

the greater stress upon our physical outer appearance, which distinguishes us from the great variety of other beings; all moving about, as it were, on the same plane. We now realise that we are one among many, a very small unit in a multitude; and we have some difficulty in remembering that all these beings and things, moving about on the same plane, which we call the external world, exist and are known to us only through impressions of our senses, that is, as features in the stream of thought. Forgetting this, we enter and live in a new world, seemingly—though not really—different from and opposed to the inner world of thought; and so great does this difference appear that we henceforward involuntarily look upon this new world of persons and things as endowed with more reality than the primordial self with all its experiences, from which this new world has become detached.

In fact, we may assert that only at this stage does the idea of reality, the attribute of being real, enter into the stream of thought, and this attribute has an opposite—namely, the unreal. It has a different meaning from mere existence; for unreal things, such as illusions, dreams, imaginations, memory pictures, &c., exist, but we do not call them real, their existence being limited but included in the stream of our thoughts: they have a place in the firmament of the soul, in the field of consciousness. This latter or primordial form of existence has, as already stated above, no opposite. As it embraces all thoughts it can only disappear with thought itself, that is, with consciousness. But on the other side, what we call real has its opposite in the unreal.