

"DR. JOHNSON'S CAT AND THE ASSIMILATION OF REALITY.
AN EXERCISE IN THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CROSS OF REALITY."

-a-

The assimilation of reality by our understanding takes place in a gradual manner. Man has to use a number of glasses in order to become acquainted with reality. Each pair of glasses represents the world to us in a different order, a different arrangement. And not before we have passed through the four aggregate states of which the glasses are sympathetic, can we pretend to know. Each separated step of getting information through one pair of glasses only is a preliminary step. A student learns external data, a child repeats solemn formulas, our will for power thinks in Imperatives and a mystic poet revels in inner ecstasy. Each of these four types uses an other entrance into the house of wisdom. Most of them are pretty fixed / types and never hear -b- of other doors in the house. The first impression is final. The rationalist always remains the eager student on the bench, the conventionalist is satisfied when he conforms with society, the British colonial, the Junker, the Fascist are at peace when they can shout their commands into the face of reality and the mystic soul meets his God in silence, because all cling to their one and first doorway as final.

I am afraid, we cannot abandon our claim for all the entrances to the house of reality. For on each doorway one indispensable form of truth is disclosed. It would not suffice to say that the glasses of the four methods of approach are of a different colouring though it may be true that the light differs widely./

-c-

Of still greater bearing is the fact that the same objects are organised quite differently when approached in the four modes.

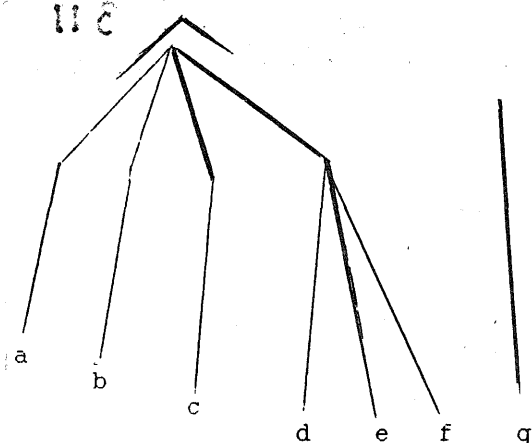
Let a b c d e f g h be some data of

- 1) the senses
- 2) memory
- 3) emotion
- 4) command

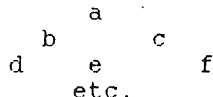
In memory a b c d turn up as a series of facts according to their happening or possibly their being remembered

happening:	1890	1900	1910	1920	1925	1930	1933	36
remembering	a week ago		three days ago		yesterday		<u>today</u>	
	a		b		cd		efgh	

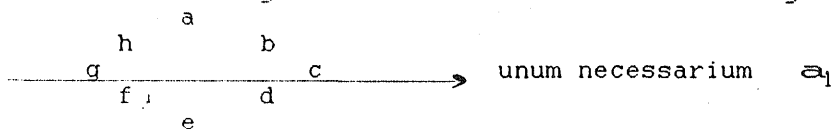
To the senses the same things appealed according to their mightiness, size, weight and mutual relation or dependency. / -d-



In our inner being, we always build up an organic order, a hierarchy. The Mystic crowns and crucifies, exalts and humiliates parts of the world and himself all the time. Reality to the inner experience is never a dated series or a mechanical bundle of impressions. It is an organic whole with a clear hierarchy of values:



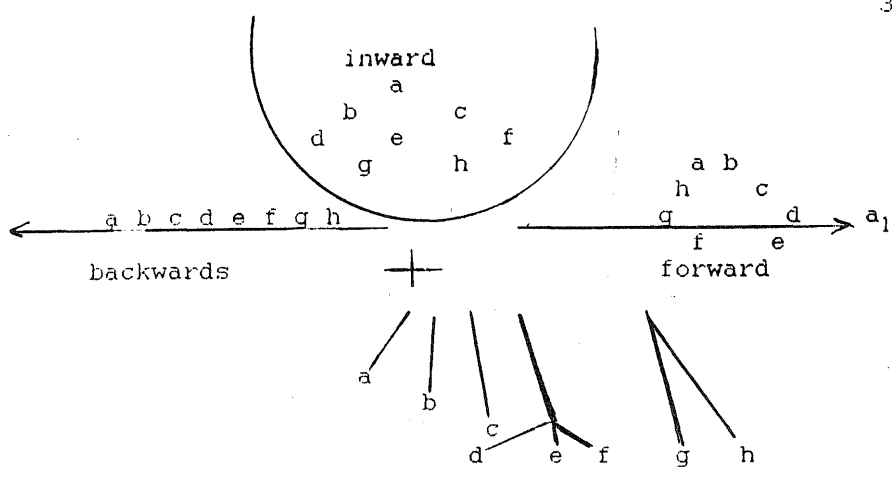
The Future is faced with a multitude of possibilities out of which it has to single out one, and one only as the necessary and irrepressible next / Step into the future. The field of the eventual next moment is covered with hundred possibilities. One among them is the needful, the thing that ought to be done first or at least the thing that actually is done next. The Martha within us can not pick this one thing that is needful; Mary forgets every thing else. In any emergency even our mechanic self learns again that first things come first. Accordingly the imperatival scheme organises the world in the following way:



The four different pictures of man's caleidoscopolical logos are organised

1. chronological
2. mechanical
3. hierarchical
- or
- organical
4. evangelical (Lukas X, 42 one thing is needful)/-f-

A complete scheme may perhaps be drawn in this form:

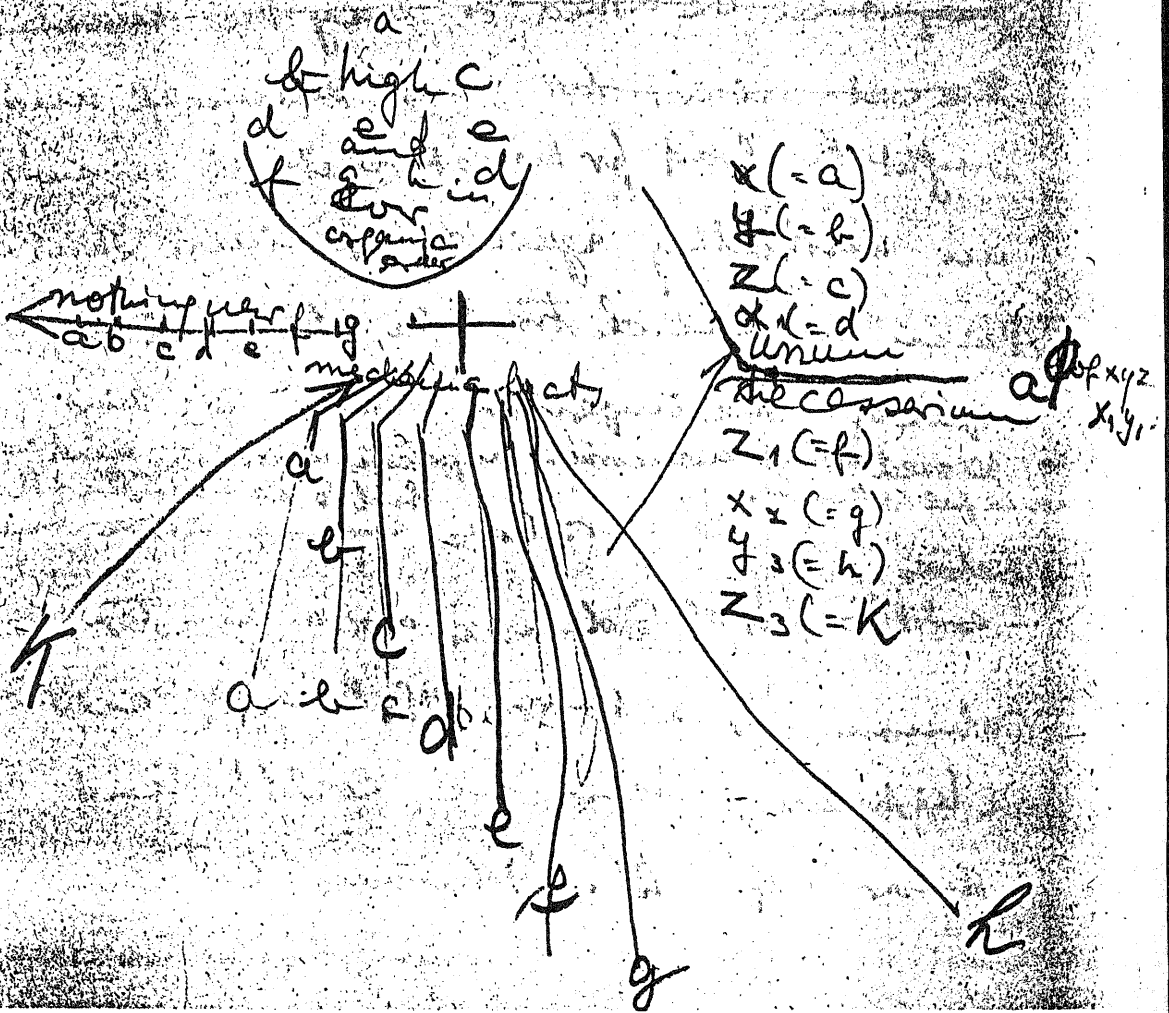
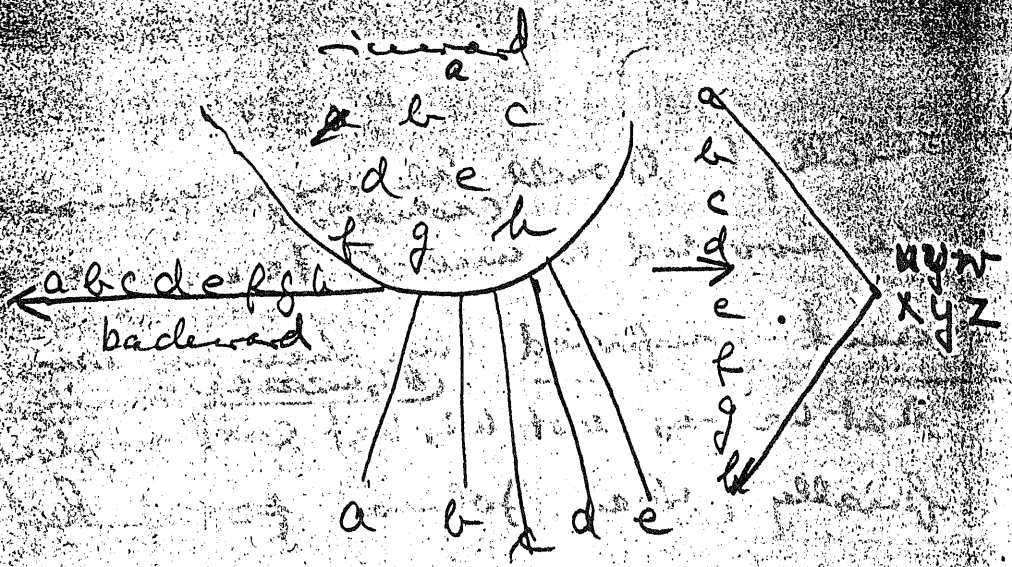


The Memorialis
 Mysticus
 Imperativus
 Naturalis are four Modes of our mind.

the Mysticus creates subjects, the Naturalis objects, the Memorialis trajects and the Imperativ projects.

They are each lifting but one seam of the mantle of reality. Let C be Samuel Johnson's cat. We know of this cat in history (memorialis). To the contemporaries, and espe/cially to -g- Boswell he was a nuisance whom he avoided to meet (naturalis). Johnson flattered and comforted him. When he once had said that he was not his best cat this meant personification (mysticus) and finally, when Johnson went himself and bought the food for the cat lest his servants take an antipathy against an animal which caused them so much trouble, he acted under the spell of the imperativ cat.

The thing C has passed through memorialis mysticus naturalis evangelicus and now we feel we know it. We ourselves had to dig within ourselves bits of Johnson as a master, of Johnson as a lover, of Boswell and of a historian, before we could pretend to know of DR. JOHNSON'S CAT.



The Manuscript has 8 pages, numbered a - g with an added scheme on p. 8 which has no page number. It is added here in the original form. The date I guess is about 1936 or somewhat earlier: 1934 or 35. It seems to me to be one of the first articulations of the Cross of Reality of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy in his american years. The manuscript has no title. The given title was invented by the transcriber. It was found in Four Wells in May 1993 and transcribed July 6, 1993 by Lise van der Molen, Winsum, The Netherlands. The pages are indicated at the end of the lines. The end of the page is marked by the sign /.