

Role of Art, Religion and Morality in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT. The great need that exists today for moral and spiritual impulses in educational methods confronts us with the most fundamental problems in modern spiritual life – problems connected with the forms assumed by our culture and civilization in the course of human history. We are living in an age when certain spheres of culture, though originally they all were one, have yet become separated from one another. In the first place we have knowledge or science, communicated, for the most part, by the intellect alone. Then there is the sphere of art, where man tries to give expression to profound inner experiences. Again we have the religious strivings of man, wherein he seeks to unite his own existence with the life of the universe. Lastly, we try to bring forth from our inner being impulses which place us as moral beings in the civilized life of the world.

In this paper I will explore the reasons for the gap between the abstract intellect and the humanities. What is the reason for the abstract intellect? How has it become subjugated to its technical aspects, career pathways and employability? What are the deeper roots of the intellect, and how are art, religion and morality part of these roots, having all four a common origin? It is of no value only to criticize this evolution of human thought. On the contrary, we should learn to understand the necessity of the reintegration of knowledge, art, religion and morality into a new transdisciplinary practice in higher education and to resolve the challenges and the riddles that this necessity confronts us with if we want to lay a foundation for a new and better human society.

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Introduction

In his lecture „Science, Art, Religion and Morality“ Steiner claimed that there „was an ancient period in human evolution when science, art, religion and the moral life were one“. (Steiner, 1923, p. 4.) What is our position today? he asks. The answer is that a deep abyss has opened between on the one hand art, religion and morality, and on the other hand science and technology. „The wonderful achievements of science are fully acknowledged by us, yet science is dumb before the mystery of man,“ he writes. „Look where you will in science today, you will find wonderful answers to the problems of outer Nature, but no answers to the riddle of man. The laws of science cannot grasp him. [...] The fact remains that man cannot be grasped by purely scientific modes of cognition. And so - in spite of all our science - we come to a halt before the human being.“ (Steiner, 1923, p. 5.)

These remarks on the cultural situation at the beginning of the 20th century are still valid today, almost a 100 years after Steiner's lecture. The situation is even more challenging than before because we today are faced with the extreme consequences of an apparently totally one-sided scientific and technological image of the world.

Hence the necessity for returning to the problem posed by Steiner. Only this time not for a deeper understanding of it, but in order to find practical answers to the challenge that it raises.

Let me illustrate this challenge by quoting the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859 - 1941). In 1932 he formulated what he called the theory of the „dichotomy and the two-fold frenzy“: „The essence of a vital tendency,“ he writes, „is to develop fan-wise, creating, by the mere fact of its growth, divergent directions, each of which will receive a certain portion of the impetus.“ (Bergson, 1935, p. 254.) In the general evolution of life, the tendencies thus created by a process of dichotomy are to be found in species different from one another, e.g. as instinct in animals and intelligence in human beings, each of them developing independently and assuming a material form that prevents them from reuniting to bring back again more fully evolved the original tendency. But this is not so in the evolution of the psychical and social life. „Here,“ Bergson continues, „the tendencies, born of the process of splitting, develop in the same individual, or in the same society. As a rule, they can only be developed in succession. If there are two of them, as is generally the case, one of them will be clung to first; with this one we shall move more or less forward, generally as far as possible; then, with what we have acquired in the course of this evolution, we shall come back to take up the one we left behind. That one will then be developed in its turn, the former being neglected, and our new effort will be continued until, reinforced by new acquisitions, we can take up the first one again and push it further forward still.“ (Bergson, 1935, p. 254 - 255.) Together the two tendencies that are being developed in the psychical and social life form a dichotomy of a twofold frenzy. The result is an apparent endless succession of the same two tendencies each one succeeding the other and actualizing itself independently of the other.

However, this succession does not need to be endless. Sometimes, according to Bergson, the mere fact of going further than what seemed reasonable, leads to new surroundings and creates a new situation that removes the danger, at the same time emphasizing the peculiarity and the advantage of the new situation. This is especially the case with the very general tendencies that determine the trend of a society, and whose development necessarily extends over a more or less considerable number of generations. Then it might happen that „a tendency, advantageous in itself, cannot be moderated otherwise than by the action of a counter-tendency, which hence becomes advantageous also. It would seem as though the wise course, then, would be a co-operation of the two tendencies, the first intervening when circumstances require, the other restraining it when it threatens to go too far. Unfortunately, it is difficult to say where exaggeration and danger begin“. (Bergson, 1935, p. 255.)

Science and technology must be looked upon as a tendency that will be pursued as far as possible. The counter tendency, i.e. art, moral and religion, will be left behind as opposed to scientific rationality. The mere fact of taking up all the room, imparts to scientific rationality such an impetus that it bolts ahead as the barriers collapse one by one. There is something frenzied about this pushing further and further afield that unceasingly will expand the gap between the sciences and the humanities until we reach the brink of disaster.

This paper deals with the question of how to reunite the two tendencies, science and the humanities. The question is: How can the teaching of science and technology in higher education create a new situation that removes the danger of today's one-sided idolization of scientific rationality, and by emphasizing the advantage of art, moral and religion makes us revert to the original, indivisible impetus, where, according to Steiner, science, art, moral life and religion were one?

The paper consists of three parts. In the first part I will, by using a processual concept analysis, examine the nature of human thought in light of the epistemology of Steiner. In the second part I will reintegrate art, religion and morality into the same processual analysis of mind. Finally, from these two analyses I will draw some consequences as to the role and significance of the humanities as a transdisciplinary practice in higher education.

1. The nature of thinking

In modern philosophy knowledge and thought have traditionally been understood in a bottom-up way, where knowledge is determined only by experience derived from sense perception. According to the British empiricists, knowledge starts with sensory impressions, which are transformed into representations, concepts and ideas and by way of abstraction into more and more complex sets of concepts and ideas. What is more, not only are the data that enter into mind added by sense perception, but also the rules for processing these data are formed solely by one's sensory experience. This bottom-up approach to explaining knowledge is among the empiricists today considered the model for the understanding of the nature and function of mental life.

The problem with this approach to justifying knowledge is that it limits itself to generalizations of sensory impressions without being able to explain how one can arrive at true universal statements. When knowledge is based on purely sensory experience, knowledge depends solely on what is observed, which means that one is always dealing with particular facts or individual cases and not true, general laws. No one can ever observe a general statement of truth, whose existence therefore always remains a hypothesis. (Kolstad, 2014.)¹

With Steiner I propose a model that is based on the opposite movement, i.e. a top-down approach to conceiving human thought. Rather than being explained in terms of successive transformations of sensory experience into complexes of abstract thoughts, concepts and ideas are to be understood as a result of a living, spiritual experience of a higher kind that precedes sensory experience, the concepts and ideas being the ideal counterpart that joins the sensuous object in such a way that the object and the ideal counterpart (i.e. the concept) are considered as belonging together. (Steiner, 1980, p. 76.)

This model entails a radical shift in our understanding of human thought. Therefore, the central question is: What are the epistemological consequences of this new, spiritual paradigm? Another question is: Can this new understanding of the origin of our thoughts solve problems arising from or being caused by the traditional way of explaining the origin of human thought as transformation of sensory experience?

I will later return to the second question.

But first, I want to focus on some epistemological consequences that follow from the spiritual way of conceiving the nature of thinking. They will be easier to understand if we start with the basic theory of Steiner's epistemology. According to this theory the reality has been split by the human being into two halves, the sensible world around us and the thinking that takes place in our minds. From this Steiner concludes that concepts do not come from seeing the physical world, but from an „inner seeing“. They are not derived from sense experience, but are added to it in order to make our representation of reality a unity. Secondly, because concepts are added to sense experience, they must come from a nonphysical, ideal sphere. Hence, with concepts we are intuitively in touch with a supersensory world.² And thirdly, if this is so, there must be some content that will appear to pure reason alone.

Steiner's epistemology differs not only from the teachings of the British empiricists, but also from the tradition coming from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804). Kant maintained that our ability to know is inextricably bound up with the way our senses are organized. He further alleged that concepts without perception are empty and any perception other than of the physical world is not known to ordinary consciousness. With this position Steiner disagrees. On the contrary, Steiner claims that in order

1. I say this knowing well that science bases itself upon an inductive method, which consists in an inference from the truth of singular statements to the truth of a universal statement. In modern times, the Austrian-British philosopher Karl Popper (1902-1994) has stressed the problem by his rejection of the classical inductivist views on the scientific method in favor of empirical falsification: A theory in the empirical sciences can never be proven, but it can be falsified, through the demand for falsifiability in science. In its basic form, falsifiability is the belief that for any hypothesis to have credence, it must be inherently disprovable before it can become accepted as a scientific hypothesis or theory. Hence, if a theory is falsifiable, it is scientific, and if not, then it is unscientific. Consequently, empirical science does not deal with positive truths, but with „negative truths“, i.e. statements that have been disproved as false. (Popper, 1959.)

2. It is true that when we perceive sensible objects our senses provide input from the sensible world, but it is the concept that allows us to know what we are seeing.

to explain common knowledge of the world, we have to admit that concepts have an independent existence in an ideal world before they are added to sense experience, and that they come from a perception of this nonphysical world. Therefore, concepts without perceptions are not empty, but, according to Steiner, filled with an original and powerful ideal meaning.

The activity consisting in the forming of concepts corresponding to the objects surrounding us goes unnoticed. The same is the case when the soul is contemplating the concepts in their ideal sphere. Nevertheless, Steiner claims that there must be possible to grasp the concepts before they are reflected in the ordinary life of soul, where they are mixed with activities originating in the body, as perceptions, feeling, willing and so forth. However, the nature of such content *cannot be determined by theorizing*. In this case we will have to use concepts' corresponding to our observations in the physical world, which betray the original rich and living meaning of the concepts's ideal content. Only the actual praxis of supersensory knowing can determine what I experience. Such a praxis of knowing is described by Steiner in many books, for example in his *How to Know Higher Worlds*.³

Steiner was the first philosopher in modern times to present a theory of such a higher praxis of cognition. This he first did in his book *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*,⁴ which perhaps contains the most complete account including consequences. The following analysis is mainly based on Steiner's theory in this book.

Steiner calls the praxis of supersensory knowing *pure thinking*. The process of pure thinking unfolds through the inner efforts of the human „I“ in the direction from below to above. In this process Steiner distinguishes between several levels, which he gives different names. Since he often deals rather freely with these designations, the terms referred to can occur in various contexts of his work in place of one another. In fact, they do not designate separate activities, but characterize the same inner process from different sides that are striving towards each other.

In the concrete sense of the word, pure thinking is synonymous with „sense-free thinking“. Pure thinking is called this because it is indeed free of all that is sensory, hence „pure“. It is simply thinking and nothing else, involving no perceptual content, no memories, no associative thoughts, but only thinking in concepts that is guided by reason. It is thinking free from sensual impressions, initiated by the thinker himself. „The highest level of individual life is that of conceptual thinking without reference to a definite perceptual content,“ Steiner writes. „We determine the content of a concept through pure intuition from the ideal sphere. Such a concept contains no reference to definite perceptions at first.“ (Steiner, 1980, p. 168 – 169.) In his book *How to Know Higher Worlds* he says:

Some people, of course, deny the existence of such thoughts. They claim that we cannot think anything that is not drawn from perception or from inner life as this is conditioned by the body. Therefore, they say, all thoughts are simply shadow images of perceptions or inner experiences. Those who assert this, however, only do so because they themselves have never been able to develop in their souls the faculty of experiencing the pure, self-sufficient life of thought. Once we have experienced this, and it is a living experience for us, we know that whenever thinking presides in our soul life we are engaged, to the extent that such thinking permeates our other soul functions, in an inner activity in whose creation the body plays no part.

In our ordinary soul lives, thinking is almost always mixed with other activities, such as perceiving, feeling, willing, and so on. These other activities originate in the body. But thinking plays into them. And, to the extent that it plays into them, something occurs in and through us in which the body has no part. Those who deny this cannot rise above the illusion caused by the fact that thinking is always observed together with these other activities. (Steiner, 1994, p. 208.)

In pure thinking we can really feel that the body does not speak anymore. It is the spiritual element in man that thinks, without any perception of the body. Hence, we need no philosophical, no scientific theories to prove that spirit exists - it has become an experience.

3. Originally published in 1904-1905 in German as *Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse der höheren Welten?*

4. Originally published in 1894 in German as *Die Philosophie der Freiheit (The Philosophy of Freedom)*, with a second edition published in 1918. *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* was Steiner's preferred English title.

To give an example of a kind of concepts that are *not* derived from sense experience we only have to think about mathematical concepts. The idea of a straight line does not come from the physical world. We are able to recognize straight things because the idea, a nonphysical thing, lives within us.⁵

Moral ideas constitute another example of sense-free thinking. According to Steiner in *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* we can experience moral ideas in two ways, either as moral intuitions brought forth in relation to a definite perceptual content, or as a purely ideal content, acting as a conceptual intuition involving no element of the world of perception:

A free spirit acts according to his impulses; these are intuitions chosen by means of thinking from the totality of his world of ideas. The reason an *unfree spirit* singles out a particular intuition from his idea world in order to use it as a basis for a deed, lies in the world of perception given to him, i.e., in his past experience. Before making a decision he recalls what someone else has done or recommended as suitable in a similar instance, or what God has commanded to be done in such a case and so on, and he acts accordingly. For a free spirit these preconditions are not the only impulses to action. He makes an absolutely *original* decision. In doing so he worries neither about what others have done in such an instance, nor what commands they have laid down. He has purely ideal reasons which move him to single out from the sum of his concepts a particular one and to transform it into action. (Steiner, 1980, p. 205.)⁶

An example of an impulse to action presented in a general conceptual form and containing no relation to perceptions (and hence characterizing a *free spirit*) are commands like „Thou shalt not steal!“ or „Thou shalt not commit adultery!“ (Steiner, 1980, p. 206.) Laws appear in the form of general concepts only when they forbid something, not when they bid things to be done: They contain no relation to a perceptual content from the start, but spring from the source of pure intuition and only afterward seek the relation to perceptions (or life). The same commands „influence the unfree spirit only through reference to a concrete representation such as that of the corresponding earthly punishment, the pangs of conscience, eternal damnation, and so on“. (Ibid.)

At a higher level, pure thinking is the experience of living thinking where the usual subject-object split created by ordinary thinking is negated. The split between an object and a subject is essential to the thinking we normally are familiar with in our daily way of thinking, and which implies a relationship between an object and a subject. Whether we are trying to solve a problem or to make up our minds about what to say or to do, we are necessarily thinking *about* something. Thoughts are always directed toward an object or a number of objects. Therefore our thoughts are said to be intentional. Furthermore, ordinary thinking involves an active subject's awareness of being somebody who thinks, and who is different from the object presented in the subject's thoughts.

The thinking we are most familiar with is a subject-object mode of thought. It is based on a subject-object distinction and the dichotomy between an active subject and otherwise passive things. It underlies all scientific and technological thinking and constitutes the premise for what is called logical or rational thought. Finally, it expresses itself through concepts and ideas.

Pure thinking in the sense of living thinking is a thinking that exists without the subject-object divide. Pure thinking is simply a process, i.e. a living experience that goes on without a distinct object and without the subject's awareness of its own agency. The essence of pure thinking is not to be about something, but to be experiencing the process of thinking so to say from the inside of the activity of thinking, i.e. the thinking part of our inner life in itself.

5. Other examples are given in *How to Know Higher Worlds*. See for instance chapter 2: „The Stages of Initiation“.

6. „But,“ Steiner continues, „his action will belong to perceptible reality. What he brings about will therefore be identical with a quite definite perceptual content. The concept will be realized in a particular concrete event. As concept, it will not contain this particular event. It would be related to the event only in the same way as a concept in general is related to a perception, for example, as the concept, lion is related to a particular lion. [...] For the unfree spirit this intermediate link is given from the outset. At the outset the motives are present in his consciousness as representations. When he wants to do something he does it as he has seen it done or as he is told to do it in the particular instance. Here authority is most effective by way of *examples*, that is, by conveying quite definite particular actions to the consciousness of the unfree spirit.“ (Steiner, 1980, p. 205-206.)

In other words, the content of pure thinking is not something exterior to our activity as a thinking subject. On the contrary, we are one with it. We are so to say experiencing the content of pure thinking as processes going on within ourselves. Therefore, this higher form of cognition transcends terms like „objective“ and „subjective“. Neither does it express itself in words nor in concepts.

This way of understanding thinking might seem unreal, defeating every kind of scientific rationality. Nevertheless, we experience living thinking every day. No other human soul-activity is more underestimated than these processes. They go on in every moment of our mental life, where they constitute the essence and continuity of the deeper soul-life.

In order to give a faint image of the power of living thinking we only have to consider what happens when we are listening to a story or reading a novel that fascinates us: We are often identifying ourselves with the principal characters and their deeds. The adventures of the heroes become our own exploits. Only afterwards we try to focus our attention on the different elements of the story. Then we start thinking *about* it, thus creating the subject-object split that tears reality into two parts: the subject's awareness of itself as an acting subject and the narrative recollected as object for the subject's reflections. Another example of living thinking is the immediate communication we can have with other people's thoughts (as for instance when we anticipate another person's wishes or sayings) or even with the emotions of their inner life. In this case we are identifying ourselves with the deeper mental processes of other persons. This happens particularly when we are sympathizing or falling in love with another person. We then become one with the beloved person and feel and see the world through his or her eyes. The beloved one's thoughts become our own thoughts; they are becoming processes of our own living thinking. Thus, we are united with the thoughts of the beloved person in a deep harmony that moves us through the power of our own pure thinking.⁷

The deeper harmony between two persons is therefore nothing else than the harmonious power flowing within a person's thinking activity, making the thinking soul and the thoughts a whole. Pure thinking is characterized by such a power. Steiner describes it as the power of „spiritual love“, also when these thoughts are another persons' thoughts. Even in this case the thinking soul is united with its thoughts in a supersensory sympathy that makes the content of pure thinking (and hence also of another persons' thoughts) really part of the love of the contemplating soul.

Furthermore, the power of love involves both a higher, spiritual feeling and will. „For he who *turns toward the living essence* of thinking will find in it both feeling and will, and both of these in their deepest reality,“ Steiner writes. (Steiner, 1980, p. 159.) Because of the richness of this deeper reality pure thinking is synonymous with „inner fullness of living experience“. (Ibid.)

Compared to pure thinking ordinary thinking is a fade, shadowy and chilling picture of the world. Steiner writes:

What then is left is something lifeless, abstract, the corpse of living thinking. If this abstract alone is considered, then it is easy, by contrast, to be drawn into the „living“ element in mysticism of feeling [...]. But one who really penetrates to the *life within thinking* will reach the insight that to experience existence merely in feeling or in will cannot in any way be compared with the inner richness, the inwardly at rest yet at the same time alive *experience*, of the life within thinking, and no longer will he say that the other could be ranked above this. It is just because of this richness, because of this inner fullness of living experience, that its reflection in the ordinary life of soul appears lifeless and abstract. [...] Thinking all too easily leaves the soul cold in recollection; the soul-life then appears to have dried out. But this is only the strong shadow cast by its warm luminous reality, which dives down into the phenomena of the world. (Steiner, 1980, p. 158-159.)

As mentioned above, living thinking goes on in every instant of our mental life without our knowing it. Those who deny this overlook the fact that ordinary thinking does not necessarily exclude these other

7. The word „sympathy“ is here used in its original etymological sense („sympathy“ comes from the Greek words *sym*, „together“, and *pathos*, „suffering“ or „experience“, which means something like „together experience“) to denote an internal communication between two forms of being that are not in an external relation to one another, but so to say are united in unison in a harmonious and existential deeper vibration (in contrast to the popular meaning of the word, where „sympathy“ simply means the feeling that you care about and are sorry about someone else's trouble, grief, misfortune, etc., or a state in which different people share the same interests, opinions, goals, etc.).

processes but exists together with them. A mental effort, under the control of the soul, is however needed in order that we should become aware of the experiences of living thinking. We must put ourselves in the soul state capable of receiving them.⁸ Describing this effort, in *How to Know Higher Worlds* Steiner writes:

In order to have such experiences, we must first make ourselves as inwardly free and independent of physical life as we are, in ordinary consciousness, when we form *thoughts* about the perceptual world or our inner wishes, feelings, and intentions - thoughts that are independent of, and unattributable to, the actual experience of perceiving, or feeling, or willing. [...] With inner effort, however, we can experience in our souls the thinking part of our inner life *in itself*, apart from all the other activities of our inner life. (Steiner, 1994, p. 207 - 208.)

Pure thinking in the sense of sense-free thinking and of living thinking is the result of this same effort seen from different sides. Living thinking can then be understood as a passage from one form to a higher form of cognition by way of an increasing concentration or densification of mental energy until „we can experience in our souls the thinking part of our inner life“.

This effort can be realized by everybody through the inner activity of their soul. However, as soon as our soul experiences enter the realm of the living thinking, they are no longer as easy to describe in ordinary language as experiences in the material world. „The reason it is so difficult to observe and grasp the nature of thinking lies in the fact that its nature all too easily eludes the contemplating soul, as soon as one tries to focus attention on it,“ Steiner writes. (Steiner, 1980, p. 158.) Therefore,

we must be mindful that the language employed is, in a way, further removed from the actual facts than is the case when we talk about physical experiences. We have to understand that many expressions and terms employed in these descriptions are, as it were, only images delicately hinting at what they refer to. [...] The supersensible realm speaks to the soul, which must then translate what it has heard into symbolic signs in order to survey it in full consciousness. (Steiner, 1994, p. 212-213.)

Consequently, supersensible experiences are described in pictures and images, rather than abstractly, i.e. in concepts or ideas that we are familiar with from our ordinary way of thinking.

At an even higher lever pure thinking is synonymous with intuition. According to Steiner, intuitional cognition means a knowledge that directly streams into us from a spiritual world of ideas that exists as a self-sustaining reality, independently of both the life of the soul and the sensible world. In *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* Steiner says that these intuitions are grasped by means of pure thinking: „When we act under the influence of intuitions, then the driving force of our deed is *pure thinking*.“ (Steiner, 1980, p. 169.) It is nothing hazy or nebulous about intuition. On the contrary, in intuition one is in an objective way acquainted with the spiritual world (just as one in perception is objectively connected with the physical world).

With the expression „world of ideas“ Steiner is not referring to a world composed of abstract, logical concepts, but to ideas experienced as spiritual processes and forces. When penetrating into the spiritual life within each person these processes are called intuitions or intuitive thinking. In intuition we are communicating directly with these processes without creating a subject-object gap between them and ourselves. In short, we become one with these processes by experiencing them as part of our living thinking.

In the sphere of the world of ideas one attains cognizance of something that is universal for all men. Therefore, intuition leads to the common ideal unity of all multiplicity. The difference between persons

8. Most people are however reluctant to make this effort. They are „generally suspicious if they are required to make an effort of a purely soul nature [...]“. (Steiner, 1994, p. 209.) They rather „prefer to have passive experiences that require no effort on their part“. (Ibid.) For this reason living thinking must not be confused with the contents or products of a soul in a passive „state of lowered consciousness - that is, a state below the degree of conscious activity displayed in sensory perception and voluntary action - as an objective revelation of a non-material reality. In other words, they will mistake visionary experiences, mediumistic revelations, and similar soul contents for true spiritual perception. What is experienced in such states of lowered consciousness, however, is not a *supersensible* but a *subsensible* world. [...] Visionary experiences and mediumistic demonstrations, on the other hand, depend completely on the body. [...] True supersensible experience, on the other hand [...] requires that we direct our development in the opposite direction from that of visionary and mediumistic experience. In other words, we strive to make the soul progressively less dependent on the body - more independent of it - than it is in ordinary perceiving and willing. Thereby we achieve the degree of independence from the body that is characteristic of pure thinking, thus extending the range of our soul activities“. (Steiner, 1994, p. 209-211.)

is not at all because we live in two quite different spiritual worlds, but because each one receives different intuitions from the world of ideas that we share, and that lights up within each human being.

Another characteristic of the world of ideas is that the spiritual processes are not happening independently of each another. Rather they interpenetrate and intermingle, forming between them a whole embracing the entire universe. Therefore, when we intuitively are grasping these processes, we are embedded in the cosmic whole.

And thirdly, these processes are the spiritual forces underlying the whole universe. In our intuitions we are communicating with the forces that govern the world and constitute the driving forces that move it in time and space.

As a result of this analysis the principle that lies at the heart of the epistemology of Steiner can be summed up as follows: Man can have knowledge of the higher, spiritual cosmic forces. In order to obtain such knowledge, we have first to be acquainted with our supersensible nature. This is only possible if we start with pure thinking in the sense of sense-free thinking. The next step would be to pass to a higher level where pure thinking signifies living thinking. Finally, we have to make the effort of putting us in a state where we will be capable of receiving the intuitions that are penetrating into us from the higher world of ideas, and that are working inside each of us. In *How to Know Higher Worlds* Steiner writes:

To experience supersensible reality, it is important that we know ourselves as supersensible beings in a supersensible world. [...] To enter the supersensible realm without such an awareness of our own supersensible nature would be like being aware of the events and processes of the physical world that surrounds us, but not of our own bodies. (Steiner, 1994, p. 215.)

And:

To develop supersensible soul activities as intended here, it is most important that we penetrate the experience of pure thinking clearly and consciously. Indeed, this experience of pure thinking is already and fundamentally a supersensible activity of the soul - although it is one in which we do not yet perceive anything supersensible. In pure thinking, we are already living in the supersensible realm; but at this point it is still only pure thinking, and not yet anything else, that we experience in a supersensible way. Further supersensible experiences must then be a continuation of the soul experience we have achieved in union with pure thinking. Therefore, it is crucial that we experience this union correctly, for right understanding of this union sheds the light of insight on the nature of supersensible knowledge.

On the other hand, as soon as our soul life sinks below the clarity of the consciousness experienced in thinking, we stray from the right path to true cognition of supersensible worlds. (Steiner, 1994, p. 211.)

Sense-free thinking, living thinking and intuition are not three different stages. On the contrary they overlap each other so that we in sense-free thinking are already entering the realm of living thinking and in the living thinking the realm of the intuitions. They represent one and the same process considered from different point views. The entire process constitutes pure thinking in the general sense of the word.⁹

The direction from below to above forms together the different stages of pure thinking. Seen from the other side the reverse of this process can be followed from above to below. We then start with intuitions of an ideal world of spiritual forces, through which man is intimately embedded in the cosmic whole. The intuitions are synonymous with pure thinking in its most condensed form. At a lower level intuitional thinking becomes less densified. Here, we experience the intuitions as living thinking, i.e. we are experiencing the act of thinking in itself and as pure activity. Finally, at the lowest level our intuitions are transformed into stiffened forms. They then become concepts, where we experience the concepts in a sense-free way before they are joining the world of perception through the activities originating in the body. Thus, from above to below the process takes the aspect of different degrees of descending intuitional thinking.

9. Pure thinking can be more fully illustrated by the kind of cognition that is experienced in art, as I shall show in the next part of this paper.

Normally we would think of pure thinking as something pre-rational, i.e. as preceding the development of intelligence or the activity of reason, and that must be rationalized in order to become clearly understandable by being transformed into a subject-object way of thinking.

I see it the opposite way. Pure thinking precedes rational thinking not as something unclear that has to be clarified by being transformed into clear concepts. Rather, it serves as the basis for rational thought, being more concrete, richer, more extensive and fuller than rational thought. The latter limits pure thinking. Pure thinking is not abstract thought, but simply living thought.

As the contemplating soul in pure thinking is one with the content of its thinking and through it part of the processes and the spiritual forces that govern the whole universe, pure thinking grasps true universal knowledge. The knowledge that is given in pure thinking, does not consist in generalizations of what is experienced because these experiences are themselves part of the universal laws. Hence they are of a different kind than mere sensory experiences. What are present in pure thinking, are not particular facts or individual cases, but true spiritual forces. In pure thinking we do not establish general laws by an inference from the truth of singular statements to the truth of a universal statement, but by living these laws in ourselves. This confirms the assumption that pure thinking is not a product of our own fancy, but of an actual, objective world. If pure thinking had been a result of our own fantasy, it would simply have been an emotional expansion of our own individual self at the expense of the supersensible reality we are part of, and hence a way of ascertaining our own self within a subject-object mode of thought at the expense of our intuitions that reveal to us our supersensible nature. Pure thinking is exactly the opposite: a way of lifting ourselves by raising us to a higher spiritual level.

Pure thinking is first experienced in a spiritual region above mind through a downward movement, where it manifests itself as a real, living force before finally stiffening to frozen forms. These forms are the concepts and ideas of rational thought. Thus, our abstract and rational concepts are rooted in processes that take place in a spiritual region above our mental life, but are reflected in human mind as the concepts that we experience in conscious thought. Hence rational thinking is not the same as pure thinking. What is important to note, is that rational concepts presuppose pure thinking and must first be gained through a process where pure, living thinking is transformed into a subject-object mode of thought. Therefore, not rational, but pure thinking is first and original.

This means that in order to understand scientific thought we must first understand pure thinking and the nature of the transformation of pure thinking into rational thought as a change of something concrete and living into something abstract and lifeless.

Hence, it will be necessary to rethink the foundation of scientific rationality. The latter must not be understood as a fulfillment of human experience, but as a limitation of it.¹⁰ An analysis that consists in explaining something by understanding it in function of the fundamental processes that lie behind the phenomenon is what I call processual analysis.

2. How can processual analysis reconcile rational knowledge, art, religion and morality?

Rational thought or the subject-object mode of thinking has three consequences, corresponding to three challenges facing modern civilization. This will become clearer when I now turn to the nature of learning implied in the subject-object mode of thinking.

10. Of course, I do not deny sense perception. My point here is that in order to understand sensory experience, we have to understand the processes that transform sense perception into fully rational knowledge, and this can only be done by understanding the nature and origin of rational or conceptual knowledge. This again entails a theory of something spiritual that descends in us from a higher region and encounters and shapes the sensory impressions. As a result of this downward movement a living process, which is pure thought, is transformed into a subject-object mode of thought, the latter expressing itself in concepts and ideas being the spiritual counterpart that joins the sensuous object in such a way that e.g. an impression of a tree does not only denote something outside us, but is spiritually grasped in the form of the concept of tree.

The first challenge is the alienation from learning that often is a risk in the acquisition of rational knowledge. In the subject-object mode of thinking learning tends to become something mechanical that only concerns the outer part of our mental life. In other words, we become alienated from true learning when we give ourselves up to the mere observation of outer events, i.e. when we allow thoughts passively to follow their succession, and are avoiding all conscious, inner activity of our own.

The second challenge is that rational knowledge is a fragmented knowledge. In the subject-object mode of thinking each knowledge element is grasped as separated from the rest. As we strive to master one element after another we are not only missing the inner link that binds them together, but we are also missing the greater unity of which each element is a part. Hence we are often dealing with elements that apparently are irreconcilable with each other.

The third consequence is that knowledge becomes separated from inner values and personal responsibility. As the subject is viewed as something different from the object presented in the subject's thoughts, it is not identifying itself with the knowledge that it acquires. When it comes to values, the subject feels free to switch between them according to the perspective it chooses for looking upon them, regarding them as mere goods. However, to look upon values as a mere piece of merchandise is the same as treating them as something that does not engage us in a deeper personal and existential way.

How can we overcome these challenges? The answer, as I will show, lies in a deeper understanding of the signification of art, religion and morality.

Starting with art, we will see that art solves the problem of alienation from knowledge and knowledge fragmentation by reconciling thinking and the spiritual forces that are acting through the creative processes of art.

In art we are confronted with imaginative knowledge or what also could be called picture-consciousness. Imagination in the sense Steiner uses the word, is not identical with a fancy or fantasy. On the contrary, it signifies a spiritual cognition where all that lies behind the world of the senses, is unfolded in pictures. These pictures do not in the least resemble anything we call by this name in everyday life. For instance, the fact that the pictures revealed by imaginative cognition are independent of the laws of three-dimensional space, make it impossible for them to be compared with anything in the world of the senses.

Imagination or picture-consciousness consists in a process where one in the manner of pure thinking starts by liberating oneself from the sense-bound perception. Thus, one arrives at a sense-free picture-consciousness where one experiences the picture not as a picture in the ordinary sense of the word, but as processes or forces. In short, we become aware of the picture as an inner, processual whole that strives to express itself through the outer, depicted picture. At a higher level, these processes are experienced as part of our own living thinking. We then experience them as forces that influence us and release our own creative force. And finally, through living thinking we rise to intuitional thinking where we directly become acquainted with the higher, spiritual reality that lies behind the creative forces in art.

The peculiar thing about picture-consciousness is that it does not describe a passive subject-object mode of thought. On the contrary, it is an active one where the subject, although it is conscious of the picture as an independent object, nevertheless experiences the image as a force that influences the subject thanks to the living and positive activity that the picture stimulates in it. In imagination we grasp not so much the nature of the picture, but the spiritual reality contained in the picture and behind it the creative activity of the universe that flows „directly into art“. (Steiner, 1923, p. 8.)

What is interesting in art is therefore not the image itself, but the immediate experiencing of forces. Artistic experience has the peculiar advantage over abstract learning that it is not so much concerned with the image itself but with the creation of the image and the underlying, spiritual activity.

To follow the creative forces in mind backwards from an abstract subject-object mode of thought to a direct experience based on picture-consciousness, is another example of what I mean by processual analysis.

Consequently, in art we become familiar with both the subject-object mode of thought and another kind of thinking. This implies a great advantage over all other forms of learning processes. Art shows us that there are two ways of understanding an object: an abstract and indirect one, which consists in knowledge of the subject depicted by the picture and the techniques used by the artist, and a concrete and so to say plastic one, which consists in experiencing the spiritual content of the picture, i.e. the spiritual forces that have created it.

Through this plastic way of understanding - or pure thinking - we are experiencing ourselves as participating in the artist's own creative act. To understand something in an inner and not mechanical way is in many respects to create what we are trying to understand. This is particularly true when it comes to art. Thus, in art we are not alienated from the process of knowing, but we become inwardly richer and a fuller personality by the fact that knowledge draws the creative activity of the universe into the experience of knowing.

Neither are we faced with a fragmented knowledge, because we are not dealing with objects, but with forces, and forces intermingle with each other in such a way that it is hard to say where one process stops and another begins.

Therefore, the fact that we in art are experiencing the universe and man in this way has consequences for the understanding of science and the limitation of the scientific concepts. In a lecture on science, art, religion and morality¹¹ Steiner writes:

Now if we follow this path with all our inner forces of soul, not only observing in an outwardly artistic sense, but taking the true path, we can allow scientific intellectuality to flow over into what I have described as „imaginative knowledge“ [...]. This „imaginative knowledge“ - to-day an object of such suspicion and opposition - is indeed possible when the kind of thinking that otherwise gives itself up passively, and increasingly so, to the outer world is roused to a living and positive activity. The difficulty of speaking of these things to-day is not that one is either criticizing or upholding scientific habits of thought which are peculiar to our age; rather does the difficulty consist in the fact that fundamentally one must touch upon matters which concern the very roots of our present civilization. [...] The kind of thinking current in our modern civilization is only one aspect of this force of thought. If we inwardly observe it, from the outer side as it were, it is revealed as the force that builds up the human being from childhood. Before this can be understood, an inner, plastic force that transforms abstract thought into pictures must come into play. (Steiner, 1923, p. 5-6.)

In fact, the creative forces to which we are exposed in art are the same as those constituting the spiritual foundations for rational thought. This gives us the assurance that picture-consciousness is not a creation of our own fancy. When once the nature of imaginative knowledge is fully understood, it will be realized that artistic imagination is not merely a matter of stimulus from outside, but of a real and objective spiritual force living in the very being of man. Having reached this stage of consciousness, we will not anymore be experiencing alienation from knowledge or knowledge fragmentation into separate elements, being often irreconcilable with each other.

In a lecture from 1907¹² Steiner explains more in detail how we in imagination, or active picture-thinking, can have an experience of the passage from the spiritual reality contained in the picture to the higher reality in itself, where everything is unfolded in cosmic colour-forms.

These colour-forms are anything but a lifeless picture. To whom who has undergone an accurate preparation and practiced the necessary exercises, these colour-pictures begin to be animated by spirit. „He then has before him not a lifeless colour-form but freely moving coloured light, glistening, sparkling, full of inner life; each colour is the expression of the particular nature of a spiritual being imperceptible in the world of the physical senses,“ Steiner affirms. (Steiner, 1907.) That is to say, the colours in the physical painting become for he who can make this inward effort, the expression of spiritual beings.

11. „Education. Lecture I. Science, Art, Religion and Morality“, lecture given by Steiner on 5th August 1923 in Ilkley (England) as an introduction to three cycles of lectures on education (Ilkley, Oxford and Torquay).

12. „The Gospel of St. Luke. Initiates and Clairvoyants. The Various Aspects of Initiation“, lecture given by Steiner on 16th November 1907 in Basle as an introduction to a course of lectures on the four gospels considered in the light of spiritual-scientific investigation.

Now, Steiner continues,

imagine a world filled with such colour-forms, reflected in manifold ways and in perpetual metamorphosis; your vision must not be confined to the colours, as it might be when confronting a painting of glimmering colour-reflections, but you must imagine it all as the expression of beings of soul-and-spirit, so that you can say to yourselves: „When a green colour-picture flashes up it expresses to me the fact that an *intellectual* being is behind it; or when a reddish colour-picture flashes up it is to me the expression of a being with a fiery, violent nature.“ Now imagine this whole sea of interweaving colours - I might equally well say a sea of interplaying sensations of tone, taste, or smell, for all these are the expressions of beings of soul-and-spirit behind them - and you have what is called the „imaginative“ world, the world of imagination. It is nothing to which the word „imagination“ (fancy) in its ordinary sense could be applied; it is a real world, requiring a mode of comprehension different from that derived from the senses. (Steiner, 1907.)

In imagination proper we are becoming acquainted with the outward aspect of those spiritual beings:

A man whose knowledge of the world is derived from this [...] imaginative perception, becomes acquainted with the outward aspect of higher beings, just as you become acquainted with the outward, physical aspect of a man in the physical world who, let us say, passes in front of you in the street. [...] The same applies to the beings of the supersensible world. [One] who comes to recognize these beings through imaginative cognition knows only their outward aspect. (Steiner, 1907.)

However, at a higher stage of spiritual experience, it is possible, Steiner affirms, even to „converse“ with these spiritual beings. One who has attained this degree of spiritual knowledge, can hear, strange as it may seem, these beings

give expression to their very selves [...]. He then has actual intercourse with these beings. They communicate to him from their inmost selves *what* and *who* they are. (Steiner, 1907.)

A still higher stage of knowledge is attained where we not only listen spiritually to what the beings communicate to us, but where

we become one with the very beings themselves. This is a very lofty stage of spiritual knowledge for it requires, at the outset, that there shall be in the human being that quality of universal love which causes him to make no distinction between himself and the other beings in his spiritual environment, but to pour forth his very self into the environment; thus he no longer remains outside but lives *within* the beings with whom he has spiritual communion. (Steiner, 1907.)

In the lecture mentioned above from 1907 Steiner call this highest stage of spiritual knowledge intuition, which here is synonymous with „to dwell in God“. In a lecture from 1911,¹³ however, the same stage is called inspiration. (Steiner, 2001, p. 280.) In the following we will use the word inspiration for this highest stage of spiritual knowledge, where we are one with the spiritual beings themselves. The earlier described stage of spiritual knowledge where we only are communicating with these beings, we shall call intuition, which is the highest stage of imagination in the sense of pure thinking.¹⁴

In the lecture from 1911 Steiner sees inspiration as a spiritual stage where our spiritual self is one with the beings in the spiritual world. Through our higher self we are participating in the processes of this world. This means that the processes constituting our spiritual self intermingle with the processes in the higher world. Thus, we are not only outwardly experiencing the spiritual beings, not even only communicating with them, but spiritually really living in them and through them participating in the processes that are the fundamental forces of the whole universe.

In other words, inspiration is a continuation through the powers of the imaginative knowledge into the life of religion. Inspiration is therefore a higher stage of knowledge than imagination, and more is learnt about the beings of the world of soul-and-spirit at the stage of inspiration than can be learnt through imagination.

13. „Pneumatosophy. Lecture III“, lecture given by Steiner on 15th December 1911 in Berlin.

14. In the lecture from 1907 this stage is called inspiration. Hence, in the lecture from 1911 Steiner interchanges the meaning of intuition and inspiration. Consequently he also reverses the order of them.

The third consequence of the subject-object mode of thinking is the exclusion of values that rational knowledge implies.

Inspiration literally means „to receive the breath of God“. Therefore, in its most fundamental sense it is religion and consequently also the foundation of morality.

If we look upon values from the viewpoint of the subject-object mode of thinking, it is hard to believe that this kind of thinking can lead to morality. The reason for this is that when we first have established a difference between the subject and the object of our thoughts, and particularly in this case when we are thinking of other persons, the difference cannot be overcome by a kind of thought that is based upon the very same gap. However, morality consists exactly in the overcoming of this gap. Morality is based upon an immediate experience of solidarity between human beings. Morality has its foundations in every human being's innermost feeling of being bonded to other persons by participating in their inner nature. To make this interconnectedness imminent in the world is true morality. The separation of the individuals from each other cannot lead to morality. Only by lifting each person above the subject-object divide and by filling him with the feeling of participating in the existence of another person, can morality be an active force in the world.

Practical morality arises when what is experienced in inspiration flows back into man's mental life. This is what Steiner calls moral intuition.¹⁵

In other words, moral intuitions are a continuation through the powers of inspiration into earth life. Through intuition inspiration is embedded in pure thinking, where our moral intuitions become the guiding principles for the subject-object mode of thinking. Moral intuitions give us guidelines for how to decide and what to do. At the same time they inspire us to take responsibility for our decisions and actions. Therefore, moral intuition is inspiration transformed into action. If imagination describes the way up to inspiration, intuition means inspiration brought down again to practical life.

In moral intuition pure thinking is immediately followed by an impetus to act. This impetus is an immediate and unbroken continuation of intuitional knowledge that engages our whole personality. Moreover, because in intuition there is no rupture between thought and action, or cause and effect, intuitional knowledge is characterized by being normative or prescriptive (value knowledge).

In the traditional sense of the word normative statements make claims about how things should or ought to be, how to value them, which things are good or bad, and which actions are right or wrong. Normative claims are usually contrasted with descriptive or positive (factual) statements when describing types of theories, beliefs, or propositions.

However, intuitional knowledge is not a statement at all. Neither is the normative or prescriptive element contained in the intuition a statement. It must rather be understood as a process, being inherent to the intuitional process in general. Intuitional knowledge encloses so to say the norms for action in it without depending on anything outside itself. When the normative process in the intuition is expressed as a normative statement, the intuitional and normative element of pure thinking is transformed into a subject-object mode of thinking, i.e. a descriptive or positive (factual) statement about the normative or prescriptive element (as the descriptive statement always is a subject-object mode of thinking).

Considered to be the foundation of morality, this theory of normative, intuitional knowledge sheds light upon the philosophical discussion of the is-ought problem. At the heart of the problem lies the apparent impossibility of making claims about what *ought* to be on the basis of statements about what *is*. In fact, as several philosophers have pointed out, there is a significant difference between descriptive statements (about what is) and normative or prescriptive statements (about what ought to be). According to these authors, it is not obvious how one can coherently move from descriptive statements to prescriptive ones. (Hume, 1739.) But if we cannot move from descriptive statements to normative statements, it is however possible, as our analysis shows, to go the opposite way, i.e. from normative processes to descriptive statements.¹⁶ This is what happens when we move from inspiration to intuitional knowledge and from the

15. See the first part of this paper for an explication of intuitions as processes that directly streams into us from a spiritual world of ideas.

16. If, however, it is true that one cannot logically move from descriptive statements to normative statements, it is nevertheless

intuitional and normative processes to descriptive statements (or to a subject-object mode of thinking). When the intuitional processes are transformed into a subject-object mode of thinking, we are transforming intuitional knowledge into a positive or factual statement about the intuition, stripping it so to say for its intuitional content. In this case we are only faced with the simple neutral and factual observation of the intuition. In other words, we are transforming the intuition into a thought among other thoughts in such a way that we feel free to follow it or not, leaving out the vigor of the prescriptive element of the intuition that makes it a special impulse calling for immediate action in an absolute necessary and pressing way by engaging our whole personality. But then we are also emptying human thinking for every value element or norm.

This last objection goes also for „normative statements“ in the traditional sense of the word. They are simply descriptive statements about what is duty in a particular case. There is nothing immediately compelling about a such a claim. It simply describes what ought to be done with reference to something outside the statement itself, i.e. the statement does not enclose the norm for action as part of itself as in intuition or pure thinking.

In other words, through a processual analysis of intuitional knowledge it can be shown that in order for rational thought to be an acting force, the normative element should be considered a presupposition for rational thinking rather than the other way around. Thus, when rational thought is brought back to its spiritual foundations, it becomes possible to reconcile rational thought with normative thought in the sense that normative thought and not descriptive thought becomes the primary and original kind of thinking.

In my opinion, the hope for our civilisation lies in the transformation of ordinary descriptive subject-object thought into value thought. The question is how to find an objective assessment of (or an objective basis for) our values in daily life. „Objective“ does not here mean „objective“ in the sense of being based on generalizations from sensory experience, but „objective“ in the sense of being grounded in an inner experience that embraces every human being. „Objective“ means „universal“ in the true sense of the word and in a much more strict way than any kind of knowledge resulting from sensory experience.

We need such value thinking for the renewal of our civilization. „We need it in order that what to-day is mere heritage, mere tradition may spring again into life. This pure, primordial impulse is necessary for our complicated social life that is threatening to spread chaos through the world.“ (Steiner, 1923, p. 10.) What is more, value thinking can only be based upon the harmony between knowledge, art, religion, and morality:

The earth-born knowledge which has given us our science of to-day must take on a new form and lead us through inspiration and the arts to a realization of the super-sensible in the life of religion. Then we shall indeed be able to bring down the super-sensible to the earth again, to experience it in religious life and to transform it into will in social existence. Only when we see the social question as one of morality and religion can we really grapple with it, and this we cannot do until the moral and religious life arises from spiritual knowledge. The revival of spiritual knowledge will enable man to accomplish what he needs - a link between later phases of evolution and its pure, instinctive origin. Then he will know what is needed for the healing of humanity - harmony between science, art, religion, and morality. (Steiner, 1923, p. 10 - 11.)

To sum up: If art, understood in a processual way, proposes a solution to the alienation that characterizes rational knowledge and to knowledge fragmentation into separate elements, then religion and morality analyzed in the same way bridges the gap between rational knowledge and normative thought and hence between rational knowledge and responsibility by bringing the spiritual experience of pure thinking back to earthly life. In this movement upwards to spiritual life and down again where descriptive science becomes rooted in normative thought, lies the reconciliation of science and humanities.

possible to move from descriptive science to normative thinking by a gradual condensation of the activity of the subject and of the object of thought where they both become living processes that melt together with each other. One way of realizing this condensation consists in as explained above an upwards movement from science through imagination to the spiritual life of inspirational and intuitive knowledge.

3. The role and significance of the humanities in higher education

The problem can be stated as follows: We are today faced with a schism where we on the one hand have science, and on the other hand art, religion and morality or in other words the humanities. What is more, science tends to banish the humanities so that we in fact have only one kind of thinking: the scientific one.

Analyzing scientific thought we find that it is based upon a subject-object divide that creates a dichotomy between ourselves and the world.

Unlike abstract, scientific thought pure thinking is concrete, living thinking without a subject-object divide. Furthermore, my hypothesis is that pure thinking lies at the bottom of scientific thought, being the primary processes from which scientific thought has been abstracted. This hypothesis leads to several consequences: 1) Pure thinking makes us grasp the limitations of scientific thought. It shows us what are the validity, significance and function of scientific thought. 2) Pure thinking implies not a fragmented knowledge, but gives us knowledge of man and the universe as a whole. 3) Contrary to pure thinking, scientific explanations have a short living. In science, one result replaces another. Thus, in scientific thought we are faced with a discontinuous knowledge. This becomes clearer when we take into account that scientific thought deals with hypotheses more than with absolute facts. It is based upon the principle of falsification more than the principle of truth. (Popper, 1959.) 4) Scientific thought, contrary to pure thinking, deals not with the living as such, but only with manifestations of the living. Therefore it does not grasp the living man, the living society or the living universe, not the creative forces in man and the world, but the static aspects of life.

The confrontation of scientific thought with pure thinking makes it necessary with a scientific formation based on spiritual principles. A true education of scientific thought is the task of the humanities. This follows from what has been said above of the reconciliation of rational knowledge, art, religion and morality through what I have called processual analysis. This challenge constitutes the first answer to the question of the role and significance of the humanities in higher education.

Leaving aside eventual criticisms that can be raised against the opposition between pure thinking and the subject-object mode of thought, we are still faced with a general, practical problem: How to make science a guideline for our lives, i.e. for our decisions of what to do or to say. In other words, the question is how to reintegrate normative thought with scientific, descriptive thought.

The model here presented is based upon the theories of Steiner. It implies a spiritual experience that is objective in a more universal and higher way than sensory experience is said to be objective. This objectivity is found in what I am calling pure thinking. Moreover, pure thinking grasps scientific thought in an inner way that makes us experience our thoughts as normative or prescriptive processes instead as abstract parts of something static and dead. Thus, in pure thinking the alienation of the individual from other persons is overcome, and by recreating a living, personal whole out of rational, fragmented knowledge pure thinking is reconciling science and moral values. This is the second answer to the question of the role and significance of the humanities in higher education.

One result of the normative mode of thought as based upon inspirational and intuitive processes (or pure thinking) is that we are directly faced with the responsibility of our thoughts and actions. As explained above, in pure thinking we become part of the processes that constitute the universe. The relation between each of us and the rest of the world is in pure thinking reciprocal: What happens to the processes of the universe changes also ourselves, and what happens to us, is likewise changing the whole world. In other words, being part of these processes imply responsibility. We are not here dealing with an abstract or logical kind of responsibility, but a living and concrete one. Thus, pure thinking means a new understanding of our responsibility towards the world. The lesson from the revival of higher education thanks to art, religion and morality is that we are not only learning how to be responsible for our decisions and actions with regard to ourselves, but through the responsibility towards ourselves, we are also assuming responsibility for the processes of the whole universe, and vice versa. This is the third answer to the question of the role and significance of the humanities in higher education.

The important thing here is to understand that the movement from a subject-object mode of thinking to pure thinking is not implying any antiscientific attitude. On the contrary, it signifies a revival of scientific thought. The model proposed sees science, art, religion and morality as different aspects of one and the same truth. Today it is claimed that art, religion and morality are no longer science. If you try to understand the human being by the artistic, religious and moral sense, you are not following the laws of observation and strict logic to which you always must adhere. The fact however remains that man is by nature an artistic, religious and moral creation. That is the reason why science cannot grasp the inner force that constitutes man. Hence the necessity of facing the problem of how scientific knowledge can be revitalized by art and the spiritual life of religion and morality.

Science deals with concepts. However, scientific concepts are to be understood as the result of a descending spiritual impulse. In this process something spiritual and universal become fragmented and abstract. In other words, an original whole is lost. In order to stimulate and energize thinking so that it can regain what has been lost in scientific thought, we must by a spiritual effort try to rise to a stage of knowledge that further can lead to a spiritual inspiration or a religious cognition of the world. This effort can be experienced in art when we do not consider art in an outward, but in an inner, spiritual way. Furthermore, art lifts us up to a stage where knowledge of the spiritual basis for the scientific concepts becomes possible. We can then follow the spiritual impulse downwards, thereby grasping the pure thinking that precedes rational thought. In this way we will be reintegrating the scientific concepts into their original context, including the moral principles that science likewise exclude, and thus attaining a universal knowledge of man and laws of the universe as a whole.

In this process I see the real meaning and importance of the revival of higher education thanks to the humanities. The humanities should serve in higher education as a platform for educating rational thought. Of course, this is the task of every person in every moment of his life, but the true impact of it can best be realized through an educative system that forms the basis of common human knowledge.

Science and technology reveal their importance for our civilization not so much in their abstract teaching, but when they are put to work. And when they are put to work, we inevitably are confronted with not only the question of what they can do, but how they actually are doing what they can do. Behind this problem however lies the stronger question of what they ought to do. For the fact that something is able to do something, is not an answer to the question if this also has to be done and in which way it should be done. It is a great lesson in life to know that we can move the world, however, it is still greater to know why we should move it and how.

Even Archimedes, who pretended that he could move the earth with a lever, hesitated as to how to use the lever and where he should go with his lifting instrument in order to move the entire earth in the best of all possible ways.

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