, moods, inclinations, wishes. An idea, which someone has, thereby – exactly because and in as far as it is something someone has – belongs to the content of *that someone's* consciousness.

From this necessarily follows the fundamental character of all ideas; that they are always ideas of an *individual* singular consciousness. For it belongs to the essence of every idea of a specific consciousness that every idea of another consciousness exactly as such is different from it. For every idea has exactly only one bearer, so that it is not possible that two humans could have the same idea. For if two humans did have exactly the same idea, this idea would be independent from the bearer in question – which would then contradict the fundamental definition of "idea" always to be in need of a bearer. Ideas can therefore not be without an individual consciousness, since they would not have any independent existence without an individual bearer (cf. Frege 1956, pp. 299ff).

In comparison, the thought – in sharp opposition to the idea – is something over-individual, which is available to all humans in the same measure, if they are able to grasp the thought in thinking. In comparison to the interior subjectivity of the mental idea, the spiritual obtains an important moment of objectivity. This objectivity, however, should not be thought of as the exteriority of physical objects, as discussed below.

Outer objects are existing and non-existing, they have certain bodily characteristics, others not, but they are never, and that for principal reasons, *true or false*. The difference between "true or false" has no application in the field of

the material outer world. To be distinguished sharply from this are, of course, *statements* about the outer world, which certainly – as statements – can be true or false; for statements are ultimately only statements, or claims about a matter of fact, because they can be true or false.

A certain physical object may weigh 5 kg or not, but it is in no case true or false. The statement *that* a certain physical object weighs 5 kg can however be true or false; but even in the case of a true statement, the statement itself does not weigh 5 kg, it does not have any physical weight at all, nor any other physical characteristic. The statement that wood can burn is certainly adequate; but from this it does not follow that the true statement itself can burn. A true (or false) statement that relates to something physical, is thus never itself something physical, because it does not and can not display any physical characteristics.

The entirely justified urge of natural science to rely on facts should therefore not be confounded with a reduction of all phenomena to bodily processes. Frege formulates this in the following way: ''Facts! Facts! Facts!' cries the scientist if he wants to emphasize the necessity of a firm foundation for science. What is a fact? A fact is a thought that is true' (Frege 1956, p. 307). The objectivity of the outer world is thus epistemically not primary, rather, it is only disclosed by the spiritual objectivity of a true thought at all which makes it what it is.

Thoughts are therefore neither physical things in the outer world, nor inner ideas. And thus a third, independent realm of reality besides the physical and the psychic must be recognized. The specifically spiritual reality converges with the ideas therein that it cannot be grasped with the senses, but with the physical objects therein that it does not need an individual bearer to whose content of the consciousness it belongs.[13] Frege formulates the triple difference in this way: 'One sees a thing, one has an idea, one apprehends or thinks a thought. When one apprehends or thinks a thought one does not create it but only comes to

13. What is meant hereby can be elucidated by the example of the cello, which has been mentioned several times during this conference. The cello is in one respect a physical object like any other, but its music – as music – can not be comprehended adequately in physical terms. However, that which can not be grasped in physical terms is not at all to be counted as entirely psychic. Here, then, the limits of the dual scheme "physical-psychic" again appear clearly. For music is (like any of the arts) not a purely subjective reality, because it transcends the narrow field of psychic experiences. The specific objectivity that pertains to it must therefore be defined as spiritual objectivity or truth, and thus distinguished from the physical and the psychic modes of being in the same degree. [The paper was originally presented at a public conference held by The Department of Philosophy at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, the Kirchliche Hochschule Bethel, and the Evangelische Akademie Iserlohn in 2004, Ed.].

stand in a certain relation, which is different from seeing a thing or having an idea, to what already existed beforehand' (Frege 1956, p. 302, note 1).

At this point, obviously, a final question must be asked: Is the thought, whose specific spiritual objectivity has now been clearly outlined in relation to the modes of being of bodily and mental phenomena, a third kind phenomena in itself, so that one could talk about a physical "World 1", a psychic "World 2" and a spiritual "World 3" (cf. Popper 1979)? Or is the understanding of three separate "worlds" next to each other ultimately incompatible with the monistic basic intuition of our thinking, so that the third phenomena of the spirit must be understood as an in itself differentiated unity of the bodily and the mental?

VI. Conclusions

As a conclusion to the presented line of thought it can now be said that the spiritual objectivity of the thought is *logically primary* in the sense that it has been elucidated in comparison to the objectivity of the material world and the subjectivity of the psychic ideas. The facts of the natural outer world can namely only be recognized as such, when they stand in a spiritual context, which grounds their objective validity or truth. In the same way, the individual psychic ideas can only reflectively become conscious of themselves when the subject transcends his private inner world onto a spiritually constituted personality. The objectivity of the spiritual thus conceived is therefore a "third" in the sense of an in itself differentiated unity of physical and psychic reality, which can only be recognized as realms of reality in their own right in the medium of the spiritual.

In this way it becomes possible by the in itself differentiated unity of the spirit, not to indiscriminately spiritualize the other of the spirit (i.e. the natural outer world and the always individual inner world). Hence, it can be avoided that the differences on which the possibility of rational recognition depends, blur into a vague sameness. Rather, the rational recognition of the spirit is in a position to gain a distance without falling apart as a result. Thereby that which is not immediately spirit gets the possibility of an appropriate and individual consideration, through which the whole field of knowledge does not yet fall into unconnected partial areas. The possibility of a rational recognition is dependent upon this genuinely spiritual mediation of inner and outer world, and the objective truth of it can be distinguished with good reasons from the constitutive subjectivity of psychic phenomena. Only in this way does the subject gain access to the being in itself of an exterior world that is different from it, as well as to the reflexive consciousness of its own interior world.

The reminder of Frege's considerations as they have been presented is therefore not first of all motivated by historical interest. For Frege's thinking

was, at the beginning of the 20th century, situated in the frame of a very fruitful discussion, which mobilized against a psychological reduction of thinking, and thereby provided important insights for philosophy, theory of science and anthropology. There are many indications today that thinking, 100 years later, is facing a similar task. Just like the great successes of the empirical sciences in the second half of the 19th century gave the impulse to a psychological derivation of the spiritual, today, in the form of the progress in neuropsychological and neurophysiological insights, we experience a flood of beginnings, which again make a psychological or simultaneously a physiological derivation of the spiritual their goal. It might therefore again be profitable to mobilize against this reduction of the spirit by emphasizing the qualitative difference between the spiritual on the one side, and the bodily and the mental on the other. This should of course not be done in order to "widen" the mistaken substance dualism between the bodily and the mental by new, just as mistaken dualisms. Rather, through a specified concept of the spiritual, the possibility appears that the in itself differentiated unity of the bodily and the mental may be determined as the spiritual unity of body and mind.

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