

action is absolutely determined by the action of the rest.

As we have seen in the previous discussion on self-consciousness, it is this distinction of self from the whole universe of notselves, that alone renders intelligible the cognition of that universe. It is also the independence of self on the universe of notselves, that alone renders intelligible its voluntary action on that universe. For a volition is not an act, to which I am impelled by the forces of external nature beating upon my sensitive nature; it is an act, in which I consciously set before myself an end, and determine myself towards its attainment. The very nature of volition, therefore, would be contradicted by a description of it in terms which brought it under the category of causality.

This freedom of the self from determination by the world of objects is the fact which alone explains, without explaining away, the consciousness, that there is within us a centre of conscious activity which is, in the last resort, impregnable by any assaults of mere force. You may apply to my organism superior forces of organic or inorganic bodies, and compel *it* to act as you wish. You may employ all the sensible inducements at your disposal in order to bend me to your purpose; you may tempt me with the most bewitching delights of sense, or scare me with its most frightful agonies. You may even, by ingenuity of torture, so shatter my nervous system as to prevent me from carrying out into the world of sense the deliberate resolutions of myself. But there is one thing which mere force,—force separated from reason,—cannot do; it cannot compel *me*.