

On the foundations (of logic and arithmetic)

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From: Tomek (*tmyslowski_at_wp.pl*)

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Hello,

In his seminal paper Hilbert says:

"[...] We take as a basis of our considerations the first thought object 1 (one). We call what we obtain by [putting together] two, three, or more of this object, for example

11, 111, 1111

combinations [Kombinationen] of the object 1 with itself. These combinations, such as

(1)(11), (11)(11)(11), ((11)(11))(11), ((111)(1))(1)

are again called combinations of object 1 with itself.

The combinations are likewise just called objects, and then, to distinguish it, object 1 is called a simple object. [...]"

No, I am not going to be a nuisance and ask question after question (I'd rather die). The passage I quoted, however, touches upon a very delicate issue, which I most certainly cannot expect myself to work out on my own vis. [putting together] of geometric figures (of symbols) as the principal act of

BRINGING MATHEMATICAL OBJECTS INTO EXISTENCE.

Please, does Hilbert himself, or some other genius, discuss this most profound ontological and epistemological issue in ALL DETAILS.

Thank you.

Tom