

July 1

I am shocked and shaken. I just returned from breakfast, and am as confused as I ever was. What happened was this: I got up early, this being my last day here. I'm flying home tomorrow. I had breakfast, and waited for Gaya to arrive. At ten o'clock I suspected something was wrong. I went to look for Mr. Dekker, but he wasn't there. There was someone else at the reception desk. I asked him for Mr. Dekker, and he said: "I am Mr. Dekker". I must have looked puzzled, because he smiled and said: "Maybe you mean my brother. He went on vacation. I'm his brother". When he said that, I noticed the resemblance. I said: "Oh, yes. He said you were on holiday". It is the first of July. Dekker said his brother was returning at the end of June. I added: "I wasn't aware that he was going when you return. I wish I could say good-bye to him. I've been staying here for the last three weeks. I'm in room 28". He smiled again and said: "I'll tell him. You are checking out tomorrow, right?" He was as nice as his brother. I nodded and said: "In fact, I was looking for Gaya. Do you know where she is?" Now things started to go wrong. He said: "For **whom**?" "For Gaya" I replied. "Who is Gaya?" He asked in a wondering tone. I was very surprised. She was an old friend of the family. I said: "She's a guest here. An elderly oriental lady". This didn't help. He said: "There is no one here by that name. What is her last name?" It never occurred to me to ask. But it didn't make sense. I opened my mouth to explain, to say that he **must** know her, that she's been a regular guest here for many years, that she is a close friend of his family, but the words were stuck in my mouth. I managed to utter "Never mind. Thank you" and literally ran away from there. I went straight to my room, my head spinning. I sat on my bed, my mind working like crazy. I took a deep breath, and tried to concentrate: What is the **meaning** of this? I tried to calm down, forcing myself not to panic, not to run out again and start an investigation. What would **Gaya** say? How **should** I act now? 'Think straight' I said to myself. What would **she** do?

° Time to wrap up. In the time I have left I shall try to answer the following questions:

- (1) Why do the preceding 113 footnotes qualify as an MA thesis in philosophy?
- (2) Why did I find it impossible to limit its scope to one of the traditional philosophical domains?
- (3) Why did so many great thinkers express so many different, seemingly contradicting views?
- (4) Why is philosophy today considered so unimportant by the general public?

These questions are, of course, in ascending order of **importance**. Therefore, I shall address them in reverse order. (The discussion will, of course, be limited to **western** philosophy).

(4) Why is philosophy today considered so unimportant by the general public?

This has not always been the case. In fact, throughout most of recorded history, the situation was exactly the reverse. Ever since *Thales*¹³⁶ said 'everything is water', and for the following two thousand and five hundred years, 'philosophy' was synonymous with 'wisdom', and was considered a trade suitable for the most talented and respected of all people. However, this is clearly not the case in the twentieth century. On the contrary: 'Philosophy' turned synonymous with empty hairsplitting, suitable for those who have nothing **better** to do. In the few cases where philosophers **were** (or are) respected (in this last century), it was due to their personal virtues, and **despite** their choice of philosophy as their field of interest. It is safe to assume,

I tried to relax. Thoughts were racing in my mind. What is the meaning of this? Was she **lying** to me? The idea seemed unbearable. No. It's absurd. Why would she? Maybe it's a misunderstanding. Maybe 'Gaya' is a nick-name the brother doesn't know. I got up from my bed to speak to Dekker's brother again, explain the whole story. At the door I changed my mind. I tried to read Gaya's mind, although she wasn't there. **Why** am I in such a panic? I was going to leave here anyway. What did I expect? To exchange phone numbers? To invite her to my home? To kiss her goodbye? I carefully reconstructed yesterday evening's events. She was apparently going away **then**. She left with Dekker. Is that why she ran out? Why didn't she **say** she was leaving? Maybe she hates **goodbyes**? Still, what kind of **behavior** is this? Gaya is the most **ethical** person I ever met! I tried to think straight: Gaya is beyond question. Her motives cannot be doubted. I was sure of that. Apparently, she thought she was doing the right thing. She **always** does the right thing. What if what she did **was** the right thing? But how could **this** be **right**? Disappearing like that! And we've become so close! Or have we? Yes! We have. I was positive she was very fond of me. I can't be wrong about this. If so, she must have thought she was doing the right thing **for me**. Maybe. Wait a minute - That's impossible! How come **he** says he doesn't know her? Did she use a false name? Whatever for? From the beginning? Is this some kind of **game**? A test? I was trying to think whether Dekker

that those few would have been equally respected and admired, had they chosen another. (Albert Einstein could have been [was?] a great philosopher, and would probably have received public acclaim as one, although, I would suspect, not to the extent that he did as a scientist).

What happened? **How** did it happen? How did philosophy's status deteriorate so badly, and so **quickly**? How could its supreme status, the one it held for two and a half millennia, be completely shattered in a single century? What is even harder to understand, is that the decline of philosophy was simultaneous with the decline of **God**, while one might have thought that the opposite would occur: That the absence of constraints over freedom of speech imposed by the church would enable philosophy to **flourish**.

What I believe happened, was a phenomenon known as 'over correction': Philosophy **brought it over itself**. It caused an effect that went **too far**, to the extent of self destruction. Philosophy was **so** successful in achieving its 'goals', that this very success, so to speak, 'turned against' the cause that brought it about, like the story of the *Golem of Prague*, which turned against its creator. It all happened very quickly, and philosophy 'lost control' over the circumstances.

Here is how I believe it happened: Ever since *Descartes*¹³⁷, philosophy had a feud with the church. For sixteen centuries, the church had a monopoly over the **good**, over the well-being of (western) humans. Philosophy (often without fully realizing it, as was the case with Descartes himself) undermined this monopoly. It took the side of **science**. In fact, philosophy **was** (natural) science. The sciences, so to speak, were **born** from it. Philosophy **and** science, combined, were winning the battle (against the church). The basic implicit claim of philosophy was: Between religion and science, **science is better for people**. Therefore, if a choice has to be made, it should be science, not religion. This was an **ethical** claim to abandon one **metaphysical** position and adopt another: The metaphysical position employed by science to this day: (Scientific, or common sense) **Realism**. (I will not define the term here again. You know what I mean by it). Philosophy advocated realism, and claimed it was not only 'the truth', but, more importantly, that it was **better**. And it worked. Realism 'caught on', science flourished, and really brought **good** to the people, as philosophy claimed it would. Now, who got the credit? Philosophy? No. Science got the credit. Science and **realism**, which go hand in hand. Not the **free thought** that brought it about, philosophy, but the *Golem*: Science and realism. So, as things turned out, it is more respectable to be a **scientist** than to be a **philosopher**. As simple as that.

ever called her ‘Gaya’. I can’t remember. She used **his** name, but did he mention hers? Maybe there’s a completely logical explanation to all this.

I finally calmed down. The way I managed that was to convince myself that there is no rush. I can conduct an **investigation** just as well later, or tomorrow, or at any other time in the future. I know the place, I know Dekker. I can always get in touch with the other Mr. Dekker when he returns and clear everything out. Besides, I shall definitely return to this beautiful place anyway. There is no rush. I felt better. No immediate action is **required**.

Then a second wave of thoughts arrived. I couldn’t get her out of my mind. It was as if she was **speaking** to me, although she wasn’t there. She said: “What’s gotten into you? Have you forgotten **everything**? What are you **doing**? I am gone for a few hours, and already you completely lapse into your old, conventional, **western** way of thinking? **Where** are you looking for explanations? **Where**? In ‘the world?’ You should know better. Something **strange** happened to you? So you immediately look for a **scientific** explanation?” And I answered, as if she was **really** there: “**You** taught me: Do the **right** thing. And what is **right**, according to **my worldview**, is not to **lose** you. Not to lose **touch**. I care for you.” She laughed. Well, not **she**. Her image I had in my mind did. I knew **exactly** how she would argue if she were here: “It is good that you care. But don’t fool yourself. You care for **yourself** now. In fact, **care** is always basically for **oneself**. But the question is, what is the right thing to **do**: Is it right to go and **search** for me? What

° So what’s wrong with that? What is so important in keeping philosophy’s status? Well, it is very wrong, and it is very important. Because philosophy is **still** free thought. And it **still** has to seek the **good** for people, as it always took itself as doing. But philosophy got so overwhelmed by its own success in building up science, that it became its **servant**. It started to worship the *Golem*. It **forgot** that it still has work to do: To **improve**. Science doesn’t need philosophy’s help anymore. It is strong enough. Much stronger than philosophy itself, the one that brought it into power. But philosophy’s interest in science in the first place was only as **means** to bring about **good**. Now that science **is bringing** the good that it can bring, **philosophy must move on**. And it doesn’t! It sticks to its old success, trying to share a bit of the glory.

What do I mean in “philosophy must move on”? I mean it has to resume its **primal role**: Seeking the **good** for humankind. This good will not be enhanced anymore by supporting science and realism. They are strong enough, and need no help anyway. If philosophy will continue to blindly advocate realism, it would achieve nothing and continue to deteriorate, **and it should** deteriorate, if it continues to do what it is doing: The general public is **right** in denouncing the value of philosophy, because it **achieves nothing**. It did in the past, but not anymore. The core of philosophy **was** always **ethics**. But in the last century it is not ethics any more. At most, it is ‘meta ethics’¹³⁸ or other kinds of lip service to what should have been the most important issue. It is the primal role of philosophy **to investigate the good**. To find out what it is, find new ways to enhance it, to bring it about. The attitude of Analytic philosophy to ethics is a **disgrace** to philosophy. The positivist claim regarding the meaninglessness of ethical propositions is an extreme manifestation of philosophy’s problem nowadays: It **forgot what it is**.¹³⁹

Any philosophical paper, book, or discussion that consciously disregards the issue of **the good** is not philosophy. It is what the public takes it to be: empty verbiage and lingual hairsplitting performed by people who have nothing better to do. This is why philosophy is (rightly) considered so unimportant by the general public.

purpose would it serve? How exactly will **you** benefit, how will your world become better, even slightly, by **finding** me, by ‘keeping in touch’? You are going home tomorrow **anyway**. When you needed me I was **here**. Do you really **need** me now? What exactly are you trying to accomplish?” And I replied: “I still have a lot to learn from you. I have a clear interest in having **access** to you.” She laughed: “You know that isn’t true. Look at the conversation you are having right now! You are doing just fine. Do you really need my **physical** presence? What **is** physical presence? Is there any question you need an answer for right now? A question you need my **body** to answer? You are just acting out of **reflex**. And a **western** reflex it is!”

It was spooky. This conversation, I mean. It got to a point that I needed to convince myself that she really **existed** at all. Maybe it was just a strange hallucination, triggered by the special circumstances I created for myself, conditions of voluntary solitary confinement? Am I going **crazy**? Well, if it **was** a hallucination, it was certainly **fruitful**. I feel so much more **whole** after spending two weeks with her. I would recommend such a hallucination to anyone. No. I’m not crazy. It was **real**. But if it was **real**, then she was telling me a whole lot of nonsense! This whole thing is completely self refuting: If she is **real**, then what she taught me is **false**. If she was **right**, then she was never **real** in the first place! My mind was beginning to boil again. I felt I was running a fever. I washed my face and sat at my computer to write the last few pages.

° (3) Why did so many great thinkers express so many different, seemingly contradicting views?

If philosophy is what I take it to be, namely, the employment of **reason** in quest of the **good**, then this phenomenon seems genuinely inexplicable. If it is just the quest of the **truth**, then it is possible that many thinkers should say completely different things, because there may be many truths, in a variety of areas. But even if we limit the discussion to the (many) cases where philosophers explicitly discussed the good, there are still as many opinions as there are philosophers. How is this possible? Is **one** of them right and all the others wrong? Most improbable. Another possible answer could be “there **is no such thing** as ‘the good’”. If this is the case, then philosophy has reached the end of its lifespan. I sincerely hope that this is not the case, and am operating under the assumption that it is not. That the good can be sought.

Many (most?) philosophers throughout history shared this view: There **is** something there to look for. It **used** to be God, whom philosophy helped overthrow. Now it has the responsibility to find a substitute (besides science, which makes its contributions, but nobody thinks that it **is** the answer). Many thinkers have claimed they **know**, and have written books about it, but they all disagree with each other. Could **they all be wrong**? A mystery.

I propose to assume that **they were all right**. I know this sounds strange, but isn’t it worth a try? I propose that all the philosophers who wrote about it, from Plato, through St. Augustine and St. Aquinas, Spinoza and Leibniz to Kant and Hegel, were all **right**. They all offered **correct accounts** as to the nature of the **good**. Sure, there is a slight problem: They seem to **contradict** each other. So? What of it? Do we clearly understand what **contradiction** is? We do not. So let us investigate it! Isn’t that what philosophy is all about? They all wrote in one **language** or another. The (alleged) contradictions between what they all said are manifested in **language**. So let us investigate language! There is a lot of work to be done. But at least there is a **hypothesis** in place, something to chew on: “What if they were all **right**?”

And there is, of course, the question of **non-western** philosophy. Of eastern thought, for example. I have limited my discussion to western thought, just because I know next to nothing about the alternative. But

Writing helped. I typed these two last pages in a frenzy, without stopping for a second. I feel better. Now, let me see. Let me analyze the situation **calmly**. Let me start this way: Let's assume that all she told me was **true**. That 'reality' is something which is **my** creation. If this is the case, then it is up to **me** to explain the situation. Not up to 'the facts', the **objective** facts. On the other hand, if I assume that it is **not** up to me, then she was not telling me **the truth**. Just some lunatic mystic ideas. But in **this** case, why do I want to **find** her so badly? If it was all a piece of rubbish, **I shouldn't care!** This is an **interesting** situation. There are only two possibilities: The first, to **accept** Gaya's philosophy, to accept that she is an exceptional human being, which makes her a **part of me**. There is no sense in looking for her **outside**. The second, to **reject** Gaya's philosophy, in which case there is no **point** in looking for her (outside). So, whichever it is, **it makes no sense to look for her anyway!** This just about settled my dilemma. Then I heard her voice again. She was unmistakably **proud** of me: "See? What did I tell you? Do you really need my old **body**? If you do, I should be flattered. Nobody has been interested in my **body** for decades.." She laughed again, as she had so many times: "Look: You **summoned** me. Or I **found** you. Is there a real difference between the two? You have everything in your book. Practically every word. It is **objective**. You have transformed me into **language**. To ask if it **really** happened is a manifestation of complete **misunderstanding** of everything we talked about. People will no doubt ask you if you **really** met a woman called Gaya. And if my name is not 'Gaya'? Does it make a difference? Does anything make a difference, one's my **ideas** are safely recorded for anyone who is interested?"

doesn't it need an **explanation** too? Even from a western point of view: Could these billions be all wrong? Or is their 'good' different from ours? Shouldn't they be included in the project?

The same applies, of course, to a genre in philosophy known as 'continental'.¹⁴⁰ Many Anglo-saxon or 'analytical' philosophers (e.g. Searle¹⁴¹) consider them unintelligible. I even heard people claim that they do not understand their own statements. This allegation cannot be treated seriously. Many of the continental thinkers are extremely intelligent and learned and obviously know exactly what they are talking about. Shouldn't their claims be reconciled with all others into a total coherent picture? I claim they are also **right**. I claim that all (or at least most) of the great philosophers are **right**. The task is to explain, in line with the critical tradition, **how it is possible**. At least I have a **hypothesis** in place, which is more than can be said about many others. What philosophy needs is a **synthesis** between all those seemingly contradicting views.

° (2) **Why did I find it impossible to limit its scope to one of the traditional philosophical domains?**

I **could** have written a thesis in epistemology. Or in the philosophy of language. Or in logic. Or in ethics. Or in metaphysics. Or in the philosophy of science. But in writing about each of these topics, I would need to employ **presuppositions**. Premises of the discussion, which belong in the other fields, the ones I was **not** writing about. As should be completely obvious by now, I am not a realist. This view has implications on each and every one of the abovementioned fields. As should also be obvious by now, I am a holist. This also affects each of them. What I **could** do, is say: Let us **presuppose** solipsism, and then take up a specific subject. I believe it would have been absurd. If I want to **advocate** solipsism, explain how it can be both coherent, intelligible and with great explanatory value, I am **compelled** to touch on each of the different subjects. I need to explain, first and foremost, why it is **good**, so I have **ethics**. I have to show how it is coherent, hence logic. I must explain how (and with whom...) a solipsist **speaks**, which belongs in the philosophy of language, and so on.

I have reached a decision. I am **not** looking for her. Even if I could find her **right now**, I still wouldn't. I underwent a complete transformation in half an hour. I entered this room in a state of panic, trying to think of ways to recover the loss, and half an hour later I don't even **want** to find her. Finding her suddenly seemed a way to **refute** everything she stands for. And I didn't **want** it to be refuted. I **wanted it to be true**. And if I **want** something to be true, this precisely is what **makes** it true. It is **good** that it should be **true**. It is **good** that she **should not** be 'real'. Not in the **common** sense of the word, anyway.

Every discussion has its **context**. Some contexts are more limited than others. Most theses employ a deliberately limited context. I could, for example, write a thesis about Hilary Putnam, whom I greatly respect. But then I would be limited by my own context. One cannot argue against the context from within which he argues. I summarized the claim this thesis tries to defend as the motto which appears one page after the title. It is phrased as belonging to the philosophy of language: *Language does **not** employ a moral vocabulary to describe an objective reference; It does precisely the reverse: It employs an objective vocabulary to describe a **moral reference***. This is as **compressed** as I could make it. But this single sentence already involves the philosophy of language, ethics ('*morals*'), metaphysics and logic.

It could be argued, that spreading over so many fields, practically the whole spectrum, will result in inevitable superficiality. That it is better to pick a small subject and dig **deep**, rather than scratch the **whole** surface. Says who? This view is **imported** from science, from the era of specialization. It has value, in specific places; In technology, for example. But I am not a scientist. I have (originally) a scientific education, but I turned **to** philosophy, not to 'copy' scientific principles such as 'specialization'. One of philosophy's most basic characteristics is its **generality**. It applies to **anyone**. It discusses the interests of anyone, at least if 'anyone' is **human**. There is nothing wrong with being superficial, provided you don't **pretend** to having done otherwise. Sometimes superficiality is **in order**. It all depends what one is trying to achieve. And what I was trying to achieve is explained in the following answer to the last question:

° (1) **Why do the preceding 113 footnotes qualify as an MA thesis in philosophy?**

I didn't turn to philosophy to get a job at the university. I turned to philosophy because I believed it is the most **worthy** activity one could engage in. Having been lucky enough to disregard economical considerations, I took it up **to find out**. To find out what the most intelligent people in human history said about the most important things for humans. I did this not just for the sake of 'knowing', of being in possession of some sort of 'truth', but mostly for practical considerations: To **form an opinion**. My own opinion, as to the most basic questions: What is the meaning of life? Is there a universal Good? Does God exist? What is 'existence'? What is 'death'? and most important of all, how should I conduct my life; my everyday life. I know this sounds strange, but it is the simple and plain truth. I had the time, the energy and the patience to accumulate a substantial amount of knowledge so my **opinion** could be formed based on the most **data**. I read practically every philosopher from Plato to Manor (my professor, whom I am trying very hard not to flatter, for obvious reasons). Not nearly **everything** each of them wrote, but a representative sample from every single one. And after more than two years of extensive (and extremely pleasant) studying, literally seven days a week, I **formed an opinion**.

I believe that is what an MA thesis is all about. And if it is not, that is what it **should** be about, which is what I believe counts: What things **ought** to be, much more than what they **are**. So I formed an opinion, one that satisfies three important conditions: It is **coherent**, it is **explanatory**, and it is **prescriptive**. I went into solitude, in *Edam*, in the company of about a hundred books I carefully selected, and wrote constantly for three weeks. I tried very hard to make it **intelligible**, because that is what writing is all about: **communication**. Effective communication. I didn't try to **prove**, I tried to **convince**. I did the best I could, with only one **purpose**: To outline the **opinion** which I formed as a direct result of my studies. And this is what turned out.

As I said, it is my last day. Time to wrap up. Time to summarize. She did right in disappearing one day before the end. Today's writing will be my **own**, not hers. What this book was all about was, of course the 'meaning of life'. I know it sounds bombastic and pretentious, but this doesn't bother me one bit. I didn't know this would be the subject. But this is how it turned out. Of **my** life, I mean. It is a long description and justification of the way I am going to lead my life, and what I recommend to anyone who asks my advice.

Some people find peace in God, by 'returning' to religion, others find it in the teachings of some *Guru*. Some don't find it at all, and die in misery, which for them is a happy end. Some people are lucky enough to have **problems** all their life; problems to keep them **busy**, and even **happy** every once in a while, in times of **relief** from their standard suffering. Nevertheless, there is another possibility. Quite a few people have discovered it: Gaya, Kant, Socrates, Lao-tsu, and, I believe, quite a number of people who didn't need to **advertise** their **way**, their *Tao*. I do have a need to advertise. Really: Not to become famous or important. Not to the 'general public', whom I don't **know**, and whose **objective existence** I deny anyway... I mean my wife, my children, my teachers, my friends. I think it is simply **unfair** to keep it to myself. Immoral.

The **beauty** of it is, that it requires **no sacrifice**. Not to observe 613 commandments, not to join an *Ashram*, not to worship anybody. It requires no money, not even extensive study. It just requires one thing, accessible to everybody: It requires **care** for one's own life. Job (Ayub) remained happy and content, because he **wanted** to be happy and content. All it takes is to really believe that it is possible. Others have phrased it differently, in other times, in other languages. 'Love thy neighbor' or 'It is **you**'. But those articulations are in different languages, hence not understood by many. I tried to write in the language that the people I know speak. And in **this** language, it is simply this: If you treat your world well, your world becomes a wonderful place. Your world is the mirror image of yourself. Be **good**, and your world will follow suit. Don't believe the people who tell you that there **is** a cruel world out there. It is a **lie**. Or at least, a grave **misunderstanding**. There is no coincidence. Nothing **bad** happens by **accident**. There are no accidents.

A word of explanation is in order regarding the unusual **format** of this work. I already explained my motives in the beginning of the 'non academic' part, but will briefly repeat it here. I don't think I have the energy to write **two** books. This one was strenuous enough. I had an obligation; An obligation to many people who 'suffered' the consequences of my sudden 'change of career'. It is just as important for me to explain to them, the ones devoid of a philosophical education (just as I was until not long ago) what this was all about. I was told by many people that the task is impossible. That an MA thesis in philosophy cannot be intelligible by 'ordinary people', and that what **is** intelligible, would not qualify. I tried to beat the odds. Maybe because I don't **really** need the degree. It is important to me, of course, but mostly because I want to proceed to a Ph.D. (I had the possibility of going directly for a Ph.D., but I preferred the long way. Long ways are always preferable to short ones). In any case, I didn't want the degree at the expense of leaving my friends and family in the dark regarding my 'findings'.

What is **odd**, is that I arrived at these conclusions **logically**. The people who know me know how **rational** I am. I have been often accused of being **too** rational. It was said that I need less brains and more emotion, more intuition. I disagree with them, but I think in this case all three are on my side. If you want to believe me because of **emotional** reasons, so be it. There are very good emotional reasons to accept what I am saying. If it appeals to one's basic intuitions, that's good too. But the whole thing is also extremely coherent; Or at least I find it extremely coherent. It happens to be the only logical explanation. The only explanation which does not refute itself.

Still, there is a good chance I will not be understood. It has happened before. If this will be the case, I will not be disappointed. Not at all. Because I did the **right** thing. I did my very best to **share**. I believe my *worldview* offers a **synthesis** between the western objective **realist** metaphysical paradigm and the eastern subjective solipsist one. I believe **both** are valid: We are solipsist creatures who invented **language** to create a **real** reality. It is **completely** real, as real as can be, only it is **our** creation. It is not 'out there' all by itself. **We** created the big-bang; We are not its **product**. We created evolution. We created everything that is **objective**, shared by all of us. The eastern view does not work by itself. It leaves everyone in **solitude**. The western view does not work by itself. It makes humanity **insignificant**. Only the synthesis works. It is time for a **change**. a paradigm shift. Maybe this is what *New age* is all about. I believe it is.

One last word about the way this book was written. It is very similar to the painting made by the Japanese amateur painter here in Edam: I simply recorded everything that happened in the last twenty days. I tried not to miss out anything. Maybe some will find it a bit boring, but I wanted it to be a **genuine picture of reality**. It is as accurate a picture of **me** (or my world, which is the same thing) as possible, in those twenty days. I was in ideal conditions for reflection and for recording these reflections. It is as if I 'transformed myself' into words and sentences, the best I knew how. It was exhausting, but a unique experience. I hope to have the chance to do it again. Provided I find anything to **say**, of course. Bye.

° So here you have it. It is an unorthodox, unconventional MA thesis, but I think it is enough to qualify me for the title 'Masters in Philosophy'. It is a summary of all I learned, all I know, all I **believe** is the truth regarding the important questions I investigated. Needless to say, I also derived great pleasure and satisfaction in the process. And now, maybe the time has come to rejoin the **real** world, and move from **theory** into **practice**.