3. Things

'Whatever exists, will either do
Something, or it is itself, by other things, done to'

Lucretius

Synopsis: *Every thing (all that is found in the analogue and the digital worlds that is not a Being) is called a Thing (1); Things, unlike Beings, cannot process information (2); Things are either found in Nature or are created by Beings (artefacts) (3); Artefacts (4); Things (and Beings, in this regard) are to be treated as a single, unitary dataset (5).*

1. *

Every thing (all that is found in the analogue and the digital worlds that is not a Being) is a dataset, a collection of information that can be processed (by Beings). For brevity's sake and for reference purposes, a thing in the above sense (consciously and arbitrarily including the earth, the air, a tree, a plot of land, minerals, an aeroplane, a hammer, and even a digitised artefact) is called a Thing.

2. *

Things, unlike Beings, cannot process information; it is not in their nature to do so. Even those that can process information do not have the will to do so, because, unlike Beings, they do not need to. If certain Things do in fact process information (e.g. a thermometer or a scale), it is their created will (created by Beings that can and will) that causes this (their purpose[136]).

This is what is meant each time it is claimed in this book that Things cannot process information.

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136 Making them not relevant to this political philosophy, see note 0/1/6 (specifically 0/1/9).

3.

Things are either found in Nature or are created by Beings (artefacts).

They are, however, invariably material information, meaning processable by (more than one) Beings in the analogue or the digital worlds.[137]

4. Artefacts*

Things can be created by Beings (animals create nests, humans make tools etc.). They invariably have a purpose, that is, to increase the information processing of their creators, although, of course, their actual uses may vary widely (for instance, a hammer can be used in construction but also as a weapon[138]).

Organisations and artificial Beings can also create Things to serve their (human-defined) purpose.[139]

Humans augment their information processing through the control[140] they exercise either over Things or over the Beings which they have created[141]—and these Beings may create and control Things in turn.

5. Things (and Beings, in this regard) are to be treated as a single, unitary dataset

Although there is invariably an infinite number of Things (or even of Beings, at a molecular level), in terms of Things in the context of this political philosophy, each Thing, as denoted by its name that is given to it by a state,[142] is here to be treated as a single, unitary dataset.[143]

For the same purposes and in the same context, the same is true for Beings (with each one of them, too, composed of an infinite number of Things or even of other Beings).

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137   See Chap. 1.1, par. 1.
138   See also note 5/2/2 and 4/5/1.
139   See Chap. 2, par. 9.
140   See Chap. 6.
141   For organisations and artificial Beings, see Chap. 2, par. 6 and 12.
142   See Chap. 8.1.
143   See also Chap. 1, par. 3.