This paper takes up the problem of agency in relation to freedom. The account is based on the notion that action and perception develop in parallel out of instinctual drive, with thought and imagery pointing to accentuations at pre-perceptual phases, and feeling referring to preliminary segments in action. Objects develop out of drive categories; actions out of drive energy. The inseparability of feeling and concept gives intent and emotion, which innervate concepts. Intent is feeling that gives impetus to decision. The self is deposited early in the process, ideas and feelings midway, acts and objects at the endpoint. The sequence from drive to object constitutes a mental state. The passage from self to act or object is an act of self-realization. Succession in a mental state is simultaneous until actualizing, at which point, though still epochal, the succession takes on temporal order in the present. The precedence of the self in the succession and the affective impulse that action imparts to concepts, gives the feeling of agency, purpose and self-determination.

Key words: mental state, the self, agency, freedom, microgenetic approach
INTRODUCTION

Philosophical speculation on action centers on interaction with the world and has not, for the most part, taken into consideration the immediate antecedents of conscious phenomena and the patterns of dissolution which, in relation to elements in the conscious stream, drop out once their outcomes are secured. As a result, the symptoms of disruption, which are the basis for a reconstruction of the process, are perceived as anomalies in the normative state (Brown 2015). Generally, actions are treated as outputs, such that the intra-psychic ingredients of an action and its putative cause are of less concern than the larger issues of freedom, conscious decision and determinism. This paper departs from that tradition in exploring an approach to free will and agency, including the contribution to action of the self, of concept and of feeling (impulse, emotion, intent), based on micro-temporal process in the mind/brain state (Brown, 2020; 2021), which is developing in time (T1) and renewing (T2) in the brain (Pańcalska, MacQueen, Brown 2012).

In working memory, images are reproduced in subsequent mental states in the order of memory, i.e., in relation to their resemblance to the coming state, and thus to the possibility of renewing the mental state. In the current state of mind, there are images closer to the perception that takes place, i.e., images from the working memory buffer that have almost reached the character of renewed perception. The brain-mind state in T1 is replaced by the overlapping state T2 before T1 ends in time, i.e., before the next phase occurs. This explains the reoccurrence of the early phases in T1, related to the condition of the body (body and brain), individuality of the person, i.e., Self, character, disposition, capacity of working memory buffers, long-term memory resources and experience, and the durability of basic beliefs, values and personality. Later phases disappear when the whole process of realizing reality is completed to make room for new perceptions. The activity of earlier phases of the mental state in the process of

Fig. 1. Mind/brain state: developing (T1) and renewing (T2) mental state in time: the birth of the minimal (working) self
Source: Pańcalska, MacQueen and Brown (2012), modified

T1, T2 - time of the state of mind creation

CS - consciousness/novel, disappearing, explicit perception
- Minimal (working) self

UCS - unconsciousness/perception
- Self-creating, implicit self
the overlapping of individual phases explains the sense of self continuity in time. It should be emphasized that the early stages of mental state development are components that incorporate later states that are more susceptible to environmental influences. At the same time, the repetition of earlier phases is closely connected with the feeling of a reality that exists (Pąchalska, MacQueen and Brown 2012; Pąchalska 2019).

In that the problem of agency has been discussed in relation to mental causation without consideration of the fine structure of the action process, or a concept of the mental events that are entrained in a volitional act, action has been interpreted as an atomic unit – output –that is the endpoint of a causal sequence. On this account, the nature of an action is displaced from an internal “genetic” process to an effectuation – speaking, moving a limb – that is ascribed to mind without consideration of its mental structure. In this respect, action as a causal outcome transports to mind the paradigm of empirical science. This grounds the idea that causation is invariant in mind and world, or that determinism is (or is not) incompatible with free will, or that causation is necessary for a free act, or that occasions of freedom occur but are exceptional, without taking into account the mental state through which actions develop, and the qualitative passage from drive or will to final implementation.

A common assumption is that freedom of action, if it occurs, is an infrequent event that requires contingency and/or quantum indeterminacy, though most writers would agree that the problem of mental causation is not resolved by chance, probability or randomness. Nor does a relaxation of constraints explain a consciously willed action. The feeling of a self that wills an act is central to the distinction of active and passive movement. Regardless of how one interprets a freely willed act, consciousness of intent and implementation are required, not a suspension of the laws of nature. The claim here is that a theory of the mental state, of subjective time, and the elicitation of serial order out of simultaneity in the duration of the present, along with an account of feeling as ingredient in intent, in decision and in the derivation of an action, especially with regard to the transition from potential to actual, offers a new perspective to this longstanding debate.

BACKGROUND

Over the years, Brown (1996, 2015, 2020) have written on some aspects of agency which, though not adequate to the difficulties of the problem, did propose that the self feels agency by virtue of its inception near the core of the mental state, enfolding the state as a whole or individuating from the whole of the state. The account was based on clinical observations, such as the feeling of an active self that is linked to action and a self that is passive in the absence of agentive feeling, as well as the shift from one state to the other, as when the agency of inner speech becomes the passivity to auditory imagery, or when an active self in wakefulness recedes to passivity in dream (see also Pachalska 2019). Agency is part of the feeling of self-determination and is felt for some images. In other
words we feel that we can cause an image of a mouse crawling on the back of an elephant, that the image is a result of mental effort and that we direct the content. The agency felt for phantom limbs – which can be abolished by a stroke in the opposite motor cortex – also implies that the feeling of agency involves perceptual imagery. Within action, the feeling of agency dissolves when movement occurs with stimulation of the motor cortex or in pathology. People with chorea or myoclonic jerks are often uncertain if the movement is willed, and they may complete it to a purposeful act (Paćhalska & Góral-Pórola 2022).

Other data that bear on this topic include the temporal lag in action and perception and the presumed synchrony of their development to consciousness. Acts and objects undergo a momentary development. Concepts externalize to perceptual objects which detach from the mind as independent things in the world. Actions remain partly intra-psychic and are felt as belonging to the actor. That is, objects appear to be external to mind; actions remain in the body. The belongingness of action is part of agentive feeling. This occurs because action discharges at a phase which, in perception, corresponds to pre-perceptual imagery (see below).

Agency is the intuition of causal efficacy, of the capacity of the self to instigate or cause something to occur. The central phenomenon – the core experience – is that the I, the self, deliberately causes an action or mental image to occur. This can be a thought, a vocalization, a decision or a movement. Agency is subordinate to volition, which implies freedom of thought or action. A voluntary act is willed and unhindered. Volition is knowing an act is freely decided, though freedom is generally approached in terms of options, not open-ended possibilities. The problem of whether the self can cause an act to occur and whether, though caused, that event is freely caused, are separate problems. The self might underlie or precede an act that is felt to be freely-decided even if, going back to arguments by Aristotle, the act is necessitated by circumstance, character and the experiential history of the individual.

Historically, even though we do not know how character and experience produce an action, this has been a problem for self-determination; that is, any action, however unexpected, can be attributed to experience and would thus not be entirely free. On the other hand, the “ability to do otherwise” (see, inter alia, discussion in O’Connor, 1995) has, in our view, no explanatory weight, since it reduces to the psychology of choice and decision. Whatever act occurs, there is always a “what if” for an act that does not occur. An outcome that is predictable would be the only act that could occur given the sum of conditions at the point of decision, even if the choice is not to act, or with awareness of the possibility to act otherwise, or if, in a gesture of freedom, a rational person chooses an irrational or self-destructive act. In contrast, as Kant noted, a person free of attachments and without bias is someone without a history, without experience, loyalties, interests and without the knowledge to make an informed rational choice.

Another relevant feature is that choice usually boils down to two or three options. Most possibilities die still borne. Once an option emerges, it may dissolve
or be replaced, or gain strength and sap the force of others. Options (preferences) trace to the drives, which spill largely into opposing vectors, such as fight or flight (Brown and Zhadiaieiv, 2022). This might explain the usual binary nature of choice. Thought tends to settle on polarities, not gradations, for example, good and bad, hot and cold, day and night. These stabilities anchor transitions which are ignored, sublimated or imperceptible. There may also be a limit on attention to more than two or three ideas in the same or alternating states. Of course, not every choice is between polar opposites. Most decisions are this or that, better or worse, not right or wrong. Everyday choices would overwhelm an individual without preferences, or with apathy, indifference or weakness of will. Agency depends on predispositions to strip away a plenitude of possible actions leaving a few to surface to conscious choice.

A person unable to choose a meal from fifty entries on a menu, or a movie from a library of films, has a weakness in the capacity to decide, and with it an erosion of the feeling of agency, but not a loss if the individual can still peruse options and feel that choice is possible. Such a person resembles the memory prodigy described by Luria (1969) who was unable to select a thought from a flood of memories, much as in the short story of Funes the memorius by Borges. Someone with too many options has a weakness of agency, though the freedom to choose remains. A person without options does not, for that occasion, have the ability to choose and can be said to lack volition. This means that a person can have a sense of freedom to choose though being unable to make a choice, or have a feeling of agency without the freedom to choose. A person is an agent, not a passive observer, even if forced to climb the steps to the gallows. Mental events, not outer conditions, determine the feeling of agency (see also Pachalska 2019).

VOLITION

While the presence of decisions or options is essential to volition and freedom, it is not ingredient in agency, which is felt in the production of images or bodily movements, not in the contact of body and object. The feeling that mind acts directly on objects is telekinesis. The relation to the body is internal though the action has external consequences. Thus, in writing, it is the innervation of the hand that is holding the pen and the idea behind it, not the words on the page, though the pen feels like an extension of the hand as the words flow through it. There is a similar feeling in the baton of a conductor. In conversation the effect of one’s words is not the basis of causal feeling but an extension of mental-to-object-causation. The spoken or written word is a nexus of agentive feeling to the object (paper, reader, listener) on which it acts. One can speak of a writer causing the words on a page, or causing a reaction in a reader, but this chain of events has long left the writer. The endogenous feeling of agent- causation passes, deceptively, to the perception of object-causation. Indeed, it has been argued that the source of necessity in object-causation is the infant’s reach for a (moving) target. Agency is a felt mental experience that begins with intent and ends in purposefulness.
Obstruction or effort magnifies agentive feeling. Even when resistance is futile, as in a hanging, the impact is on volition not agency, since the will does not depend on external conditions. In Tolstoy’s *War and peace*, Peter, imprisoned, still feels an agent in thought, thus, he “cast his eyes upon the firmament, filled at that hour with myriad of stars. ‘All that is mine,’ he thought. ‘All that is mine is in me, is me. And that is what they think they have taken prisoner.’” What is lacking is not agency but the volition or freedom to do what one wants, and being conscious that, were the action to be permitted, the actor could carry it out.

Volition and agency are in conflict when the selection of one act voids the possibility of others. Action forecloses the possibilities of freedom even if new possibilities arise. Linking volition to agency gives theoretical heft to a feeling of self-initiation. The freedom to act without restrictions exists as a potential prior to commitment. Potential embraces a multitude of possible acts; commitment precludes all acts except that which occurs. Freedom is potential, agency is actuality. More precisely, volition is the freedom to select from a range of options; freedom is conceptual possibility; agency is the active feeling in the selection. Put differently, volition applies when an action is not coerced; agency applies when an action is (felt to be) instigated by the self; and freedom is the expectation that a range of actions can be implemented. The concurrence of segments in act-and object-development aligns agency with becoming as feeling delivers the idea to motility.

**SELF AND DECISION**

Feeling resolves indecision and conveys definiteness. Reason is the adaptive quality of what is decided, but feeling in agency propels decision to actuality. Commonly, a focus on two or three alternatives accompanies a conscious assessment of the relative value of what is possible. In thinking, one or more ideas are rejected (vetoed), often implicitly, to arrive at the one that is chosen. Relating to Libet’s (1985) work, the idea of a conscious veto can be interpreted as a continuation into consciousness of the parsing – the selection-by-inhibition – that occurs at antecedent segments.

In weighing options, the recurrence of one line of thought by predicative spread strengthens over iterations. Options are reinforced by unconscious preference and the recruitment of justifications. Even in novel situations, decision is swayed by experience and personal interest, along with drive-based egocentric values. Drive is a particularity of will, which extends to action as feeling and intent. Put differently, drive arises from energetic feeling as an expression of will; it is a source of action that, over segments, is refined to individual wish. The self is a specification of the categories of drive in relation to knowledge and experience. In its development, the action passes out of the self and character, which shape drive-preference to cultural norms and core values. Sub-surface proclivities are trimmed to uncover the final specification. Though acts are interpreted as the endpoints of a causal sequence, exposing an outcome is not the same as producing it. If decisions are uncovered, not selected, wherein lies the causal effect?
Action develops in concert with perception. The subjective in thought becomes the objective in perception. A subliminal action in every object corresponds to a tacit object in every act. Various writers have argued that thought develops in the delay before action, a delay that is an expansion at segments within the forming act or object (Brown, 2021), with are treat to the interiority of feeling and concept. Delay is incomplete recurrence of the antecedents of immediacy. We become conscious of feeling as an impetus to thought and the ground of intent. We can act without thinking or think without acting but every mental state inclines to feeling or concept.

**MICRO-TEMPORAL STRUCTURE OF ACTION**

In that action and perception involve widely distributed regions in the brain, speculation on the succession and correspondence of segments in process is possible only at a level of considerable generality. Yet, given the speculations to follow, the microgenetic account, as a plausible theory based on clinical study, deserves the same consideration as the groundless replacement of an organic model by computational theory. After all, central processors, buffers, inputs and outputs, and mind as software are pure abstractions with little or no psychological reality. One ingredient of a psychological theory is that structural components in an underlying *Bauplan* have, in the course of evolution, so individuated that their uniformity is concealed in the complexity. A hierarchic organization over evolutionary layers leading through limbic and mesolimbic structures to neocortex and asymmetric action in the world entails a progression from bodily space and axial motility to neocortical motor areas for discrete innervation and distal limb action.

The corresponding process in perception leads from upper brainstem through a limbic transition of experiential memory to externalization and object space. The transitional series can incline to motility or perception depending on the dominance of feeling or concept. In both, process leads from a deep midline source in drive-based systems of brainstem, hypothalamus and/or diencephalon, through limbic formation to neocortex. The common transition through limbic segments accounts for the reciprocal influence of action-derived feelings and perception-derived concepts, the conceptual modulation of action and the affective and intentional bias in thought. Rather than a top-down transition, act and object begin at an archaic source and develop “upward” to final externalization; importantly, they are not endpoints but incorporate preliminary phases.

The fundamental shift in the origin of drive is from the circularity of reflex to a synchronous act-object (Fig. 2). In reflex, a stimulus elicits a response that serves as a stimulus for another S-R reaction (Weiszacker, 1939/1958). The argument here is that action and perception arise as representational phenomena out of the seriality of reflex. In this process, rhythmic systems of axial motility develop out of oscillatory systems such as the periodicity of circadian, biologic, respiratory and other cycles. A series of nested oscillators leads from earlier stages in evolution that support the rhythm of gait and the respiratory cycle to recent
formations that underlie the prosodic contour and the fine temporal pattern of digital and articulatory movement. Evidence for the oscillatory foundations of action comes, *inter alia*, from the observation that purposeful finger movements appear at the crest of the rhythmic wave in resting tremor. Kinetic rhythms peel into bodily action (Bernstein, 1967). The pattern is one of a hierarchic series of rhythmic oscillators discharging at multiple levels.

In this derivation, objects develop out of drive categories; actions out of drive energy. Pre-terminal segments in perception are concepts or images; pre-terminal segments in action are feelings. The act-development transports drive-impulse through feeling to action. The fusion of feeling with concept gives emotion. Concepts give the quality of emotion, feeling gives the intensity. Action provides the feeling that infuses concepts with emotion, as well as the intent to act and the forward momentum that brings ideas to satisfaction.

In sum, the co-temporal development of act and object gives conceptual-feeling, with arousal of concepts or images on the pre-perceptual side and, on the action side, an intensity of feeling at phases prior to discharge. Act and object go on to completion but the activation of earlier segments of thought and feeling combine to give an emotion in which the quality or category of feeling. Consequently, what emotion it is – is related to perceptual imagery and the quantity or intensity of feeling, while how strongly it is felt – is related to phases in action discharge. The category gives the specificity of the emotion; the action-feeling gives direction and intensity to what is felt. The unity of act and object, or feeling and concept, is a process of becoming into being, which passes from archaic strata in mind through intermediate segments to actualize in the world.
Thus, with regard to intra-psychic process, the transition from potential to actual – the specification by elimination – gives the feeling of contingency and possibility behind every act. Action arises in drive and carries through to desire, which retains the binary quality of approach and avoidance. In desire, action specifies a feeling of intent directed to choices uncovered in the object-development. The arousal of phases prior to objectification gives ideas in the perceptual series and conscious feelings in the action series. The self is a precipitate of knowledge, drive and experience at the floor of the mental state, and is felt as an agent to the forward surge in action.

**INTENT**

As agency is the feeling of an active exertion of will, intent is the conscious desire to do something that anticipates or substitutes for an act. One might say that intention is knowing what one wants to do while agency is the feeling of doing it. Intent is a weak feeling of agency, a desire to act in which a decision is made to do something that is not yet carried out. In one instance, there is an emphasis on the object of the action, in the other, on the preliminary feeling. Agency is the conscious implementation of intent. The one is a feeling of activity, the other its expectation. Intentions do not inevitably lead to actions but they do imply decisions. Perhaps one could say that intent is to decision as will is to action. Intention can accompany agency, as when I intend to say or do something but fail in the attempt, say, finding the right word, lifting a heavy weight of “change my mind”, yet there is a feeling of agency in the effort. Agency may pass through intention as it fractionates to an act. However, unlike agency, which is restricted to bodily or mental activity, an intention, say to lift a book, entails the knowledge I can lift it. I do not intend to do the impossible. Intention requires knowing what I want to do even without the capacity to do it. Knowledge participates in decision, with intention a combination of knowledge and desire (Anscombe, 1963). Perhaps intention is less the knowledge behind an action than the feeling of knowing what to do, with desire the engine behind the decision.

The desire to lift a book has a trace of the directionality and self-initiation that are more strongly felt in agency. We see the forward direction as an inclination to act. The futurity of intention distinguishes it from agency and emotion which entail present feeling. Agency seems a more bodily feeling than intention. The closer to the world surface, the less the feeling is grounded in the body. Intention entails a conscious if implicit choice that can resolve the anxiety of indecision even if its aim is ill-defined. It may even be that intention arises in the making of a decision rather than being a forecast of its selection or implementation. One can think of intention as a specification of desire that expresses a wish or objective biased to action more than to objects and directed to future satisfaction. A thing desired is valued and the impulse to act is an expression of a desire to act. Perhaps we could say that desire is feeling directed to things (events, etc.) of value, and agency is feeling directed to acts that achieve desired or valued ends. The distinction concerns the distribution of feeling into concepts or actions.
FREEDOM AND AGENCY

Free will is a conflation of volition and agency, making an appearance when freedom of action is appended to the exercise of agency. One might say that freedom is for the many, action for the one, with free will combining adventure in the world with the mind’s imaginative reach. Freedom is a catalog of potential; agency is a dynamic of forward-directed activity, a manifestation of will in relation to action as drive-energy flows into movement or mental content. In sum, agency is inner activity in relation to outcome; volition is the menu of possible actions, and free will is their unholy alliance. Ultimately, freedom must be tested to be more than theoretical, and action must be rational to merit the freedom that volition requires. To paraphrase the poet, lack of freedom is more than ‘vague longings bred by want of power’; freedom is the capacity to act in accordance with rational desire.

If we set aside agency as inner feeling, and concentrate on the freedom of outcome, we can ask whether decision is conscious choice or imported to consciousness by submerged predispositions and, if the latter, what accounts for the belief that thoughts, plans and actions are freely decided? What role in the origination of ideas is played by consciousness? If options are derived from presuppositions and inherent bias, and the growth of preference over an iterated series of mental states, deliberation is a sideshow, yet still we believe that informed conscious intent is central to decision. Further, for an actor to state the reasons for an action when those reasons are the analytic endpoints of the presuppositional biases that underlie them is to accept surface justifications as inciting sources.

Feeling, not thought, is what drives and consolidates choice. Given the primacy of feeling in organism, the impulse to action is of all mental phenomena the most likely to be a direct experience of reality or the least likely to be illusory. A will is not free of ancestral claims, but the sense of free will or unhindered choice, leaving aside what constitutes a limitation on freedom, is too powerful to be dismissed without an account of how the phenomenon comes about. The self and act or object occur as ingredients of the same epoch. In the mental state, the self is antecedent to act and idea, a predecessor, not a cause; in an epoch all constituents are simultaneous. The precedence of the self imparts agency, purpose and self-determination. The epochal nature of the mental state would not preclude the possibility of causation in the replacement of one state by another, especially since the replacing state overlaps earlier phases in the preceding one. A causal effect across epochs would reinforce and supplement the base of the state prior to its actualization.

One aspect of free will is the ability to do otherwise; another is the ability to freely decide. With respect to the former, even if decision is conditioned at unconscious phases, there is invariably a potential to do otherwise. If the choice is a film or concert, or something better or worse, the individual is always free to do nothing. In fact, the necessity of choice can itself be an obstacle to freedom.

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Inaction is no less a decision than action; to not make a choice is also a choice. In an occasion of decision, the proto-self resolves to a liminal awareness in relation to the foundational values and beliefs that make up individual character. At this point, choices are unspecified, more like competing tendencies within or between categories with the potential for further elaboration and analysis. Preference becomes a priority as recurrent traversals establish a relative dominance of one path over another. Feeling as intent “nudges” an idea to finality.

With regard to free decision, given a choice between two conscious options, does agency occur when the individual makes the final choice or when the option not selected fades away? Does the person feel an agent to an act unaware that

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Fig. 3. Pictures from the "Clichés of Memory" of Marian Kołodziej, a well-known Polish painter and prisoner of the former German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. After his arrival in the first transport to Auschwitz on 14 June 1940, he was marked with the number 432. In the concentration camp, he survived the entire Second World War. Since then, after 50 years, he wants to bear witness with his drawings of the hell of Auschwitz, he was moved by the words of Zbigniew Herbert, the great Polish poet and essayist, who wrote: You survived not to live, you have little time to bear witness.

A). A self-portrait of the painter made in 1990 depicting a camp number 432 on his forehead to make people aware that a person in a Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp was a number only;

B). A painting entitled "Bowl of Soup" depicting Father Maximilian Kolbemarked with the number 1667 feeding a starving, hopeless prisoner in Auschwitz (this forbidden act of mercy was punishable by death in the gas chamber).

Source: Exhibition "Clichés of Memory", St. Maximilian Centre, Harmęże, with permission.
alternatives have been eliminated? A final choice occurs when options are disempowered by the dominance of the surviving course of action, which occurs implicitly even if the person feels that a displaced option has been intentionally rejected. This raises the question, does the feeling of agency arise in the direct implementation of an intended event or in the final selection when other options have been discarded?

In simple actions such as purposeful finger movement, studies show that the onset of action is prior to conscious decision. The choice is merely when, not how, to act. With deliberation, choice is less likely to be specified before it becomes conscious. The act must traverse segments in which the quality of feeling and the persuasiveness of ideas, regardless of their unconscious attribution, are options unique to the individual. While an informed rational person usually makes informed rational choices, freedom is not necessarily in selecting the most rational choice but in the license to be who you are to make it. This includes the emotion that carries value to commitment. The individual is not a calculator that computes an objective outcome, but a person who brings a history to every decision. What sways decision is the emotional state applicable to that individual. Decisions that are not the most rational may be a sign of ignorance, egoism or impulse, but they are also expressions of personhood, namely, the freedom to decide in conformity with one’s feelings and character (an example of one such activity is illustrated in Fig. 3).

Free will flows from the dispositions of the agent, asserting the freedom to act according to personal desire, interest, bias and experience.

**FREEDOM AND CAUSATION**

The question of causal necessity arises in relation to agency. If one conceives an action as the outcome of a transition from drive to desire, not as a circulation in consciousness of competing reasons or an externalism that ignores the action structure, the momentary pre-history of an action is critical. Early phases associated with (animal) drive that give rise to instinct-driven acts cannot be said to be freely decided, while acts with a dominant focus on phases that correspond to emotion, and consequent limitation of choice, may not have the rationality to justify being described as free. This label then applies largely to conscious acts that require a reasoned decision.

In a choice between competing options, if one option is reinforced over recurrent states such that its competitor is gradually replaced, how are we to describe the selection process? The dominant content arising from unconscious experience has a conceptual and emotive bias. The accrual of dominance over repeated volleys can be described as causal but is this true of the final choice if there is no actual selection but a dropping out of alternatives? The self is ingredient in decision but cannot be said to cause it. The actual cause is the resolution of one line of thought or intent by a reinforcement of the axis of its growth.
On this account, the self “stands behind” a decision but does not cause it to occur. The final decision is not indeterminate since it is conditioned by past and present experience, but action and decision are not caused by the self. Agent-causation is an uncovering of the selection and the feeling of effectuation. Unlike the passage of drive into action, which in animals is more or less direct, this is a realization of the potential for multiple outcomes. Individual freedom can be construed as the self-actualization of one’s own character including personal experience, knowledge and emotion, along with the ability to act without external constraints. It is useless to ask if an act would be the same at another time if conditions were identical since there is novelty in events and in growth of personality. Novelty makes room for freedom but is not itself the freedom we are looking for. Self-expression will differ according to the individual life-experience out of which the self consolidates, but the individual must take responsibility for who he or she is, as others in moral judgment have a responsibility to consider formative history and circumstance.

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