932 Spirituality and Intellectual Honesty *(this is an edited version of my blog 932)*

This blog is about a talk Thomas Metzinger gave in 2017 for a gathering at the Krishnamurti Foundation America, in Ojai, California. Metzinger is professor and director of the theoretical philosophy group and the research group on neuroethics / neurophilosophy at the department of philosophy, Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Germany. He is the founder and director of the MIND group and Adjunct Fellow at the Frankfurt Institute of Advanced Studies, Germany. His research centers on analytic philosophy of mind, applied ethics, philosophy of cognitive science and philosophy of mind. On behalf of this talk I added a footnote to my essay SPIRITUAL. He asks if the opposite of religion is not science but spirituality, and if, in its purest form, the scientific and the spiritual stance actually emerge from the same values: "By the standards of academic philosophy, there is almost no definition of spirituality. We know very little about it, and we only know what it is not. It is completely unclear whether something like a method of the spiritual stance exists as well. As you know, this is a debate that's been going on for many centuries. There are practices, paths, masters. And there are other people who say it is none of these; there's nothing that can be practiced, nothing that can be transmitted, nothing that can be taught; it can only happen in an instant; it's not a question of time; the first step is the last step". And, maybe, these are even both true at the same time. So, what Is Intellectual Honesty? "I think most of you have thought about spirituality a lot in your lives, and maybe intellectual honesty is a new word for you. Let's start with a very simple working definition: *to refuse to lie to yourself, no matter what happens, on the level of thinking, on the level of intellectual activity.* So, intellectual honesty is an ethical stance. It has to do with the ethics of the inner life because it relates to inner actions, towards what one thinks. Probably most of you have thought about what ethical action is - eating meat or not, etc. - but could there be an ethics for what you do with your mind as well? Is there an ethical point about what to believe and what not to believe? Intellectual honesty is about seeking a specific form of moral integrity, not on the level of outer actions, but on the level of your own mind. So intellectual honesty has to do with having only evidence-based 'beliefs'. And, most of all, that the process of inquiry, the process of thinking logically, the process of investigating, does not serve your emotional needs. You do not do all of these things because you want to achieve a form of emotional security, for instance, or positive feelings. Intellectual honesty has nothing to do with that." Krishnamurti said: "Out of suffering is born the urge to seek truth; in suffering lies the cause of the insistent inquiry, the search for truth. Yet, when you suffer you seek an immediate remedy. When you feel physical pain, you obtain a palliative to lessen your suffering. So when you experience mental or emotional anguish, you seek consolation, and you imagine that trying to find relief from pain is the search for truth. In that way you are seeking a compensation for your pains, a compensation for the effort you are thus forced to make. You evade the main cause of suffering and thereby live an illusory life."