

A vibrant cosmic background featuring a dense field of stars and a large, colorful nebula. The nebula has swirling patterns of blue, purple, and orange, with a bright white and yellow core on the left side. The stars are scattered throughout, with some appearing as sharp points of light and others as soft, glowing spheres.

Günther Gold

Dimensions of Reality

Part 1

**Nagual-Shamanism,
New Physics & Eastern wisdom**

For Andrea, Anja and Niklas

Günther Gold

**Dimensions of Reality
Part 1**

**Nagual-Shamanism,
New Physics & Eastern wisdom**

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FOREWORD

Dimensions of Reality – part 1

Nagual Shamanism, New Physics & Eastern wisdom

For most people, reality is probably a static, unyielding matter of fact, an “external reality” that exists independently of them. But shamanism and the wisdom teachings of the East – and lately New Physics as well – have come to understand that something like a “reality out there per se” does not exist, but rather, what we experience as reality only occurs through our participation in it. Each of us as an individual, and all of us collectively, are involved in the process.

And for the way we experience the “out there”, the “in here” is obviously responsible; – that is, our thoughts, feelings, values, convictions, beliefs, the level of our consciousness – and what we focus our attention on.

So, reality – all that we experience and encounter – is an answer to the question that we are – a mirror-reflection of what we radiate into the world.

We react to the circumstances of our lives and overlook the fact that these circumstances are what they are because they reacted on us. Thus, we set in motion an endless feedback loop, where changes can hardly take place, or, if so, only with great effort. We and the world and our experiences in the world form a self-sustaining and constantly reaffirming system.

And just as this applies to any system; it is a vicious circle that can only be overcome effectively and sustainably from outside the

system, that is, from a “higher” standpoint, a higher level of consciousness, by a quantum leap, so to speak.

Nagual Shamanism speaks of the “mirror of self-reflection,” in this context, which needs to be seen through and shattered. But how can we, as both individuals and a collective, do this? How can we break this vicious circle?

Is it really true that we are not merely victims of predetermined realities that we can only more or less skillfully deal with, but that instead we are actually creating the circumstances of our lives ourselves? Assuming this is the case, how could we then do this more consciously and better?

The following book examines these issues in breadth and in depth and also explores the possibility of resolving them using the tried and true methods of Nagual Shamanism, which I have developed further.

Finally, of course, this gives rise to those eternal philosophical questions: “Who am I?”, “Where do I come from?”, “Where am I going to?” and “What is the meaning of this all?” These questions, in turn, extend to: “Who are we?”, “Where do we come from?”, “Where are we going to?” and “What is the greater meaning and context of this all?” No doubt, this refers to the entire universe, the cosmos as a whole.

What we can recognize, then, is not only that we humans are an inner and an outer being (a thinking, feeling and a physical being in the world), but that our human existence, individually as well as collectively, reaches far into transpersonal, spiritual realms of being and consciousness, out of which then our experienced inner and outer existence unfolds. To what extent we are able to experience this consciously depends altogether on the development level of our consciousness.

...

The aim of this book was first and foremost to share my knowledge of – and my intensive experiences with – **Toltec Nagual Shamanism**. In the process, however, it became evident that it would be a good idea, perhaps even a necessity, to describe the field of knowledge and experience in a more understandable way by means of cross-references to **Eastern wisdom teachings** and some findings of the **New Physics**.

We are living in an exciting time. For the very first time since the triumph of rational consciousness, rational scientific thinking itself has arrived at the same results and conclusions as many ancient peoples, shamans, mystery schools and some Eastern “religions” such as Brahmanism, Buddhism and Taoism.

Findings by researchers about the emergence of the universe, of life and about the building blocks of reality, which have earned a profusion of Nobel Prizes, converge with the affirmations, myths and cosmogonies mentioned by ancient peoples and religions.

Much of what these acknowledged great thinkers and scientists have discovered about the origin, interrelationship and functioning of life and reality corresponds exactly with what I have experienced in my nagual-shamanist training and activities.

Nagual Shamanism is a special form of shamanism. Its primary focus is on experiencing and exploring the multiple layers of being human and the world we live in. Reality is not seen as a predetermined, incontrovertible fact, but rather as a sphere of consciousness and effect of collective consensus that can be experienced in a more permeable and malleable way through the development of consciousness and the learning and application of certain skills and modes of behaviors.

The basic requirements and tools for this are knowledge, techniques and the ceremonial experiences of ancient cultures, such as the Toltec, the Maya and some North American Indian tribes.

In the course of my fifteen years of intensive training, I spent many years travelling in Central and North America for several months each year. Most of the time, I was in the bush and cactus savannahs of California, Arizona and New Mexico, as well as in remote and dilapidated temple grounds of the Maya in the most distant jungles of Mexico and Guatemala.

Besides being a study of Indian shamanic healing methods, the process was essentially an apprenticeship with a Nagual, an initiation into becoming a successor to the Nagual; in my case, the Nagual of a European “wheel of power.” (More about this in part 2, chapter 7)

In the course of this training – and more than twenty years of independent nagual-shamanic activity since – my view of the world and my attitude towards reality, have changed drastically. It is not always easy to bridge the gap that opened up between everyday reality – the people and the situations I deal with every day – and some extraordinary states of being and reality experiences I have got to know in an underlying energetic field of consciousness.

Out of growing fascination, I became more and more familiar with the findings of the “new physics” and especially quantum physics – at any rate, as well as a layman and non-physicists might get to know this field – and so this gap has been closed, at least from an epistemological standpoint.

Finally, everything fell into place, the shamanic approach to life and existence, the insights of the Eastern wisdom-schools and “religions,” and the findings of New Physics. The thinking and the

behavior of people, however, did not fit these findings. How can it be that scientific data and insights about reality and our human life – results that have been awarded Nobel prizes – did not succeed in permeating the everyday consciousness and life of people?

Could this have also been the case when it was discovered that the earth is a sphere? Did people back then maintain the image of a disk for a long time and go about their daily lives accordingly? How much longer do we want to pretend that “out there” is a reality that developed without our involvement and for whose continuing existence we are not responsible at all – a fixed reality that we just have to try to deal with as best we can?

...

In this first part of the trilogy, I will provide theoretical background knowledge of Nagual Shamanism and give insights into the underlying structure of an apprenticeship and training in Nagual Shamanism. I will compare the world view arising from such an education with the most fascinating findings of quantum physics, whereby I would like to point out once again that I did not study physics, let alone quantum physics, but that I read up on the subject. There is a great amount of good literature out there that will provide the curious reader with more information or details. I have taken the liberty of quoting from some of these books, so the sources of my information can be traced.

... We have inherited from our forefathers the keen longing for unified, all-embracing knowledge. (...) But the spread, both in width and depth, of the multifarious branches of knowledge during the last hundred odd years has confronted us with a queer dilemma. We feel clearly that we are only now

beginning to aquire reliable material for welding together the sum total of all that is known into a whole; but, on the other hand, it has become next to impossible, for a single mind fully to command more than a small specialized portion of it.

I can see no other escape from this dilemma (lest our true aim be lost for ever) than that some of us should venture to embark on a synthesis of facts and theories, albeit with second-hand and incomplete knowledge of some of them – and at the risk of making fools of ourseves.

So much for my apology. Dublin, September 1944. ...

Erwin Schrödinger, Nobel Prize winner for physics and founder of quantum mechanics, in the preface to his book, *What is life?*

I am perfectly aware that I probably do not fall into the category of researchers that Erwin Schrödinger called “we” and “us.” Yet, I do feel, in all modesty, somewhat addressed and concerned, even a sense of “belonging,” due to my irrepressible thirst for knowing and my insatiable research into a wide range of border areas of human experience and fields of consciousness.

Moreover, the entire body of knowledge that needs to be connected, indeed since 1944, when Schrödinger published his book, has once again grown considerably.

My knowledge of **Eastern wisdom teachings** is based on years of study and practice of zazen meditation and includes mainly Tibetan mysticism, the Vedic wisdom of the Bhagavad-Gita and the Advaita Vedanta of the Upanishads, as well as Taoism and Mahayana-, Vajrayana- and Zen-Buddhism.

To provide reliable sources for the main path of knowledge described in this book, **Nagual Shamanism**, as I have come to know it, is not that easy. The principal source of information was my personal teacher, the **Nagual Tehaeste**, certainly one of the most

fascinating human beings I was privileged to meet. Similarly intriguing and inspiring personal teachers, though in other areas of knowledge and experience, were **Richard Bandler**, **Eli Jaxon-Bear** and **Gangaji**.

As sources for my acquired knowledge and skills in the nagual-shamanic field, I cannot provide much more than my teacher Tehaeste, one of his teachers, Haeste, and decades of practical self-experience – alone as well as in my work in and with groups. This paucity of sources may be due to the fact that knowledge from Toltec or later Maya and Aztec sources was traditionally passed on from Nagual to apprentice orally and mostly on a one-on-one basis. This had several advantages, the most important one being, that the knowledge remained alive and always adapted to the challenges of the respective time period and its special needs.

Every Nagual, including the one I learned from and consequently I, too, in the end, had to face the challenge that knowledge and especially consciousness of humans are continuously changing and at a great speed. The Nagual's challenge is, on the one hand, to keep up with these evolutions, and, on the other hand, to be at home in as many fields as possible, in the forefront of development and research. That is, if he wants to be of help in dreaming “new” and “better” realities into our lives.

For the broader public, the concept of the “Nagual” has probably become known primarily through Carlos Castaneda's quite popular books from the 1980s. The reader who is familiar with Castaneda's works will recognize some of what is described there and will come across some terms like “controlled folly” or “stopping the world” and others.

This is not surprising, since Castaneda and my teachers drew their knowledge partly from the same source, the Toltec Nagualism. The main difference between my approach and Castaneda's is, that his training was in the “stalker line” and mine in the “dreamer line” of Toltec Nagualism. And so it can be very interesting for one or the

other reader to rediscover some things described by Castaneda, differently weighted, perceived from another point of view and experienced differently.

...

The content of part 1:

Chapters 1, 2 and 3, elucidate the theoretical background and the fundamental structure of Nagual Shamanism as well as the techniques and skills that need to be learned and practiced.

Chapters 4 to 9, are by and large an attempt to get to the bottom of the phenomena of matter, soul, spirit, consciousness, space, time, life and reality. In doing so, I dip into New Physics and Eastern Wisdom.

So far, no one to my knowledge has been able to crack the secret of the interrelationship between the “outside” and the “inside” and the “physical” and the “mind.” Nor have they explained the “spiritual” that transcends the “outside” and “inside.” There are no answers that are ultimate true and satisfying for everybody. So this cannot possibly be expected from me either. Nevertheless, I will endeavor to provide clarifications as far as I am able.

What I offer in these chapters is a kind of “thought meditation” on the topics at hand. This means following a path of insights that will gradually provide possible explanations. I can only hope that you, the reader, will let yourself be carried along the path, admittedly quite a deliberately meandering path. And as you meditate and think while moving with the chapters, you, too, may develop and discover new insights and possibilities.

In chapters 10 and 11, the insights of the preceding chapters are interwoven with a look at the nagual-shamanic “art of intending.” I attempt to show how imagination can be carried into reality, and how reality can be “unfolded” into being from the possibilities offered in higher dimensions. This is an approach on the great topic of “creating realities.”

The aim of this book, therefore, is to reach a more comprehensive, multi-layered view of “reality” by opposing and interweaving the findings of New Physics with the ancient experienced and lived knowledge of Toltec Nagual Shamanism and of Eastern wisdom teachings. In the process, I hope to contribute to inspiring as many people as possible to go about creating their – and ultimately also all our – reality with courage, vigor and vision, and responsibly and consciously as well.

1.

NAGUAL SHAMANISM

1.1 Shaman – Sorcerer – Nagual

Since I use the terms “Shaman,” “Sorcerer” and “Nagual” in this book, it would seem appropriate to give a short definition of each term, albeit a subjective one.

The Shaman

is integrated within a tribal structure and a combined healer, teacher, priest, therapist, and master of ceremonies. He has knowledge of the secret connections of life that are not recognizable to outsiders. He acts first and foremost for the community and is responsible for the smooth interaction within the community.

This is generally what people understand by the term shamanism. It has always existed in this form all over the world, and still does in old Europe, Siberia, Africa, Australia, North, Central and South America.

(The exact responsibilities and methods of the shaman are discussed in more detail in chapter 3, Shamanic leadership).

The Sorcerer

is something completely different and known to me primarily from the Toltec tradition of Central America. The sorcerer is a kind of “knowledgeable person,” a seer, who sees the world in the “old Toltec way” and acts accordingly. The term “Toltec” was used by the

successor cultures of the historical Toltecs, such as the Aztecs – though detached from the culture and people of the Toltecs – for describing an “educated, artistic, knowledgeable” person. Someone who knew about the secrets and arts of “stalking” and “dreaming” was a Toltec. (More on stalking and dreaming in chapter 1.3)

Using the term “sorcerer” doesn't actually make much sense because it has a completely different connotation in our culture. In any case, these “sorcerers” or “seers” are not part of the tribal structure at all. They are also not at all interested in healing others, nor in acting as a teacher, priest or master of ceremonies for them.

The seer/sorcerer sees the world in a radically energetic way – everything is perceived and understood as an interplay of energies. His aim is to obtain or maintain as much energy as possible. This works best by wasting no energy or as little as possible. I will come back to this very plausible and interesting energetic issue.

The community generally shuns and fears the seers (sorcerers or also *brujos*). They are respected for their abilities and knowledge, but one would rather have nothing to do with them.

The Nagual

is essentially a seer/sorcerer who uses his power primarily to perfect his “nagual abilities” of seeing, stalking, dreaming, shapeshifting and intending. He does this to “see” beyond reality (the collective agreement about what is real) and to dream, intend and create realities other than the existing ones – for himself or for himself and others, or together with others.

“Nagual” as a term is best understood and explained in conjunction with its counterpart, the “Tonal”.

The tonal is everything – the nagual is everything else

Tonal refers to everything for which humans have already coined a word, or created a picture, a symbol. In other words, everything we can name and we more or less agree that it exists. It has been extracted from the state of “oneness” as “something,” was separated from other things and thus was born into “duality.”

In other words, “tonal” was defined as what is real and existent emerging from the “nagual,” the *foam of possibilities*, as quantum physicists describe the blurred, fuzzy area of the almost boundless reality possibilities.

In the words of the physicist and philosopher David Bohm, the tonal would be the “unfolded” partial realization, appearing in the “explicate order,” of a “folded in” potential in the higherdimensional “implicate order” (the nagual). Explanations for all these terms come later in chapter 4.

We might join some Indian tribes in saying that the “tonal” was already dreamed by humans into reality. Sorcerer or Naguals would say, the tonal was already dreamed from the fifth dimension, the dream-time, into a reality determined by the fourth dimension. Thus it became three-dimensional reality.

In contrast to the tonal, the nagual is everything that could be “dreamed into being”, but has not yet been done.

A Nagual, as a person and teacher, is therefore first and foremost an individual who has realized that the “tonal” is nothing more than previously dreamt up “nagual” – and who supports others in recognizing this as well.

He is furthermore able to carry out “excursions” into this nagual, into other realities, into the field of consciousness-energyeffectiveness underlying our reality and to enable such “excursions” also for his students (apprentices).

The goal is the softening of some of the possibilities that have solidified into realities and the bringing about of new realities.

...

Based on the explanation of terms above, I would not call myself a “shaman,” because a shaman does his work within a tribal community. My work, like the work of a Nagual, is done in the border regions where the old is dissolving and new realities are being created.

The nagual thus becomes the *agent d'évolution*. On the one hand, this means “agent of evolution,” i.e., an operating principle, the active force, the substance, the means that makes evolution possible. On the other hand, it is the “evolution agent,” the mediator, representative and “spy” of evolution, so to speak.

A Nagual has the ability to create new dream spheres for himself as well as for others, and to work either alone, or – in my opinion best and most effectively – together with others, on creating new beneficial realities.

The most important building blocks for these possible new experiences of reality are the Nagual’s skill in seeing, stalking, dreaming, shape-shifting, and intending acquired through practice and integrated experience. (These are discussed in more detail in chapter 1.3)

In order to understand the art and the phenomena of seeing, stalking, dreaming, shape-shifting and intending, one must envision that sorcerers and naguals live in a world where they are always aware **that everything that seems so real and existent to us now, is nothing more than a possible reality – selected, created and maintained, by a kind of collective agreement of many generations of people in the course of many centuries, out of virtually unlimited possibilities.**

This created possible reality could just as well have been assembled in a completely different way – and can (with sufficient power) be done differently at any time.

Fascinatingly, this view of reality is completely in line with the findings of quantum physics.

Not science fiction authors, esotericists or shamans, but Nobel Prize winners like Albert Einstein, Max Planck, Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg and Erwin Schrödinger tell us in all seriousness that *... the entire reality on the quantum level is an erratic unpredictability of possible probabilities. ...*

The physicist and Nobel Prize winner Niels Bohr, one of the forefathers of quantum theory, describes the world in the subnuclear range:

... as a superposition of all possibilities, in which every possibility exists as a probability next to each other resp. shadowy superimposed parallel, until a conscious observer observes or measures and thus decides for a real existence and thus the probability waves of the other superimposed existences collapse resp. disappear. ...

... Every particle is until its observation in a not real intermediate world, in which it is accompanied by an innumerable amount of shadowy doubles, which represent every other possibility. ...

... So all events, which could occur, can “exist” with a certain probability parallel in this intermediate world, until an observer decides for one of these (possible) realities. ...

These great minds and Nobel Prize winners call our beloved reality and all matter a *... ghostly foam of probabilities ...*

Is all that exists merely a foam of possibilities?

... Anyone who is not shocked by quantum theory has not understood it.

... Niels Bohr

So essentially, the highest scientific circles agree that it is when the observer observes – meaning perceives – that what is observed, “becomes real.”

In Nagual Shamanism, there is a guiding principle:

Attention is power.

This means, wherever we direct our attention – the focus of our conscious perception – will become the reality that we experience.

1.2 Perception and reality

The way we create our reality begins with our perception – and so at this point we may need to take a closer look at the phenomenon of “perception.”

During the process of perception, sensory impressions are processed in the brain and by our neurological faculties – and then projected to the outside world. These sensory impressions are visual, auditory, kinesthetic, gustatory and olfactory, i.e., all that is received by our sensory organs (seen, heard, felt, tasted and smelled). This complex, lightning-fast and apparently uninfluenceable process is “ignored” by us. We do not give it any meaning and so we proceed as if the “perceived” were “really” out there without any intervention on our part.

Our perception is a dense filter system, and must be as a “protective measure” against an inconceivably large and otherwise hardly manageable flood of information. Considering this, the assumption that something “taken for real” by us really does exist out there in exactly the same way, is rather presumptuous.

... There is no “out there” that is independent of what happens “in here.”

... Fred Alan Wolf

The philosophical idea of “truth” probably remains insolvably hidden in the extremely creative interaction between “conceived world” and an “outer world” (if there is such a world by itself). In literature good metaphors can be found for the relationship between reality and the perception of it.

"The map is not the territory"

A. Korzybski: *Science and Sanity* (1933) – or

"The menu is not the food"

S. Freud and also P. Watzlawick.

I think we have all, in one way or another experienced this difference between the map and the landscape, or between the menu and the food. It might have been a banal experience, like the following one, that will appear familiar to each of us:

You are alone somewhere in nature, you go for a walk or a hike, or you are sitting or lying down – it does not matter – maybe in a forest. It could be that you will start to enjoy the atmosphere of the forest and the peace and quietness, and after a while the stream of thoughts begins to quiet down, the chatter in your brain becomes less and less – and somehow it happened that you were thinking of nothing at all – and you don't even know how long this has been – somehow, you have completely "lost yourself" ... you just were "there."

And that for a while you were in a self-forgotten, timeless "allone" state, you only become aware at the moment when you are no longer in this state, but are thinking about what had just happened there. You do not know exactly how much time has passed, you were in a magical "all and nothing at the same time" moment that is hard to describe, you did not feel "yourself" separated from the rest of the world.

Now you can reorient yourself again and recognize where you are. You can see the trees, name them internally as pines or beeches, see the ferns and feel the soft moss beneath your feet. The "immediate" experience of just now is replaced by the "perceived" experience, explanation and the naming of the world.

Our perception provides the brain with an extremely simplified, reduced picture of the environment. We recognize “everything” as individual, identifiable and clearly separated “things.”

In the brain, these images are then further simplified and compared with previously stored known images and patterns. So “new” impressions are classified and interpreted based on already existing experiences and memories.

Perception psychology, a science that deals specifically with these processes, concludes that there is no perception before experience. This means that there is no world “out there” that only needs to be perceived by us, but that the world “out there” is created by our perception and the processing in the brain in the way we finally experience it. And this process depends on already made experiences and interpretations of the individual.

What we take to be reality is therefore nothing else than stimuli coming from outside. These are then processed, edited and then projected outwards again (filtered, generalized, distorted, interpreted) by the activities of our senses and our brain. As mentioned above, this processing and treatment consists mainly of filtering by means of three primary categories of extremely effective filters:

- **The neurological filters – (our limited sense organs)**

Whatever is “out there,” we use our senses to grasp it and our brain to organize it. Due to the rather limited possibilities of our sensory organs, we can only grasp a very small fraction of what are probably infinite possible sensory impressions.

You only need to compare our perceptive capabilities with those of various animals.

Eagles see much better, cats and owls can see at night and the world of bees is much more colorful than ours because of their ability to perceive UV light. Bats have an infallible radar system.

Sharks and dolphins sense movements in the water over enormous distances. Dogs can smell many times better, and every tick is able to make more accurate temperature distinctions.

... I find myself agreeing with the eminent Cambridge philosopher, Dr. C. D. Broad, "that we should do well to consider much more seriously than we have hitherto been inclined to do the type of theory which Bergson put forward in connection with memory and sense perception. The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main eliminative and not productive. Each person is at each moment capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and of perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful." ...

Aldous Huxley: *The Doors of Perception* – (He quotes the philosopher C. D. Broad, who in turn quotes Henri Bergson, French philosopher and Nobel Prize winner for literature 1927).

- **The social-genetic (cultural) and individual filters**

The small section that we can perceive due to our neurology and the nature of our sense organs is further filtered by our experiences, our culture, beliefs or attitudes, values, interests and assumptions. Each person lives in his or her unique world based on his or her sensory impressions and individual life experiences. Furthermore, we act on the basis of what we perceive: This is our model (our map) of the world.

The filter of the individually-tinted glasses – that is, the restrictions we create based on our personal experience – creates a completely different map of the area for each person. On one map, a

dog may be something to be avoided at any rate, since you were bitten by such a beast as a toddler. On another map, the same dog may be a pleasant, wonderful creature, since you grew up with a particularly good-natured animal that was a great playmate.

The strongest social-genetic filter system is our language. It probably developed initially so we could survive even better in a dangerous environment and gradually became a tremendously socially unifying element that also enabled a mental explanatory model of the world.

Eskimos have on their map seventy-two different words for differentiating snow. European or American youths distinguish dozens, perhaps hundreds, of types and brands of cars on their maps. In the language of the Maidu, a Native American tribe of Northern California, there are only three words to describe the entire spectrum of colors.

... Every individual is at once the beneficiary and the victim of the linguistic tradition into which he has been born – the beneficiary inasmuch as language gives access to the accumulated records of other people's experience, the victim in so far as it confirms him in the belief that reduced awareness is the only awareness and as it bedevils his sense of reality, so that he is all too apt to take his concepts for data, his words for actual things. ...

Aldous Huxley: *The Doors of Perception*

- **The filter of our imagination**

We cannot perceive something that does not exist in our conception of reality.

This fact is the basis for a feedback loop that restricts possibilities and shapes reality: We only see what we believe (consider possible).

And we only believe (consider possible) what we see.

This mechanism ensures that everything we perceive and experience is within a fairly unvarying range and that “reality” can be experienced as quite constant and reliable.

... Just as a thermostat compensates as far as possible for any major deviation from the desired temperature by appropriate counteraction with the heating system, our “realostat” – in the form of our convictions – also ensures that any excessive deviation of our perception from the “target size” (the world we believe in) is “cushioned” again by appropriate counteraction in the form of doubts and disbelief. Our belief system keeps us confidently on our self-defined roadway through the space of possibility and ensures that we do not take any turns that are too sharp. Thus, the world we experience always changes only within the bounds of what we think is possible. ...

Jörg Starkmuth: *Die Entstehung der Realität* – (Transl. G.G.)