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A Problem In Isomorphism

On the Position of the Perceived Point

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The main tenets of isomorphism may be stated briefly as follows:

(1) Due to the physico-chemical nature of the cerebral cortex, the physiological process that taken place in it must necessarily have a macroscopic structure or, in a word, a "physische Gestalt."

(2) Since conscious phenomena and physiological processes are realities of different order, their "correlates" cannot be identical or similar to each other in quality, nevertheless, they must be identical or similar in their macroscopic structure.

Applying the above theory to explain the following fact, I tried to see what results may come out and what new problems are likely to be raised.

Example—Suppose you stimulate two points, A and B on the hanging arm, in which A is nearer to the wrist than B, then A will be felt in the position lower than B; while in the case of the arm raised, A will be felt in the position above B.

This should be explained, as Köhler has insisted, by differentiating the psychological body from the physical one, and by considering the functional relationship of the position with respect to the "limb coordinates" and the "ego coordinates" in the psychological body. In general, the percept resulting from the proximal stimulus given to a point in the receptor will appear in a position with respect to the psychological body in a phenomenal space different from one resulting from the same proximal stimulus given to the same point in the receptor, if the position of the receptor in relation to the physical body is different in the two cases. This principle can be applied also to the auditory and visual senses. The conclusion warranted may be summarized in the following two propositions:

Proposition I. The position of the tactual point with respect to the "limb coordinates" and the "ego coordinates" is felt directly and spontaneously.

Proposition II. The position of a luminous point with respect to the "vision coordinates" and the "ego coordinates" is felt directly and spontaneously.

From the point of view of isomorphism the above propositions may be transformed into the following statement:

Proposition III. The "psychophysical correlate" resulting from the proximal stimulus given to a point in the receptor will have a position in the psychophysical level relative to the correlate of the trunk.

These propositions lead to a further proposition concerning the position of the percept in the phenomenal space. Making a diagram to illustrate these propositions and examining the results of the experiments done by Lauenstein, Jacobs, Amano and myself, I tried to arrange the psychological facts in order, preparing for the future development of physiology.