This is a dialogue from Jacobi's work, called 'David Hume on Faith or Idealism and Realism. A Dialogue by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi'. The 'I' in the following extract supports 'realism' against 'idealism'. Idealism is a response to Kant which emphasizes that the 'outside world' is not properly real.

I: Let's try again then. The representations of objects outside us are all copies of the actual things immediately perceived by us, or are composed of parts derived from them. In brief, they are beings that merely imitate the actual things and cannot in any way exist without them. Isn't that so?

He: Yes, it is.

I: But we are also agreed, I think, about something else. These imitations can be distinguished from actual beings only by comparison with the actual itself.

He: Right.

I. Then there must be something in the perception of the actual which is not in the mere representations, for otherwise the two could not be distinguished. But the distinction concerns directly the actual, and nothing

else. Hence the actual itself, the objectivity, can never be made present in the mere representation.

He: How so? Representations are only copies of actual things; they are put together only from their parts; yet we are not to suppose that they can ever present the actual?

I: 1 am saying that representations can never make the actual present as such. They only contain the properties of actual things, not the actual itself. The actual can no more be presented outside its actual perception than consciousness can be presented outside consciousness, life outside life, or truth outside truth. The perception of the actual and the feeling of truth, consciousness and life, are one and the same thing. Sleep is the brother of death, and the dream is only the shadow of life. Whoever has never been awake, could never dream, and it is impossible that there should be original dreams, or an original illusion. This truth seems to me to be of the greatest importance, and for this reason I entreated you so urgently just now to hold firm to the ground of your knowledge of it, which is the

ground of the knowledge of certainty itself and the only source of it.

He: Honestly, it is only now that I feel what good cause you had for urging this on me so emphatically, and how difficult it is to awake completely from a long and deep dream. We bring the awakening itself into the dream and we dream again; then we have to make even greater efforts to return to our full senses.