

# **Reaching for heaven**

**A philosophical perspective on the special capabilities of thinking**

# Reaching for heaven<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

Experiences significantly influence the way people live. Pleasant and unpleasant events shape their personality. Yet people tend to tell about funny things. Apparently no one is waiting for melancholic stories. Success scores. Why? I argue that in addition to the way other people react to success, the human inner thoughts strongly influence the assessment. In this article I demonstrate that human thinking provides a framework for "unnatural" perfection. Man reaches for heaven. This in turn has great influence on the human personality and its condition. Thinking determines the inner drive of humans. Striving for perfection has implications for behavior in positive and negative ways. It can lead people to great heights: climbing mountains, beautiful art forms, great performance. On the other hand, gossip is an effective way to improve a subjects own position. Then, success is at the expense of others. Perfection can offer a lot, but apparently also has negative implications. And because all people have this property, they reinforce each other. Human behavior, the consequence of the way humans think and interpret experience, demonstrates a struggling nature. Wars, injustices and environmental pollution are an indication of the struggling nature. Is a breakthrough possible? I believe so. If you want to know why I think so, keep on reading.

## **Thinking**

Rationality is a distinctive feature of humans. The rational property of man can be determined indirectly and directly. Indirectly, man has different abilities than animals. Thinking provides the ability to influence and shape objects in nature. Man is able to build, to irrigate land and convert raw materials into a variety of products. He is also able to communicate in a way which is not directly available in nature, such as internet, music.

Directly, man is able to think without reliance on nature. Metaphysical thinking (transcending nature) is characterized by distinct thoughts. First, he is able to think perfect forms by the act of presentation. Second, he is able to put objects together in his mind and "move back and forth" that way. I conclude that the thoughts of man are directed to perfect conditions. Perfection in relationships is balance. This approach is geometric, mathematical. Euclides, and after him many others, in Greek Antiquity, professed that the science of geometry, algebra and arithmetic belong to the class of intuitive evidence. For the mathematical objects (lines, shapes, algebra) which are evaluated by human reason, no experience is used. These cases are therefore of an extraordinary category, because they prove that man can reproduce

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<sup>1</sup> This article is translated. The original title: "Hemelbestormers".

shapes and numbers without making use of the senses, but indeed by applying a metaphysical order. Distinction of these categories (nature and metaphysics) gives an insight in the relationship between pure thoughts and experiences.

I will return to these axioms (i.e. not proven but accepted on the basis of claims) later in the paper. Natural experiences do not match with these perfect proportions. People can get disappointed, lose grip on life or lose balance. Man is seeking for balance analogous to the idea of perfect proportions; a balance that he is not able to hold, because nature upsets the abstract balance. The moment a flower is in complete bloom, is a brief moment. This is comparable to the concept of perfect life: the idea of perfect life is corrupted with the acquisition of 'peak experiences'. Uncertainties block peak experiences and that is the reason why man wants to control experiences.

In this article I demonstrate the impact of thinking on human life. I answer three questions. The first question is: "What is the significance of thinking to mankind?" (1). I will demonstrate that perfect thoughts control human life. These thoughts create tension with the imperfect nature of mankind. The second question is: "What are the positive and negative effects of perfect thinking on everyday life?" (2). As I argued earlier, the effects can be categorized in positive and negative ways. This leads to the question whether humans can influence the effects. I therefore introduce a third question: "Is man able to reduce negative effects of thinking and stimulate positive effects?" (3).

### **Question 1: What is the significance of thinking to mankind?**

#### Thought Game

Follow me in the next mind game. Take a point in mind. You increase the point. What is happening? The point becomes a circle. So you can without using the senses, think from a point to a circle. Because the circle is defined with an inner and an outer area, the edge marks a border. You might think from a point to a point on the border and back to the starting point. Then take this movement of the image in mind. You are able to judge the size of the circle from small to large and vice versa. You are able to move the line (the diameter and thus the radius of the circle) in your mind. With this thought game, I declare two axioms proven to be right. These propositions are, first, that man is able to think perfect forms by making presentations without interference of the senses. Second, he is able to put things together in his mind and "move back and forth" that way.

### Thinking as standard

If you agree with the proposition that man has a mental ability which has no direct relationship to the visible world, I call this a mental condition. Man approaches the physical world from this starting point. This approach is characteristic for his existence. Existence literally means "to stand outside himself." By thought, which is typical for man, it is possible that man thinks himself as "point in the timeline". I rely on both axioms. He develops a self-image by combining (perfect) thoughts and experiences. This includes a number of variants that can be distinguished, which I will explain in this section. Based on the perfect forms i.e. ideals, intellectual capacity allows him to criticize the surrounding world and himself as a person. By thinking man has the ability to develop abstract thoughts of himself as a distant point. Because he thinks in perfect forms, he is able to assess himself in certain proportions. Existing is, cognitively speaking, bringing experiences under the measure of the intellectual framework. In this process man judges the experiences using the forms as standard. He gives meaning to the world by conceptualization of events and relates them with each other. For example, these standards can be reflected in laws. These laws can be interpreted strictly or with any nuance or mildness. In this case, man is seeking for a proper ratio, too. Apparently, it is difficult to convert perfect forms to applied rules and match perfect thoughts with nature. Nevertheless, man seeks for unifying nature and perfect forms. In art and music, he looks for perfect sounds, lines and colors and balance in proportions and order. So man has a criterion that gives him guidance for beauty and balance in his life. But it also causes frustration.

### Thinking in relationships

Earlier I stated that man compares, combines and reflects mathematical shapes with his experiences. Man looks at the world continuously for this relationship, these aesthetic principles, and defines these principles (for example, by defining a boiling point). Man projects forms, but idealizes the knowledge of the world as if it should be perfect. Man objectifies natural transitions, by indicating boundaries and transitions in nature. The transition of temperature from above the freezing point to below the freezing point is a concept to mankind, but to nature itself it is meaningless (because the phenomenon is a natural transition from one condition to another). Man thinks in relations and boundaries as he compares his experiences with ideal forms. He draws a line that is black and white, as well as borders. This attitude leads to conflicts, because these concepts are not fully compatible with the independent nature. Man is confronted especially with this problem in thoughts about life and death. After all, he crosses a defined boundary. He hopes for a transition from one state to another state, similar to the transitions he experiences in nature. There is no tangible evidence of a spiritual existence (in any form) after death, and yet he seeks support from words by

prophets and gurus about life after death. He focuses especially on a (natural) transition to another condition. This is the consequence of his condition to look to the nature this way and the condition of the standards which he applies in certain ratios. These are based on perfect forms. This condition is related to the human center, the ego. Therefore, the human ego has, unlike perfect forms, no spiritual substance, but is shaped by relationships. The ego is primarily a body (an embodied thinking object), which produces sensations like pain and pleasure. Pain and pleasure focus awareness on the body and separate this body as an object of another nature. Emphasis on pain and pleasure leads to concentration on physicality that 'the other' or the surrounding nature puts in an unbalanced, imperfect relationship. This concentration of consciousness on the body is logical because the body is constantly exposed to elements. These elements lead to a change of the body. A very important element is light, which enables growth.

#### Nature and thinking: light respectively perfection

In nature, light pulls matter into forms (bodies). These forms are pluriform, but not perfect. The shape of a tree seems to be a goal of a tree. However, I have already indicated that such a transition is a human consideration, but for nature itself of no importance. Transitions of a flower in full leaf to loss of leaves, are conceptual crossings of boundaries. Man is thus concerned because he translates perfect thoughts to expectations and desires in nature. Nature as such is pluriform and focuses on light. Man focuses on the perfection of the mind. The mental condition is a static state of perfect forms, reasoned to the world. Nature is cyclical and dynamic. Achievement of perfection delivers therefore fragments of luck. The mind is perfect, the natural body is like a rope on which man dances. The mind is pure, in life man seeks balance. In life, man tends to avoid imperfection (by for example avoiding food shortages by controlling food supply, by building walls against flood, by providing medication against diseases). On the other hand, he looks for sublime moments by reaching the top of a mountain, making a space trip to the moon or Mars, by making and drinking tea perfectly. So he is looking for balance naturally and he tries to avoid imbalance to reach out for and enjoy perfect moments optimally. In economics, theoretical solutions to achieve balance are an important argument and support the search for balance. The question is if he should construct this balance and should intervene. I note that if man criticizes the imperfection of proportions substantially (and that is a rather soft criterion), man will intervene. That is the case with a natural disaster such as a tsunami, hurricane or volcanic eruption, but also with excessive and intolerable violence. Nature is indifferent to any intervention in the cycle of arising, flowering, or perishing. In the discussion about the CO<sub>2</sub> measurements, man is not that much concerned about the damage that humans cause to the environment, but more about the consequences for human life on earth. The tension in life is

finding an optimum between the balancing natural life and the seeking for the perfect form of the mind. The body provides the mind the opportunity to gain aesthetic and harmonious experiences and thereby to fortify the mind, despite the relative imbalance that is offered man by the imperfect nature. Spirit offers the human being in its natural condition the possibility to avoid imbalance and imperfection by anticipation. He has the ability to control proportions partially or to soften them by anticipation. Spiritual movements, religions aim fundamentally at perfection of mind and, if you want to state it that way, at empty forms. Empty forms are in fact the basis for perfect proportions. From these forms, man deals with the world. Learning about the way man practices these forms is therefore an important aspect of life. From this point of view, the soul can be considered as a form.

### The circle of the soul

The perfect imprint has a divine level, because man not only thinks forms and series of numbers, but he also has the ability to think unity. The most basic point of a circle is the center. This center provides an analogy for thinking in unity. This point is like the eye that sees, but is not seen itself. In analogy, the soul marks the boundary between the spiritual (the form) and the body. The soul is the bridge between the spiritual and physical and gives spiritual direction to human life. This is not the natural life, because, as I have said earlier, this is not the same as the intellect. The soul is a perfect idea with a fundamental starting point. It marks a boundary and thus a relationship with the environment of the subject. The soul is cross-linked in time and space with nature. By 'playing' in this relation with imaginary forms, man is able to create forms in nature. The man also has the (axiomatic) ability to change the ratio of the forms and to apply them to the human habitat. He has, as I have argued, the power to form images that are not abstracted from nature. But man has an external perception too. The soul provides a window to access the world. This might be considered as a relationship based essentially on the static perfections of the mind. In this way he assesses the world, including physical relationships. For example, man finds it annoying or pleasant when other people enter their physical area. Another man can enter the spiritually perfect circle of a person, which can be intimidating. He is thus caught between imperfect experiences and (higher) ideas. It is also possible that a human being appreciates intimacy with another. I suggest that thinking extends human feeling. This explains the human emotions which exceeds that of animals in intensity. For example, loyalty, faithfulness, love, sacrifice, but also resentment, envy, revenge, hatred. By the ability to cross-border thinking, he is able to share. The physical makes it possible to express emotions. Perfection thinking is not limited to the scope of the mind and is therefore not aloof. Thinking impacts relationships and emotions. It makes thinking personal and not anonymous. But the contrast or even the contradiction between the perfection and the imbalance of men has a striking effect on relationships and

emotions. Apparently hatred can be so overwhelming that man causes great suffering by war, for example. Perfection may be incorrectly applied and interpreted, and therefore present a distorted image of yourself and the world around you. But it might also, by thinking and practicing in the right proportions, set an example and sanctify.

Man can presume the spiritual or even divine meaning of the soul. What precedes the soul or the spiritual substance of the soul is not known to mankind but only assumed by judgment. For example, proofs of God are made through reasoning and might be approved or rejected. I mentioned earlier that forms can be judged as an appointment of the divine, because they are not related to nature. With reference to Aristotle<sup>2</sup> it could be said that God is an "unmoved mover" of the world, while with help of Plato<sup>3</sup> it could be argued that man participates in the divine Idea. The point of view is crucial to accept or reject the judgment. If man looks at nature, Aristotle can be followed. Reasoning plays a critical role. Imagine a flower for example. The presentation then is a "perfect flower" and not one that is withered. Man sees the withered flower imperfect, while it is perfectly natural because this particular flower is a product of natural influences or already has had its heyday. I can also point to advertising media, which suggests that a specific product brings man in a perfectly harmonious state. For example the promotion of cosmetic products that are said to help men and women find a state of physical and mental balance. Symmetrical commercials appeal to the intention of a balanced life and shape, and in a harmonious atmosphere. If the focus of the soul is judged from an introspective point of view, towards the original forms, the influence of a completely comprehensive intelligence or essence in which man participates, seems possible. The ability to assess nature by thinking, may lead to the question of the core of this ability. Because this power is not part of nature itself, the question arises why man thinks as he thinks. This question is a consequence of the axioms: by thinking man can move forth and back between points. And if man may think pure without interaction of nature, the question to the origin is made quickly. I do not make a choice between the theories of Plato and Aristotle, because the question of the origin also depends on the point of view.

The answer to the question 'What is the significance of thinking to mankind?', is that he thinks in perfect shapes and proportions. Characteristic to thinking is that a priori thoughts are heavenly; they presume perfect proportions. In these proportions lies the angle in which man judges relationships. Thinking is the foundation of human motivation and in turn man can be judged as a revolutionary; for his striving for reaching heaven.

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<sup>2</sup> Aristoteles (2002), *De eerste filosofie* (translated: *The first philosophy*), Amsterdam/Groningen: Muntinga Pockets/Rainbow Delphi, Historische Uitgeverij

<sup>3</sup> Plato (2010), *De ideale staat* (translated: *The ideal state*), Amsterdam: Athenaeum-Polak & Van Gennep

## **Question 2: What are the positive and negative effects of perfect thinking on everyday life?**

### Man as the center of nature

The soul is like a centre of a circle from where man acts. This center is rooted in thinking. The centre has a radius, as an analogy in the way man reaches for the horizon that he perceives. That is a direct result of his eyesight, combined with the natural environment (buildings, mountains or forests or lack thereof). At sea, the horizon is a large circle. Different social, scientific or spiritual movements do not alter that. For example, a central thought in the Middle Ages was that earth was flat, like a pancake. It was also assumed that the earth was the centre of the universe. The sun was circling around earth. Man was appointed by God as a steward to manage the world. I argue that this has an analogy with thinking from the center of the soul. That point of view changed in the Renaissance: man becomes the centre of the world. I note that this seems to be a similar condition as in the Middle Ages, besides man is less obliged to be accountable to God. His virtues are induced by the ratio (*sapere aude*). The effect of modernity is different. Let me take as an example the human relationship with life and death. According to the religious composition of Christianity, man has to be in a state of grace to deserve heaven. Modern time emphasizes interventions in nature to gain an eternal life. The goal is and remains a blissful state. Nowadays mankind thinks apparently that this state can be fulfilled during the natural life. Striking is the way in which the result can be achieved. The way we strive for heaven in current times, by influencing matter to postpone the physical death is absurd, as I will argue. Man is unable to make natural bodies perfect because they will fall apart, eventually. Nature exhibits inertia and therefore cannot be controlled by man. On the other hand, nature is not spiritual, because it is not focused on perfect forms. A tree is not a perfect square, and it never will be.

### Psyche

Practice is ultimately more relentless than theory. When man is continuously exposed to imperfections, he can be psychical or psychological out of balance permanently. Therefore, clerics want to withdraw from the daily concerns from time to time to communicate with God or "experience emptiness". Then there are also man who misbehave to themselves or to their environment, so their mental abilities can be doubted. Using power as a mean to determine the proportions is not a key to success, because in nature there will be no balance but only flux. Power and pride are combined, if man creates an imbalance in the environment, aiming to put himself in a favorable natural relationship. Such manipulation is not symmetric and an outgrowth of thinking, because an imbalance is ratified as a perfect static equilibrium. The



conclusion is that it can be seen as unethical. It provides sufficiency of the body, but the spiritual man comes into an abusive relationship, because he deliberately causes imbalance. This is a dead end, because the inherent choice is an abstract of the relationship with nature and neglects the spiritual. Nature itself will never be balanced completely, because only in the mind proportions can be balanced perfectly. If man tells himself nature can be balanced, he will conclude eventually he has no control and power over nature but only momentary and in cases of providence. Striving for balance in nature based on matter has the toxic effect which can be compared with a bite of a venomous viper, both to the individual in question as to the surrounding of the person. By making such choices, however, the mind is weakened. The psyche is like a thin tightrope between nature and spirit, and has to proportion and canalize both to stay in balance.

### Self-image

Perfect forms have psychological effects on man, because man pursues perfection in the world. The self-image of man can be divided into five groups: (1) high expectations of himself that cannot be fulfilled by experiences in reality (hubris, frustration), (2) high expectations of himself with negation of the imperfect experience (narcissistic, vanity), (3) seeking for affirmation of perfect thoughts in nature (inclusive man himself) (developing negative self-esteem, for example manifestation of eating disorders), (4) perceiving imperfection without the ability to relate them to perfect thoughts (development of complexes; traumas).

Self-image		basic attitude	
		Thinking	Experiencing
impressions emphasis on processed	perfect thoughts	Hubris	Narcism
	imperfect nature	Negative self-esteem	Complexes

The mentioned typology of self-images all have a negative connotation. The fifth typology is the balanced self-image, in which the relationship between thinking and experience on the one hand and impressions of perfect thoughts and imperfect nature on the other, are balanced.

### Ratio above ethics

Man might think a perfect circle, and construct it physically. Nature itself has no interest in a perfect circle, but man is committed to the perfect image. Why? The circle is given with his mind and such a perfect image imposes man. Man tends to underestimate this statement. I note that wherever man looks, he captures physical forms and proportions in mental forms and proportions. With the philosopher Kant, I agree that reason makes judgment between representations and experiences possible. This rationality culminates in a perfect imprint of shapes and series of numbers: the perfect circle, the equilateral triangle, the marking of natural phenomena in ordered numbers such as freezing, boiling, et cetera. Human existence is largely influenced by these lines, forms and perfect proportions.

Man does not have an 'opinion' about things naturally, because forms basically dominate the mind. Therefore he is not so much focused on ethics, but rather seeking to assess relationships. Ethics is driven by preventing disruptions of balance or achieving perfection. That includes physical, natural proportions and thus in administrative relations. Governments and churches determine natural proportions, affecting the perception of many, because they affect the experiences of many people. This may lead to excesses, when man's heavenly ratios are made subsidiary to the dictate of individuals, who claim to have divine ideas or to be of divine origin. People then could be manipulated and get out of balance, physically or mentally, especially if the fruits of the dictator are sour. Man embraces the belief of religious institutions because he is afraid of missing the heavenly prize if he neglects the dictates: he should have to pursue perfection by following his own inner standards, and not because these standards are imposed by others. This fear has a negative impact on a balanced search for equilibrium.

So spiritual development is not so much in first instance a view on good and evil (ethics), but more about the extent to which man is able to configure natural forms to ideal forms that people have received as imprints in their minds. Therefore evil people appear in many movies and pictures as asymmetric deformed creatures. By these expectations, man is deceived. He is able to rely on a false representation of experiences. Symmetrical forms in nature justify a positive assessment. A material form (with content), might distort another life, and ultimately with the death of one another as consequence. This has not a direct relation with rational forms, but with natural events and experiences. And nature offers no guarantee for balance and perfect forms. Therefore, it is possible that a man of great natural beauty, is a horrible and evil person. But it is also possible that a deformed human, has a very delightful inner side. I note that man first thinks forms and from this framework assesses the world. From this perspective, nature leads to confusion of the soul.

### System thinking: prelude to make nature perfect?

By connecting points figures arise, representing a form. By assessing points together and make changes in lines or points, man is able to think systematically. It only makes sense to change points if he gathers information from nature and assesses the implications of the changes. He is able to run systematic analysis by changing variables. By modeling reality, he is able to judge reality after having compared the results with the facts. In that case, he activates his faculties and applies them to the world. The fact that man is able to read, is also related to the fact that he can identify forms, wherein sets of letters can be seen as images. The problem is that man then uses his perfect mind to aspire perfect systems. Perfection in information exchange is not an aim for itself. Weather can be predicted, but not broadcasted perfectly, because man is not able to control the variables in a system. If the systematic handling leads to an instrument of control to create thoughts of perfect proportions, the consequence is an imbalance. Perfection is anchored in thinking, not in nature. It is impossible to match nature with perfect proportions.

### Thinking focused on the natural and spiritual condition

I am not an existentialist, so I do not state that 'the truth' is formed by choices people make in their lives. The existence of man is not an equivalent of the development of man. Man would then assume that human freedom is free of value and man's choices are free of value. Human freedom is curtailed, however, and not as unlimited as he suggests. Human freedom is influenced constantly by 'conditioned' intentions: to strive for symmetric perfect proportions and balance. In nature man is looking for opportunities to imitate this perfection and redeem intentions. So man adapts matter to create perfect proportions. That can be controlled by manipulating matter and to create perfect forms and thereby lead a perfect life. Eventually, he translates intentions into a practical (material) object such as constructing a house or making money. Such goals are derivatives of a higher purpose: a perfect life. A perfect life is timeless because it is a form without content. It is an idea. Exemplary is the situation where one has reached a substantive set goal, after which life turns out not to be perfect. Money itself does not bring happiness, because the perception is temporary - euphoria seems to be a heavenly momentum. Perfect life eludes physical life, so it is metaphysical because it is rooted in a spiritual condition. But what happens when intentions are not focused on physical life, but on metaphysics, on (perfect thought) forms? In its most extreme form there will be negation of nature. Intentions then focus on the core on which these are based, a spiritual condition. Buddhism is a striking example for this point of view. Buddhism is a religion that seeks emptiness. One of the most important objects of the doctrine is extinguishing the flame of experience and thereby to end the fire of shifting thoughts; thus the transition of floating

thoughts to solid form as from soil to diamond. The rising thought without content and movement would be redemptive. I might argue that human intentions than are free of value, never off-balanced by natural experiences and focusing on the flow of thoughts on the perfect heavenly relationship exclusively. The natural flower is sublimated into a spiritual relationship in 'stasis'.

### Coexistence and habitat

Man, however, is not able to get rid of nature. In the aspect of society and the human habitat returns the tension between perfect thought and nature. This shows that man is hardly able to distinguish 'thinking' and the natural condition. Perfect thinking is the guiding principle for human life on earth. Since man thinks the previously mentioned axioms, he is encouraged to assess them on nature and also on himself. As a result he is able to work out very complex proportions, similar to the tree of Pythagoras. In this complexity, he can easily recede to pride, regarding his personal life as physical center and making (selfish) choices as consequence. Such choices lead to corruption of thought, resulting in imbalanced proportions, because the mind is perfect if based on forms, not (physical) nature. Worse is the use of power in this case. Do we have to condemn man? I think most people who work in large complex organizations or administrative environments, are at a given moment at high risk to experience a corruptive mood. This may be due to stress or pressure of the environment (or a combination). Here, self-enrichment seems often to be ratified by the close environment. The association of the 'culture of greed' at banks, indicates that the ruthless hunting of matter itself (at the expense of others) is considered disproportionate and unethical. The underlying reason is that it leads to imbalance, because abuse leads to misfit of perfect proportions. Egocentric thinking and behavior leads to a disharmonic sphere. This claim is valid for all cultures. On a smaller scale, such as a family, an over-abundant appropriation and maintenance of control of power might be excessive. Such an attitude does not lead to harmony, but to a contradiction and creates imbalance, because (possession of or control over) matter is not a measure for a perfect form or perfect relations. Man is obviously, perhaps unfortunately, able to maneuver proportions and relations for himself in physical, natural conditions. The price of perfect thinking in an isolated manner is imbalance in the habitat. Man realizes his shortcomings only on natural conditions. This is, for example, applicable to the profit-oriented enterprise. Unlimited striving for profit harms the environment. Profit should be balanced with social goals such as jobs, environment and welfare. Profits of enterprises have to be limited, given that mere pursuit of profit is at the expense of the environment and society. Thus, systems without proper proportions are undesirable. If designed in isolation, a system feeds the myth of perfection in the natural life. The greed for property corrodes the environment, which threatens the foundations of the human habitat. Increase of droughts and floods are signs of

the pressure on the natural habitat. The influence countries use to secure raw materials confirm the risk of greater imbalances. In the process of influencing, man anticipates the behavior of others. An example is the theory of Marx's communist revolution. Through anticipation by the upper class, the focus of unions was changed from revolution to negotiation. The upper class has weakened their demanding attitude and accepted a new social framework in order to normalize the social relationship. Man reflects in the social context, in order to widen the horizon, including and especially in a material orientation.

### Expansion and socialization

Man is focused on crossing borders, deviant behavior. Man works from the imaginary focal point, his centre, comparable to the centre of a circle. The range is the physical and imaginary radius of the circle. Physical: the scope of an arm, the perception of the human eye to the horizon. Because the range is not only physical (sensory) but also imaginary, the latter gives man the ability to shift the border. By the ability to draw and edit imaginary boundaries, he is able to think and act accordingly. Man has the power to explore the world and the universe; by travelling or bridging ranges (by satellite links, telescopes). The power largely determines human life. By setting certain limits, it is possible that man has influence on other people and can exert social pressure on them. Humans are socialized and conditioned. They are able to think spiritually and draw boundaries that exert an extraordinary influence on the way they live their lives. From this point of view, not only nature but also natural behavior, including social interactions by human beings, are key. Thus, the application of the mind is expansive (to the nature) and limiting (to the behavior).

The effects of thinking on everyday life are psychologically and socially numerous. This holds for the interaction with nature too. Thinking gives man a transcendent power which stands for a creative ability to make changes in ratios and relations, to balance the inner with the outer nature and people. The cause is axiomatic. If man takes the physical nature as starting point instead of thinking, the perfect thinking is used as a mean to achieve unlimited material expansion. The result is the loss of imaginary perfection instead of the preservation of perfection. Man is not able to create heaven, but to understand and enjoy his perfection.

### **Question 3: Is it possible to reduce the negative effects of thinking and stimulate positive effects?**

For man is able to create shapes, human thinking can be attributed a divine element. Literally by making art, architecture, but also by marking domains in, for example games like chess or computer games. Because man is able to define virtual domains on internet, he is able to think without direct experience, for example. Man makes (juridical) agreements about how they

interact with domains. These domains are important to people. I note the need to access personal but digital bank accounts. A bit line has no value unless people make agreements on exchange value of such lines and amounts. Problematic is the way people change boundaries and demands for their own purposes. Striving for perfection and a perfect life is focused on gathering opportunities to achieve elevation. But matter is by doing so not an expression of the perfect idea, but an end in itself. It strikes me that the accumulation of wealth is a sport of great size, but really a shortcoming of the human species, because the intent is not focused on pure forms. Property itself might give a physical and temporal feeling of euphoria, but will not yield everlasting perfection. The shapes are in fact in the core simple, and a plurality of accumulated matter doesn't clear the picture. Here, I emphasize the connection between perfection and unity of pure forms. Man seeks expression to experience perfection. A reason for imperfection is the instability caused by matter. This can be avoided by balancing and moderating life in nature. Balance is thus an expression of perfection. I note similarities with religious traditions that classify excessive property and possessions as redundant luxury.

Human experiences are imperfect, because only in rare cases nature shows perfect shapes. Life is not perfect at all, because life forms are not static, and not harmonious, perfect images or thoughts. Humans should seek for balance in the natural environment, like stabilizing the opposites yin and yang. Opposing forces can be confusing. Besides thinking, life is also bounded with emotion, feeling, touch, joy and sorrow. These mixed natural and spiritual forces influence man's experience of perfection. Under these circumstances man is pushed out of balance and therefore man cannot realize fulfillment and perfection in nature. If there is no attention for natural influences in the pursuit to organize a perfect life and, furthermore, if the relationship between mind and nature is not approached with prudence, it is possible that man decays to virulent, radical positions. It is striking that many people and sometimes leading people too, have radical ideas that do not contribute to the fulfillment of a perfect balance in the world, but rather poison and harm lives. Religious traditions that tolerate imperfection and preach meekness have much more strength and support eventually. I argue that a desire for superiority of man over nature leads to deception. The use of power over nature and others is motivated by the deceit that man is by doing so, able to create a relatively perfect life compared to nature and other people. But, as I have argued before, this is a temporary case. People pursue perfection, but it cannot be realized in nature. At some moment the flower will wither. Because imperfection is endless in nature, the resistance offered by nature to subject itself to thinking, seems to be endless too. Subjecting the nature to the mind leads to excesses. So is the thought that an infinite amount of money leads to a perfect life, a fallacy, and, by excesses, a cause for disharmony and disbalance. The feeling of imperfection is getting worse when man has to protect his interests against events or behavior of others that affect these interests. Nature in combination with the system of ratios is the cause of natural impasse. The

system in which people are raised and the bases on which people are selected for positions, are determining factors. The mind is not just a pack of working brains, but also enables man to reflect and maintain the center. Therefore man is stuck in the middle, between nature and rational capabilities. Not everyone has the ability and the iron will to weigh, maintain and balance the different interests and abstractions, and to judge them on consequences for individual and social environment. I note it is not nature that causes trouble, but the way man connects his power of the mind with nature. Man could work out and strive for balance in his life by being aware of the effects and motives of thought. In that context, I have put a few items from the text above in summary.

Thinking evokes behavior and awareness of behavior evokes thinking.

Happiness is a thought that is realized ephemerally in nature, like the flower in full bloom over a whole period of growth and decay.

Thinking and not nature is the 'black box' of man.

Nature is not related to the perfection of the mind, the mind does not rule the world but marks transitions of states and measurement (and nature does not).

Enforcing a happy individual moment in nature often affects the environment and might bring imbalance and dissatisfaction.

Thinking perfection provides the possibility of working on a balanced self-esteem in a dynamic environment.

Man is able to avoid disharmony by anticipation through reason. If life is unbalanced he is able to alleviate the suffering and help others.

Reading signs and changing relationships or proportions require clear use of reason and wondering and resisting shadows of the mind.

EH, 14-2-2014