

Part Two: Mediating the Immediate: The *Consciousness* chapters of the *Phenomenology*  
Lecture 4:

**Immediacy, Generality, and Recollection:**  
**First Lessons on the Structure of Epistemic Authority**  
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Hegel opens his *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* by articulating a basic epistemological criterion of adequacy: any understanding of the processes and practices that institute cognitive relations between minds and the world they know about must make it intelligible that if everything goes well, the result is genuine knowledge of how things really are. He then argues that this requirement, what I called the “Genuine Knowledge Condition,” cannot be met by theories exhibiting a familiar, otherwise tempting structure, whose paradigm he takes to be Kant’s account in the first *Critique*. Such approaches envisage knowledge as a cognitive relation between a mind whose understanding consists in the application of concepts and an objective reality that, considered apart from that cognitive relation, is not in conceptual shape. Skepticism will result, he claims, from any picture that requires minds to process or transform a nonconceptual reality so as to get it into the conceptual form intelligibility requires. Hylomorphic models of this kind must appeal to a notion of the content common to knowings and what is known, which appears in a conceptual form on the subjective side of the intentional nexus and in nonconceptual form on the objective side. Since intelligibility is identified with what is in conceptual form, he argues, the concept of such amphibious common content must be acknowledged to be unintelligible as such. Such an account must lead to skepticism, since the way the world really is (“in itself”, he says) cannot be understood. Only its appearances (what it is “for consciousness”) are in the right shape to be intelligible.

Underlying the epistemological point is a semantic one: for the common content to count as *determinate* it must be conceptually articulated, in the sense (defined by standing in relations of determinate negation) that Hegel gives to ‘conceptual’. The *Consciousness* chapters are devoted to exploring this notion of determinateness.

So Hegel does not challenge the identification of what is intelligible with what has a conceptual form, shape, or structure. He takes it that a good thing to mean by “conceptual content” is just what must be exhibited by the intelligible as such. His own constructive response to this critical semantic and epistemological argument is to develop a *conceptual realism*, by articulating a sense of ‘conceptual content’ in which the objective, no less than the subjective pole of the intentional nexus, can be seen to be conceptually structured, to possess or exhibit conceptual content. The difference between the objective and subjective forms such conceptual contents can take is understood in other terms. More specifically, as I read Hegel, to be conceptually contentful is identified with standing in

relations of material incompatibility or exclusive difference (“determinate negation”) from other such conceptually contentful items. The difference between the conceptual contents of facts on the objective side and thoughts on the subjective side is to be understood in terms of the difference between alethic modal incompatibility and deontic normative incompatibility. It is *impossible* for one object at the same time to exhibit incompatible properties, whereas a subject merely *ought* not think of it as exhibiting such properties.

In the first chapter of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel opens the extended argument that will lead us to this conception by considering its polar opposite. The conceptual realism he endorses seeks to satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition by construing both poles of the intentional nexus as conceptually structured. Approaches that fall under the rubric he calls “sense certainty” (SC), by contrast, agree in accepting the conclusion that to understand knowledge as requiring conceptualization of the nonconceptual commits one to taking conceptualization to be falsification, but seek to avoid the specter of skepticism and satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition by seeing empirical knowledge as based on a purely *nonconceptual* taking-in of nonconceptual reality. The complementary epistemological criterion of adequacy that a theory must make room for the possibility of error (what I called the “Intelligibility of Error Condition”) is addressed by seeing that possibility creep in precisely when what is cognitively given *nonconceptually* is subsequently conceptualized. A foundation of genuine empirical knowledge is nonetheless thought to be secured by construing the immediate deliverances of sense experience as passive, in a way that contrasts with conceptual activity and allows no room for error apart from and in advance of such activity.<sup>1</sup>

The *Sense Certainty* chapter, with which Hegel opens the intellectual adventure-narrative that is the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, addresses the origins of our empirical knowledge in sense experience. The naive view he dissects there is traditional empiricism. Its soft underbelly, he argues, is its structural commitment to *semantic atomism*. This is the view that the content immediately delivered by the exercise of our sensory abilities is what it is independently of its relations to anything else. Such sensory episodes possess their epistemic authority intrinsically, in virtue of their nature as passive exercises of those sensory abilities, without correlative responsibility to anything else. This is the conception Wilfrid Sellars, self-consciously guided by Hegel, would diagnose and criticize in similar terms a century and a half later as the “Myth of the Given.”

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<sup>1</sup> Besides these three options—nonconceptual objective world and conceptual subjective grasp of it, conceptually articulated world and conceptual grasp of it, and nonconceptual world taken in nonconceptually—there would seem to be the abstract possibility of a conceptually articulated world taken in nonconceptually. I do not know of any actual view of this shape, though there are analogues if the conceptual/nonconceptual distinction is replaced by such others as the infinite/finite or divine/human distinctions.

This view has not gone away. A reasonably widely held view among contemporary philosophers of language is that the sort of causal contact with the perceptible world that is expressed in explicit form by the use of demonstratives should be understood as non- or pre-conceptual. This *de re* element in empirical knowledge is contrasted with the conceptually articulated *de dicto* element. Some thinkers appeal to a primitive stratum of “pure *de re*” beliefs, which would be expressed by using *only* demonstratives (though they could be possessed by creatures without language, and so without demonstratives).<sup>2</sup> Stripped of its overtly cartesian trappings, there seems to be much that is still attractive about the idea of a minimal kind of cognition that consists in an exercise of *mere* receptivity, simply registering, noticing, or pointing out what sense delivers. This would be a kind of cognition that, while it need not be taken to be infallible (since the causal mechanisms might go wrong sometimes), nonetheless would be particularly secure. For it would at least be immune to errors of mis-assimilation, misclassification, and mistaken inference, on the grounds that the subject has not *done* anything with or to what is merely passively registered, noticed, or pointed out, and so not anything that could have been done *incorrectly*.

Just so, the authority of immediacy is conceived by sense-certainty as deriving precisely from the *passivity* of the knower, from the fact that the sensing consciousness is careful to incur no obligations. The cognitive *authority* of immediacy is to come with no corresponding *responsibility* on the part of those to whom it is addressed. What drives the arguments I am discussing is the incompatibility of two features of sense-certainty’s conception of the cognitive *authority* of immediacy: *immediacy* of content (in the sense that endorsing it imposes no *responsibilities* on the part of the endorser that could fail to be fulfilled, no obligation to make distinctions or grasp relations among immediacies—things that could be done *correctly* or *incorrectly*), and even minimal *determinateness* of content. Recovering some sustainable sort of cognitive authority associated with immediacy then obliges the candidate knower

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<sup>2</sup> [On the general issue, see the articles by Sosa and Burge that McDowell talks about in “De Re Senses” [ref.]. Mention that essay as usefully setting out the issues, in a way congenial to the approach taken and attributed to Hegel here. On “pure *de re* beliefs”, see Dretske, late in KFI [ref.]. The view that there is a distinctive role for demonstrative, object-involving thoughts (“strong *de re* commitments” in the idiom of Chapter Eight of *Making It Explicit*), but that they are through and through conceptual is introduced by Evans, endorsed by McDowell (for instance, in the essay referred to above), and developed in a somewhat different direction in *Making It Explicit*.]

(consciousness) to *do* something, to make distinctions and invoke relations among the various instances of authority of this kind.

The *Sense Certainty* chapter is an investigation into the epistemic authority of what Hegel calls “immediacy” [Unmittelbarkeit]. The distinction between immediacy and mediation is a central one in Hegel’s philosophical vocabulary. Though it has many species and ramifications, the idea he generalizes from is to be found in specifically epistemic immediacy. We can think of his terminology as anchored in Kant’s usage:

All certainty is either *mediated* or *not mediated*, that is, it either requires proof or is neither susceptible nor in need of any proof. There may be ever so much in our cognition that is mediately certain only, that is only through proof, yet there must also be something *indemonstrable* or *immediately certain*, and all our cognition must start from *immediately certain* propositions.<sup>3</sup>

Kant is distinguishing between knowledge or belief that is the result of *inference* and what we come to know or believe noninferentially. The paradigm (though not the only species) of noninferentially acquired belief is observational judgments, in which subjects respond directly to perceptible states of affairs—for instance, the visible redness of an apple—by coming to belief that the apple is red. It is the kind of epistemic authority distinctive of such episodes that Hegel analyzes under the rubric of “immediate sense certainty.” Kant finds it natural to talk about inference (whose most robust, knowledge-securing variety he calls “proof”) in terms of “mediation” because he is thinking of the role of the middle terms in classical syllogisms (for him, the very form of inference), which secure the inferential connections between premises and conclusions. “Certainties”, that is, commitments, arrived at by reasoning are accordingly denominated “mediated.” Those with a noninferential provenance, by contrast, are called “immediate.”

The epistemological conception Hegel addresses as “sense certainty” is shaped not just by Kant’s conception of epistemic *immediacy*, but more proximally by his

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<sup>3</sup> *Logic* [ref.], p. 79. This sort of use of ‘certainty’ [Gewissheit] is also important for Hegel’s use of another important dyad ‘certainty’/‘truth’, which he uses to try terminologically to loosen the grip of the picture of subjects and objects as independent things, in favor of one in which we can appreciate thoughts and facts as having in favored cases the very same conceptually articulated contents. [ref. to my discussion of this].

conception of sensuous *intuition*. While the first model emphasizes that immediate sensory knowledge is being understood as *noninferential*, the second model emphasizes that it is being understood as *nonconceptual*. This is not to say that Hegel takes the epistemological strategy he dismantles in *Sense Certainty* to be Kant's. Kant himself did not treat the mere presence of intuitions as constituting any sort of knowledge. ("Intuitions without concepts are blind," as he famously says at A51/B75.) Rather Hegel takes the Kantian conception to be the one he addresses at the outset of the *Introduction*, which construes knowing as a process ("instrument", "medium") whereby a nonconceptual reality (what things are *in themselves*) is transformed into conceptually articulated appearances (what they are *for* consciousness). Sense certainty is a different strategy, which seeks to avoid skepticism (satisfy the GKC) by finding a foundation for empirical knowledge in a kind of nonconceptual, noninferential immediate sensuous taking-in of how things nonconceptually are. The idea is that the mind, by being wholly passive and receptive, making no inferences and applying no concepts, does nothing that could alter or falsify the content it passively receives. The conception of what it is for a proto-cognitive but in some sense contentful episode to be noninferential and nonconceptual, however, is taken over from Kant's way of making out the concept/intuition distinction.

In *Sense Certainty*, Hegel distinguishes a number of dimensions of Kant's distinction between intuitions and concepts. Two of them are of particular importance to begin with. First, for Kant the intuition/concept distinction lines up with the receptivity/spontaneity distinction. Intuition is a passive capacity, the capacity to be sensuously affected, to be given representations that the subject simply finds itself with. Applying concepts, by contrast, is something the subject actively *does* (though not in general intentionally). This dimension is of the first importance for the epistemological strategy of sense certainty, since the thought is that where the subject does not *act*, it cannot *err*.<sup>4</sup> The second dimension of the intuition/concept distinction is that it coincides with that between *particular* representations and *general* ones. *What* one does in

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Kant: "It is therefore correct to say that the senses do not err—not because they always judge rightly, but because they do not judge at all." [A293/B350]

applying concepts is understood as *classifying* particular, bringing them under universals (that is, concepts, which Kant understands as rules). This idea fits nicely with the first one, since classifying involves *comparing* what is classified with other things. Doing that introduces the possibility of making a mistake, getting things wrong. Classification involves the possibility of *misclassification*, placing particulars under the *wrong* universals, ones that do not in fact characterize them. According to this line of thought, the possibility of epistemic error arises only when the deliverances of sense are brought under concepts.

Hegel distinguishes these two dimensions of Kant's distinction between intuitions and concepts in the first paragraph of *Sense Certainty* as "immediate knowledge" and "knowledge of the immediate. The first is a matter of "our approach being immediate or receptive." This is immediacy of the *act* of "apprehending without comprehending."<sup>5</sup> It is to be distinguished from "knowledge of the immediate," which is immediacy of the *content* apprehended.

We can think of these two senses of "immediate" as corresponding to immediacy as the *noninferentiality* of the provenance of an episode and immediacy as the *nonconceptuality* of its content. Here it is worth comparing one of the central moves Wilfrid Sellars makes in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind." He is concerned to argue there that when we talk of observational reports or perceptual judgments as being "noninferential," we must be careful to distinguish between taking that predicate to apply to the act and taking it to apply to the content. We must not be confused by what he calls "the notorious 'ing'/'ed' ambiguity."<sup>6</sup> Observation reports and perceptual judgments, in the sense of reportings and judgments, are noninferential in the sense that those acts are not the products of processes of inference. They are the results of exercising reliable dispositions to respond differentially to environing stimuli, and should not be assimilated to the extraction of consequences from premises. But that is not at all to say that grasp of the concepts that are applied observationally can be made sense of apart from mastery of the use of those concepts in inferences, that is, non-observationally, or that the contents of those reports and judgments is intelligible apart from their standing in inferential relations or being

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<sup>5</sup> All lightly paraphrased quotations from §90.

<sup>6</sup> [ref.] to EPM.

governed by norms of inference. For Sellars, a parrot trained to respond to the visible presence of red things by uttering tokens of “Rawk! That’s red!” might share reliable differential dispositions with a genuine observer of red things. But it is functioning at most as a measuring instrument, labeling, not describing the things it responds to *as* red.

It is only because the expressions in terms of which we describe objects...locate these objects in a space of implications, that they describe at all, rather than merely label.<sup>7</sup>

The genuine observer of red things must, as the mere differential responder to red things need not, place it in a “space of implications” by knowing something about what follows from something’s being classified as red, and what would be evidence for or against such a classification being correct. If by “noninferential knowledge” one means knowledge one could have even though one had no practical mastery of proprieties of inference, Sellars claims, then there is no such thing as “noninferential knowledge.” The concept is unobjectionable only as it applies to acts of making observation reports or perceptual judgments, that is, to reportings and judgments, and indicates that those particular acts did not result from the exercise of specifically inferential capacities. The existence of cognitions that are noninferential in this sense is entirely compatible with claiming that the capacity to have *any* determinately contentful cognitions requires the subject *also* to have inferential capacities, even if they need not be exercised in every cognitive act of the subject.

Exactly one hundred and fifty years before Sellars, in his opening chapter Hegel is making a point of just the same shape.<sup>8</sup> The fact that cognitions acquired receptively through sensation are noninferential in the sense that they are not the result of exercising inferential capacities does not mean that they are nonconceptual in the sense that they are intelligible as determinately contentful apart from the situation of those contents in a “space of implications” of the sort exploited by inferential capacities. Being immediate in the sense of intuitive as an act of receptivity does not, Hegel will argue, entail being immediate in the sense of intuitive as having a content that does not involve universals. Those two Kantian senses of “intuitive” come apart.

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<sup>7</sup> “Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities” [ref.] §108.

<sup>8</sup> “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind” was delivered as lectures in London in 1956, and Hegel wrote all of the *Phenomenology* apart from the Preface in 1806.

Running them together results in what Sellars called the “Myth of the Given.” The *Sense Certainty* chapter is, *inter alia*, an argument against the Myth of the Given. (Sellars was perfectly aware of this, describing “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind” as his “incipient *Meditations Hegeliennes*” and aligning himself with Hegel under the rubric “that great foe of immediacy.”<sup>9</sup>)

When we look at Hegel’s argument for that conclusion, however, we see that he conjoins the Sellarsian line of thought with another, which is not present in Sellars. If the two sets of considerations are not properly separated, it will look as though Hegel is offering a fallacious argument for the conclusion that a coherent conception of the epistemic authority of sensuous immediacy requires acknowledging the role of sense universals in articulating the contents of its deliverances. Hegel structures his discussion in three movements of thought, unpacking what is implicit in the notion of knowledge of the immediate, what is implicit in the notion of immediate knowledge, and what is implicit in the notion of immediate knowledge of the immediate.<sup>10</sup> While there is good and sufficient methodological reason for structuring the discussion this way, it obscures the relations between the two crucial distinctions that articulate his argument as I would understand it. The first of these, the distinction between immediacy of (the origin of) the act of sensing and immediacy of the content sensed, which I have been emphasizing, is indeed reflected in the distinction between immediacy of the act of knowing and immediacy of the content known, which Hegel uses to organize his discussion.<sup>11</sup> The other crucial orienting distinction is between two senses of immediacy of content, one corresponding to particularity as opposed to generality, the other to authority residing in unrepeatable episode tokenings as opposed to repeatable episode-types. The first is modeled on the distinction between singular terms (representations of particulars) and predicates (representations of universals or properties).

<sup>9</sup> In §20 and §1 of “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind.”

<sup>10</sup> The first is introduced in §94 and its consequences extracted in §95 and §96, the second is introduced in §100 and unpacked in §101 and §102, and third is introduced in §103 and what is implicit in it elaborated in §104–§107.

<sup>11</sup> Hegel follows up on his introduction of the distinction between immediate knowledge and knowledge of the immediate in the opening sentence of *Sense Certainty* with this passage in §92, setting up the way he will exploit the distinction in the three movements of thought: “Among the countless differences cropping up here we find in every case that the crucial one is that, in sense-certainty, pure being at once splits up into what we have called the two ‘Thises’, one ‘This’ as ‘I’, and the other ‘This’ as object. When we reflect on this difference, we find that neither one nor the other is only immediately present in sense-certainty, but each is at the same time mediated: I have this certainty through something else, viz. the thing; and it, similarly, is in sense-certainty through something else, viz. through the ‘I.’”



The second is modeled on the distinction between demonstratives and indexicals ('this', 'now'), which are token-reflexives (in Reichenbach's terminology) each tokening of which might refer to something different, on the one hand, and expressions all cotypical tokenings of which types are construed as coreferring (such as 'tree' and 'night'). These very different distinctions correspond to two further dimensions of Kant's intuition/concept distinction, beyond that of act/content (ing/ed).

I take the main intellectual work of *Sense Certainty* to be Hegel's analysis of the fine structure of Kant's intuition/concept distinction as involving lining up these three distinctions, which Hegel acknowledges as articulating genuine dimensions of representation, but which he insightfully recognizes as actually orthogonal to one another. The way he organizes his discussion around the first distinction makes the relation between the other two distinctions harder to appreciate than it needs to be. It thereby invites that attribution to Hegel of a terrible argument for the claim that if sensuous immediacy is to be understood as investing a special kind of epistemic authority in its deliverances, the *content* that authority is invested in cannot be understood as nonconceptual. For that content to be *determinate*, it must be *conceptual* content, in that it must at least involve the application of *sense universals*: observable properties. Finding this conclusion to be implicit in the conception of the distinctive epistemic authority of immediacy as invested in determinate contents is what motivates the transition from the *Sense Certainty* chapter to the *Perception* chapter. The beginning of hermeneutic wisdom in reading this bit of the *Phenomenology* consists in disentangling the various distinctions that Hegel deploys in his compelling argument for this important conclusion, and avoiding the snare and delusion of what I will call the "Bad Argument" that his exposition invites us to find in its place.

The Bad Argument results from failing to distinguish three kinds of repeatability that Hegel points out, and treating them as though they all amounted to generality or universality in the sense in which the universals or properties expressed by predicates contrast with the particulars referred to by singular terms. All three are important for arguments Hegel makes, but they, and the arguments they actually support, must be carefully distinguished. The first sort of repeatability concerns the kind of epistemic authority distinctive of the deliverances of sensuous

immediacy. It is, Hegel observes, a *kind* of authority, which can be exhibited by *different* episodes with *different* contents.

An actual sense-certainty is not merely this pure immediacy, but an *instance* of it.<sup>12</sup> This observation is an important move in Hegel's argument. But it clearly does not follow from the fact that there is a kind of generality in the Fregean *force* of immediacy, that it can be invested in different representings, that the *contents* in which it can be invested, what is represented, must be general rather than particular. Only entitlement to the latter claim can motivate the transition to the discussion of sense universals such as **white** and **cubical** in the *Perception* chapter. Hegel is not trying to make this move in one step.

It can easily look as though he is doing something structurally analogous, running together two other senses of 'repeatable', however. He considers how we might express in language what is merely "meant" or "pointed out" by a consciousness taking in what is sensuously given without characterizing or classifying, hence conceptualizing it. When we try to express explicitly sense certainty's understanding of its immediate experience as a passive *registration*, without comparison or classification, or committing ourselves to any determinate inferential consequences) of what is merely there (a way of talking about immediacy in the sense of independence on the side of the thing), we can do so by using a bare demonstrative: 'this'. The use of the demonstrative is as a device of *direct reference*. It is a kind of *reference*, because it is merely *pointing out* what is there—not *saying* anything *about* it. It is *direct* (immediate) in the sense of not relying on or otherwise employing (being mediated by) concepts; it does not involve the application of concepts at all. (This is one kind of immediacy of *content*. The tokening is also immediate as a process, that is, as pertains to its *origin*, since it does not result from a process of inference. But that is not the current point.) But 'this', he points out, while a pure demonstrative, is an expression *type* that admits of many different *tokenings*. 'This' is repeatable, it applies generally, indeed *universally*. *Anything* can be picked out by some tokening of the type 'this'.

It is as a universal too that we *utter* what the sensuous [content] is. What we say is:

'This', i.e. the *universal* This; or, 'it is', i.e. *Being in general*...

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<sup>12</sup> §92.

Similarly, when I say ‘I’, this singular ‘I’, I say in general all ‘I’s; everyone is what I say, everyone is ‘I’, this singular ‘I’.

“If we describe it more exactly as 'this bit of paper', then each and every bit of paper is 'this bit of paper', and I have only uttered the universal all the time.”<sup>13</sup>

These three passages are each drawn from a different one of the three explicating movements that make up the body of *Sense Certainty*: the first from the discussion of immediate knowing, the second from the discussion of knowing of the immediate, and the third from the discussion of immediate knowing of the immediate. So observations of this sort mark important steps in all three of the arguments. And it certainly *looks* as though the point is that since *any* object can be responded to appropriately by some tokening of the *type* ‘this’ (that *any* subject can be indicated by some tokening of the type ‘I’), that these demonstrative and indexical expressions must be understood as having universal contents and expressing absolutely general concepts. The argument would then take the form of an analogy. The repeatable expression ‘Red’ applies to a lot of particulars. So ‘red’ is a predicate, which expresses a concept and stands for a universal or property: the universal or property shared by all things that are properly called ‘red’. In the same way, the repeatable expression ‘this’ (‘I’) applies to lots of particulars. Indeed, for *any* particular (in the case of ‘I’, any particular self) it is possible to refer to it by using a tokening of the repeatable type ‘this’. So ‘this’ (‘I’) is a predicate, which expresses a concept and stands for a universal or property: the universal or property shared by all things that are properly called ‘this’ (‘I’), that is, all particulars (or particular selves).

That would be a Bad Argument. Spelled out as I just have, the fallacy should be obvious. Although ‘this’ is a repeatable expression type that can be applied to any particular thing or situation, it is not *predicated* of them, it is not *describing* them, it is not a universal in the sense of expressing a *property* that they share or a *concept* that they fall under. To refer to something as ‘this’ is not to characterize it in any way, certainly not to attribute a property to it, even a very general one. ‘This’, ‘I’, and ‘red’ are all repeatable expressions, and can be applied on different occasions to different particulars. But the sense of ‘apply’ is quite different: referential in the first case, predicative in the second. ‘This’ and ‘I’ are not *true of* anything. Put another way, there is a perfectly good sense in which ‘this’ and ‘I’ mean something different on different occasions of

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<sup>13</sup> §97, §102, and §110.

their tokening. In order to know what is meant by ‘this’, or who is meant by ‘I’, it is not enough to understand the use of the expression *type* in general. One must also know the circumstances of its particular tokening. In this sense the demonstrative and indexical expression types are *ambiguous*. But that is not the same as saying they express universals. ‘Bank’ is not a universal that applies both to the shores of rivers and to financial institutions. Of course in another sense, these words are not ambiguous. For what each tokening means is determined in a uniform way from the circumstances in which it is produced. As Kaplan has taught us to say, different tokenings of expressions like this have the same *character* (type), but express different *contents*. No distinction of this sort applies to expressions such as ‘red’. The predicate/term (universal/particular) distinction and the character/content distinction are actually orthogonal to one another, since in addition to singular term types where a single character determines different contents for different tokenings (such as ‘this’ and ‘I’) and predicate types whose characters assign the same content to all tokenings (such as ‘red’), there are singular term types whose characters assign the same content to all tokenings (such as ‘Hegel’, or a suitable lengthening of that name) and predicate types where a single character determines different contents for different tokenings (such as “...is the same color as this sample”).

These passages cannot be ignored, and the argument they invite us to attribute should neither lightly be attributed to Hegel, nor—far worse—endorsed as a good one. (Few commentators on this chapter measure up to this tripartite standard.) As I would reconstruct the argument that emerges from *Sense Certainty*, Hegel is fully aware of the distinction that vitiates the Bad Argument, and is in fact concerned to insist on it. On the side of the immediacy of content (as opposed to the immediacy of the origin of the act of sensing—it’s being noninferential in the only sense Sellars and Hegel allow that cognition can be noninferential), Kant’s understanding of intuitions construes them as *particular*, by contrast to the *generality* of concepts. Hegel sees that this doctrine is ambiguous. Kant in the Second Analogy of Experience carefully distinguishes relations of representations from representations of relations, the former a matter of relations among the subject’s representings, and the latter a matter of relations represented as objective. His (meta)concept of intuition, however, elides the analogous and equally important distinction between particularity of representations and representations of particularity. Singular terms are representations of particulars, while predicates and sortals are

representations of general properties or universals: things that can be true of, apply to, or be exhibited by many particulars. Here what is particular is what is represented. Token-reflexive expressions such as demonstratives and indexicals are particular representings, in the sense that what must be semantically evaluated is particular, unrepeatable tokenings of the repeatable type.<sup>14</sup> Put otherwise, these representings exhibit a structure of authority that Sellars (in *EPM*) calls “token-credibility.” Epistemic authority accrues to uses of expressions of this kind in virtue of features of the provenance of particular tokenings of them, and vary from one to another. By contrast to judgments like “This pig is grunting,” and “The frog is on the log,” which are token-credible if credible at all, judgments like “Snow is white,” and “Baryons are hadrons,” have a kind of credibility (epistemic authority) that accrues equally to all of the tokenings of those types.

Kant thinks of intuitions as *both* singular-term-like, in representing particulars, *and* demonstrative-like, in being unrepeatable token(ing)-reflexive representations. These features can, of course, coincide. But they need not. There are demonstrative and indexical predicates, such as “that shape,” and “my mother’s favorite color.” And there are singular terms all the cotypical tokenings of which are coreferential, like “Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel,” and “the inventor of bifocals.” When these features diverge, Kant’s intuition/concept distinction breaks down. We already saw that a similar breakdown occurs when immediacy of origin diverges from immediacy of content, in *either* of these senses of “immediacy of content.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Fussy terminological note:

- a) It is tokenings (acts or episodes of tokening), not tokens that are unrepeatable in the relevant sense. A religious enthusiast who makes a sign inscribed with an arrow and the legend “You are a sinner!” and goes around pointing at various passersby utilizes a single token (the sign), but performs many unrepeatable speech acts (tokenings), whose semantics varies from tokening to tokening.
- b) Demonstratives and indexicals are different species of token(ing)-reflexive expression types. It is wrong to think of demonstratives as a kind of indexical, expressions relative to an index that consists not of a time, place, speaker, or world, but of a demonstration. That is wrong because in the case of genuine indexicals, the index in question can be specified independently of features of the particular speech act whose semantics depends on that index. But what is being demonstrated is highly context-dependent along a further dimension. In Lewis’s example, what makes something “the most salient pig” can be *any* feature of the situation at all. Which one matters is not settled in advance, as it is for proper indexicals.

<sup>15</sup> One might be tempted to argue that the two distinctions do not really generate three senses of ‘intuition’, since uses of demonstratives are always exercises of receptivity in the sense that they are noninferentially elicited. This would not be at all plausible for indexicals, which include not only ‘here’, but ‘there’, not only ‘now’, but ‘then’. But they also include “a week from last Tuesday,” which can surely be used as the conclusion of an inference—as indeed, it then becomes clear on reflection, can even the simplest here-now-me indexicals. The same considerations show that even demonstratives, whose most basic use *is* in making noninferential reports and perceptual judgments,

Hegel does want to argue that *both* these sorts of content-immediacy (representings of particular representeds and particular representings) are intelligible only in the context of their relation to things that count as mediated. But the kinds of mediation involved are different, corresponding to the different senses of ‘immediate’. He will argue that representations of particulars, modeled on singular terms, are intelligible as such only in a context that includes representations of universals, in the sense of general properties, modeled on predicates and sortals. And he will argue that representings that are themselves particular, in the sense of being unrepeatable, modeled on the use of tokening-reflexive expressions, are intelligible as such only in a context that includes larger structures of repeatability: ways of recollecting those unrepeatable events and taking them up as available in inferences made later. Put otherwise, Hegel claims in *Sense Certainty* that the authority of immediacy that invests acts of sensory awareness implicitly involves *two* sorts of repeatability of the content of those acts. We might distinguish them as *classificatory* and *recollective* repeatability. The first is the classificatory or characterizing repeatability of predicates and concepts, which Hegel calls “universals”. The second, which in the context of endorsements whose cognitive authority depends on their immediacy turns out to be presupposed by the first, is epitomized by the way pronouns pick up, repeat, and so preserve the content of demonstratives serving as their antecedents. Only by keeping the considerations proper to each of these two sorts of repeatability rigorously separate can we learn the lessons Hegel is trying to teach us in this section. The Bad Argument results from running together these two lines of argument. To avoid it, they must be disentangled, since both are in play in all three of the movements of thought (“dialectics”) that make up the body of *Sense Certainty*. The result of that disentangling is two Good Arguments.

The Good Arguments begin with the observation that the authority of immediacy is itself a *kind* of authority. This is true, in turn, along two different dimensions. First, the authority of having been immediately (in the sense of noninferentially) responsively elicited can be invested in *different* contents. Second, for an unrepeatable episode to be intelligible as possessing any kind of epistemic *authority*, it must be related to *other* episodes that can inherit or appeal to that

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also always have inferential uses: “If she left an hour ago, she should be here by now,” surely reports the product of an inferential process.

authority. Otherwise it is a *mere* occurrence, like an eddy in a stream. Since our aim is to disentangle these two strands of argument, we'll consider them sequentially.

Hegel does not leave any possibility that we will fail to see that one of the central lessons of the discussion of *Sense Certainty* is that immediacy is ultimately unintelligible apart from its relation to universals. He repeatedly says things like “sense certainty has demonstrated in its own self that the truth of its object is the universal.”<sup>16</sup>

As to the first, it begins with this sort of observation: one tokening of ‘this’ picks out a tree, another a house.<sup>17</sup> These presentations have the same kind of authority: the authority of sensuous immediacy. It will help in our discussion to introduce notational conventions permitting us to distinguish between episode- or expression-*types* and episode- or expression-*tokenings*. We can refer to the types by placing a token of the expression in question between angle brackets, and to the tokenings by placing such a token between slanted lines. Different tokenings of the same type can then be distinguished by subscripts. Then /this/<sub>i</sub>, which picks out a tree, has a different content from /this/<sub>j</sub>, which picks out a house, and a different content yet from some /this/<sub>k</sub>, which picks out a stone. Each has the authority of immediacy, that is, of experiences, putative or candidate knowings, with which one simply *finds* oneself. *What* is given or presented to the subject, and can differ from occasion to occasion, can be called its “content,” even within the scope of a commitment to understanding such content as being nonconceptual. The potential *diversity* of such contents must be acknowledged, as what makes immediate sense knowledge “appear as the *richest* kind of knowledge.”<sup>18</sup> That the contents of different acts of sensory knowing can at least barely differ from one another is the very weakest sense in which those contents could be thought of as determinate.

We'll see further along that a stronger necessary condition must obtain as well. But even the minimal observation that the same sort of epistemic authority of immediacy can be exhibited by episodes with different contents (which must be acknowledged if they are to be intelligible as having the significance even of bare referrals or “pointings-out”) already implicitly brings into play a certain kind of universal or principle of classification applying to them. For /this/<sub>j</sub> and /this/<sub>k</sub> have in common their difference from /this/<sub>i</sub>. A ‘this’ that is a

<sup>16</sup> §99. Other examples include:

So it is in fact the universal that is the true [content] of sense-certainty §96.

What consciousness will learn from experience in all sense-certainty is, in truth, only what we have seen, viz. the This as a *universal*... §109.

<sup>17</sup> Hegel splits up the pure indication that would be made explicit by a tokening of ‘this’ into temporal and spatial dimensions, which would be made explicit by tokenings of ‘now’ and ‘here’, and makes the point indicated in terms of a “now that is night” and a “now that is day”, on the one hand (in §96), and a “here that is a house” and a “here that is a tree” on the other (in §101). But the importation of this distinction is irrelevant to the point I am discussing.

<sup>18</sup> §91.

house and a ‘this’ that is a tree have in common that they are both different in content, not merely different as unrepeatable tokenings, from any ‘this’ that is a stone. That much they have in common, that is a *classification* of their contents. (Using ‘≠’ to indicate mere difference or distinguishability of content, this is the fact that /this/<sub>j</sub> ≠ /this/<sub>i</sub> and /this/<sub>k</sub> ≠ /this/<sub>i</sub>. Both are of the kind of the kind “≠/this/<sub>i</sub>.”) Merely to distinguish instances of immediacy from one another, to see them as different instances of one kind of authority, is already in a weak sense implicitly to classify, compare, and characterize them.

Still, this is a pretty minimal sort of classification: each episode is what it is, and not another. (As Hegel says it gets classified only as a “not-this”—for some other tokening of ‘this’.<sup>19</sup>) The degenerate character of the universals we can see as implicitly brought into play in this way is a consequence of the weakness of the relation of mere difference. But realizing this is just the first step.

For besides “mere or indifferent” difference, Hegel claims that a stronger, exclusive sense of ‘different’ must also implicitly be in play in any conception of sense-experiences as determinately contentful, even according to the severely restricted conception of sense certainty. For the contents day and night are not just *different*. The *exclude* one another: the applicability of one rules out the applicability of the other. Hegel says that the experience of one *cancels* or *opposes* the experience of the other. This is to say that experiences can appear as *incompatible*, in the sense that their contents *cannot* both simultaneously have the authority of immediacy—they *ought* not be endorsed in a single act. Since the authority of immediacy can be invested in incompatible contents, it can contradict itself: authorize materially *incompatible* commitments, commitments that undercut or cancel each other out. Hegel says of one such example:

Both truths have the same authentication [Beglaubigung = warrant, credentials], viz. the immediacy of seeing, and the certainty and assurance that both have about their knowing; but the one truth vanishes [verschwindet] in the other. [M101]

Now if the authority of immediacy simply contradicts itself, then it is no authority at all. In treating immediacy as conferring some sort of credibility or right to endorse, we are implicitly distinguishing between the *kind* of authority, and the *contents* of its instances. We are, in effect treating the incompatibility as a feature of the *contents* in which the authority of immediacy is invested. The content that I merely indicate at one time *we* might express (using the least committal feature-placing language) by saying “It is night,” is not only different from but

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<sup>19</sup> §96.



incompatible with the content I might similarly indicate at another time, which we could express as “It is day.” (It would beg the question against sense certainty to insist that the consciousness involved must apply these concepts. The idea is that *we* use those concepts just to keep track of the rich nonconceptual content that the consciousness in question, according to the conception of sense-certainty, merely points out, entertains, or contemplates.) To recognize any sort of content here at all is to acknowledge that two such contents can contradict (strongly contrast with) one another.

This relation of incompatibility, which Hegel often talks about using the term ‘entgegensetzen’,<sup>20</sup> (he also uses “ausschließen”) is stronger than mere difference, and it induces a correspondingly richer sort of universal. We might use ‘#’ to indicate the notion of incompatibility, and so express the fact that a ‘this’ (or ‘now’) that is night (that is, a content that could be picked out by a tokening of ‘this’ produced at night) “vanishes” into one that is day:  $\text{this}_i \# \text{this}_m$ . Incompatibility of contents in this sense is by no means as promiscuous a relation as mere difference among contents. For instance, it need not be the case that  $\text{this}_i \# \text{this}_i$ —for trees can appear at night or in the day. The universal “ $\#/\text{this}_m$ ”, which Hegel calls “not day...a negative in general,”<sup>21</sup> is a genuine universal, under which  $\text{this}_i$ , but not  $\text{this}_i$  or  $\text{this}_j$  falls. In fact, for many purposes we can represent the repeatable content of an experience or claim by the set of experiences or claims that are incompatible with it. The contents of commitments are determinate insofar as the class of other commitments they exclude or are incompatible with differ (merely differ) from one another.

The process whereby one certainty (commitment) “vanishes in another,” that is, has the authority it possesses in virtue of the immediacy of its origin (its having been noninferentially elicited by receptive sensory processes) undercut by the advent of another certainty with credentials of exactly the same kind but whose content is not mere *different* (distinguishable) but *contrary*, is a process of *experience* [Erfahrung] in the sense that Hegel gives to that expression in his *Introduction*. This is a much richer sense of ‘experience’ than the notion of sense

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<sup>20</sup> For instance in §98.

<sup>21</sup> §98.

experience that lies at the heart of the conception of sense certainty. As Hegel will argue in the *Perception* chapter, it opens the way for the acknowledgement of *error*.

The first of the two good arguments I am taking Hegel to be making in *Sense Certainty* is that the possibility of such an experience of the vanishing of one immediate certainty in another contrary one shows that sense certainty already implicitly acknowledges what it explicitly denies: the presence of a *universal* element in its conception of the authority of *immediacy*. What is picked out by a barely referring /this/<sub>n</sub> that is a raining can be seen to be *like* what is picked out by a barely referring /this/<sub>o</sub> that is a snowing in that both of them are incompatible with (rule out, exclude, would vanish in, cannot be combined in a single act with) a /this/<sub>p</sub> that is fine, but *not* with a /this/<sub>m</sub> that is day or a /this/<sub>l</sub> that is night (though these exclude one another). Patterns of incompatibility and compatibility that can be shared by different acts of sensory awareness group them into kinds exhibiting repeatable contents that are determinate in a sense stronger than that induced by their mere distinguishability. Insisting that the cognitive “richness” of acts of sensory awareness requires acknowledging them as determinately contentful in at least this contrastive sense rules out a particular way of thinking about their contents as immediate. It rules out their being immediate in the sense of being merely *particular*, as involving no *generality*, no awareness of *universals*, and so no even implicit *classification*, *comparison*, or *characterizing*.

A second line of thought entangled with this one throughout *Sense Certainty*, which comes to be the central focus in the third movement of the section [§§103-8]. The issue it addresses is what is required for a dateable, intrinsically unrepeatable act or event—a unique occurrence—to be associated with a content that can be “held onto” or “preserved” after the expiration of the act itself, so as to be available for comparison with the contents of other such acts. The lesson of the second good argument is that deictic or demonstrative expressions do not form an autonomous stratum of the language—a language game one could play though one played no other—and would not even if what was demonstrated had the shape of facts or judgeable contents. Deictic tokenings as such are unrepeatable in the sense of being unique, dateable occurrences. But to be cognitively significant, what they point out, notice, or register must be repeatably available, for instance to appear in the premise of inferences, embedded as the antecedent of a conditional used to draw hypothetical consequences, and embedded inside a negation so that its denial can at least

be contemplated. Demonstratives have the potential to make a cognitive difference, to do some cognitive work, only insofar as they can be picked up by other expressions, typically pronouns, which do not function demonstratively. Deixis presupposes anaphora. When I say that this lesson is not a philosophical commonplace in the way the first is, I mean that the philosophers who have seen in what is expressed by demonstratives a crucial nonconceptual basis for our capacity to make conceptually articulated claims about the empirical world have not typically emphasized or looked closely at the anaphoric mechanisms by which what uses of demonstratives make available to knowing subjects is taken up into the conceptual realm. This is a lesson we by and large still need to learn from Hegel.

Putting the point another way, if we are to succeed in treating the unrepeatable (not merely particular, but unique as an occurrence) *act* of sensing as the source of epistemic authority, it must be possible to treat that authority as invested in a content in a way that is *not* undercut by the fact that the *same* sort of authority may in a *different*, subsequent act be invested in an incompatible content. To do that, we have to be able to focus on *that* content, the one that the first act entitles us to endorse, independently of what contents may be introduced or validated by other acts. The *act* as such is intrinsically *unrepeatable*. But unless its *content* is in some sense *repeatable*, we cannot see the act as introducing or endorsing a *content* at all. The challenge is to see what is presupposed in making an act/content distinction of this sort. The conclusion will be that there is no way to make sense of this distinction if we just look at the single act, independently of its relations to other acts. (An *anti-atomist* conclusion.) The other acts we must consider, however, are not acts with the same kind of authority but *different* (even *incompatible*) contents, as was the case with the argument against immediacy as pure particularity. They are other acts with the *same* content, and with an authority that is *inherited* from the authority of the immediacy of the original act. The later act will not be immediate in the same sense as the original one, but will look to its immediacy as the source of its second-hand authority. Altogether these considerations will rule out thinking of the *content* as *immediate* in the sense of being *unrepeatable* in the way the uniquely occurring *act* (the bearer of the content) is.

Hegel introduces the idea that the evanescence of the ‘now’ (equally the ‘this’) raises problems for the conception of immediacy of content already in the first movement of experience expounded under the heading of ‘sense certainty’ (and is then repeated in the second). The content indicated by phenomenal consciousness—which from our phenomenological perspective we can pick out by attributing a tokening of ‘Now’—spontaneously changes to an incompatible content, and then to yet another incompatible with it. The strategy explored in third movement is to rescue an understanding of the authority of immediacy by showing how the content introduced in an evanescent act can be “fixed” or “held fast” by another sort of act, a “pointing-out” of the first that preserves it by making it’s content repeatable.<sup>22</sup> So we need to think about the distinction and relation between two sorts of acts, one essentially evanescent, which might be made explicit by a tokening of ‘now’ (or ‘this’), and the other which points to the first, inheriting its content and authority from it.

Here it is worth looking a bit more closely at how Hegel tells this story. At the outset

I point out the Now, and **it** is asserted as the truth. I point **it** out, however, as something that has been, or as something that has been superseded [etwas aufgehobene]; I set aside the first truth.<sup>23</sup>

For that act has vanished, perhaps to be replaced by another with an incompatible content and an equal claim to endorsement. But we ignore its replacement and think just about the original claim.

I now assert as the second truth that **it** *has been*, that **it** is superseded.<sup>24</sup>

This, Hegel says, is a kind of negation of the first claim. (But notice that it is a very different sort of negation of a /now/<sub>q</sub> that is day from that constituted by a subsequent /now/<sub>r</sub> that is night.) Next

But what has been *is not*; I set aside the second truth, **its** *having been*, **its** supersession, and thereby negate the negation of the ‘Now’, and thus return to the first assertion, that the ‘Now’ *is*.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> thus for instance “festhalte”, “Bleibende”, “aufgezeigte” in §108.

<sup>23</sup> § 107.

<sup>24</sup> § 107.

<sup>25</sup> § 107.

So at the second stage, it is apparent that what is true is that the immediate is not. It only has been. The past, which is the truth of the future, the only reality it has, is a negation of the present. But this negation is in turn negated. The original unrepeatable event was authoritative precisely as the sort of thing that has been and has being *as* vanished. It is *now* taken to be and indicated as something whose authority resides in being an unrepeatable event. Its authority, properly understood, thus involves mediation, relation, contrast, and comparison, as the negation of the negation of immediate unrepeatable being. It has significance for now precisely by *not* being now. To treat the authority as consisting and residing in the unrepeatable event, one must *recollect* it. Recollection [Erinnerung] refers to something that is no longer, *as* something that is no longer. The authority it has now depends on this reference to what no longer exists, because of what it was when it simply existed. It is by the sacrifice of its immediacy, by its relation to a future that negates its negation as past, that the immediate acquires a significance.

This is quite dark. I interpret it as follows. The question is how a 'now', which is unrepeatable and unenduring in the sense that any other tokening of that type will have a different content, can nonetheless be understood as investing its authority in a determinate content. The passing away of the moment during which alone one can immediately indicate the content meant does seem to negate the possibility of investing such authority in a determinate content. But it does so only if the only tools we have available to invoke that authority are repeatable token-reflexive *types*, such as 'now' itself (or 'this' or 'I'), on the one hand, and unrepeatable *tokenings* of those types, on the other hand. What is needed is another sort of meaning entirely, one whose content is *recollected* from a tokening of such a type. What is required is some expression such as '*then*', which will inherit the content and authority of the original demonstrative. Demonstratives can only sensibly be used when there are anaphoric pronouns available to pick them up and use them, and so give their epistemic authority some significance for the rest of thought.

Notice for instance the emphasized '**it**'s in the passages cited above in which Hegel is "holding fast to the Now pointed out". 'Then' can function just like 'it', as a pronoun picking up its reference from its anaphoric antecedent. Such '*then*'s are repeatable and reusable. Each tokening of "now" I utter indicates something different, but I can use many different 'then's to indicate whatever it is that that one "now" indicated. It is the possibility of recollection later by such an

expression that makes an utterance of 'now' or 'this' a move in a language game, and not just a noise (*flatus vocii*) or an ejaculation like 'ouch'. The immediate in the sense of the unrepeatable requires this mediation in the sense of relation to other tokenings as (content-) repetitions of it for it to have any cognitive significance or content—even one incompatible with what would be expressed by later tokenings of the same type. Any such tokening can, accordingly, only be understood as investing a content with the authority of immediacy if it is seen as an element (Hegel says “moment”) in a larger, temporally extended, whole comprising also acts of different types.<sup>26</sup>

The resulting understanding is of the Now, and hence immediacy in general as thoroughly mediated, in the sense that the authority of any immediate sensory episode depends on its being situated in a larger relational structure containing elements that are not immediate in the same sense. For being preservable or recollectable in the anaphoric way, we now realize, is the being of the Now, an essential presupposition of the possibility of immediacy conferring epistemic authority on a determinate content. The possibility of "holding fast" to the Now (in fact anaphorically), making it into something *repeatable* while preserving its selfsame content, by contrast to the type <now>, which though repeatable does not preserve the content of a single tokening or /now/, is essential to the notion of immediacy investing a particular content with its authority:

The 'Now' and the pointing out of the 'Now' are thus so constituted that neither the one nor the other is something immediate and simple, but a movement which contains various moments.<sup>27</sup>

This account presents a crucial fact about the use of demonstratives and similar indexical expressions in contributing to empirical knowledge. *Deixis presupposes anaphora*. It is a fact that is too often overlooked by contemporary theorists of demonstratives, who are prone to

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<sup>26</sup> For future reference, it should be registered that this structure could be invoked by talk of the future, viewing the present as past, and thereby making the present into something. We'll see further along, in the discussion of *Reason*, that for Hegel future interpretations quite generally determine what our acts are in themselves. It is this open-ended potential for interpretation they show to be something *for* future consciousness that is what we mean by the in-itself. This is just the doctrine of the historical significance of the distinction between noumena, reality, or what is in itself, on the one hand, and its phenomenal appearance, what it is for consciousness on the other, that was announced in the *Introduction*.

<sup>27</sup> [M107]

suppose that an autonomous language or fragment thereof might consist entirely of demonstrative expressions.

If one focuses just on the immediacy of contact that is genuinely involved in a particular use of a demonstrative expression such as 'this', it is easy to forget that what makes such immediate contact have a potential significance for *knowledge*, for instance what makes the content it raises to salience available for use as a premise in *inference*, to draw a conclusion or learn something from it that one could remember and use again, is the possibility of picking up that content and making it repeatable, by treating it as initiating an anaphoric chain: "This chalk is white, it is also cylindrical, and if it were to be rubbed on the board, it would make a mark. (This is anticipating our story a bit, since inferential articulation as an essential element of cognitive significance will not be put into play by Hegel until his discussion in *Perception*). The chain 'This chalk'...'it'...'it'...'it' is a repeatability structure that makes the content of the original demonstration repeatably available, just as though we had christened the chalk originally with a proper name, say 'Charlie', and used other tokenings of that repeatable type to make the reference. The use of demonstrative expressions presupposes the use of nondemonstrative expressions, in particular anaphoric ones. In this sense, then, anaphora (the relation between a pronoun and its antecedent) is more fundamental than, prior in the order of explanation to, deixis (the use of demonstratives): there can be an autonomous set of linguistic practices (ones one could engage in though one engaged in no others) that exhibit anaphoric reference but not deictic reference (though it would not be an *empirical* language), while there could not be an autonomous set of linguistic practices that exhibit deictic reference but not anaphoric reference.<sup>28</sup>

The second good argument I am taking Hegel to be making in *Sense Certainty*, then, is that the possibility of determinately contentful sensory awareness implicitly requires the presence of something that makes the content of such acts *recollectibly repeatable*, in order to make sense of the authority of immediacy. What is required is another sort of act, one that is *not* an act of immediate sensory awareness, but is rather one that has its content and credibility or authority indirectly, by inheritance from such an act of immediate sensory awareness. Immediacy of content in the sense of the unrepeatability of that content as a unique occurrence is accordingly

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<sup>28</sup> I elaborate this point (without reference to Hegel) in Chapter Seven of *Making It Explicit*.

ruled out, as incompatible with the authority of immediacy being invested in determinate contents. We already saw that immediacy of content in the sense of particularity of that content is also ruled out by the demand that content be determinate in a relatively weak sense.

The conception of empirical knowledge that Hegel calls “sense certainty” mistakenly tries to understand the role of immediacy of origin—the immediacy of the act of endorsing a content—in terms of various conceptions of immediacy of content—the immediacy of what is endorsed. Immediacy is a category of independence, in the normative sense of authority without correlative responsibility. *Sense Certainty* dismisses two senses in which one might take sensory content to be immediate. Content immediacy as particularity is the denial of contrastive repeatability, or the involvement of universals or generality in any form. This means that possession (or grasp) of some sensory content is independent of any relation to other acts with contents that are similar in some respect, or that have incompatible contents—which induce respects of similarity among contents, as it were, horizontally. The idea is that classifying or characterizing a particular content by bringing it under a universal involves comparing it with others, which accordingly have a certain sort of reciprocal authority over the content of the original particular. That the content of one act should in this way be responsible to the contents of other acts—so that what it is depends on what they are—is what this sort of content immediacy rules out. It turns out that content cannot be immediate in this sense and still be determinate in a minimal sense. Content immediacy as temporal unrepeatability is the denial of recollective repeatability. This means that possession (or grasp) of some sensory content is independent of any relation to other acts with the very same content (not just in some respects, but in all respects). But apart from their as it were vertical relation to other acts that inherit their content and authority from acts of immediate sensory awareness, the contents of those acts are as evanescent as the acts themselves. So no determinate content can be immediate in this sense either.

I began my discussion of *Sense Certainty* by urging that Hegel fills in Kant’s notion of immediacy by analyzing his intuition/concept distinction as conflating three distinctions that are actually orthogonal to one another: receptivity vs. spontaneity of episodes, particularity vs. generality of what is represented, and unrepeatability (token-credibility) vs. repeatability (type-credibility) of representings. I then argued that we can acquit Hegel of commitment to the Bad



Argument if we disentangle two good lines of thought that are not sufficiently clearly separated in his discussion of them. Both start with the observation that the epistemic authority of sensory episodes that are immediate (noninferential) in their provenance is a *kind* of authority. It is a kind of authority that, first, can be invested in *different*, even *incompatible* contents. And it is a kind of authority that, second, can be inherited anaphorically *from* one unrepeatable demonstrative or indexical (tokening-reflexive) episode *by* others that have the *same* content, but are *not* themselves immediate in their origin as the originating episode was. The epistemic authority conferred by sensuous immediacy of origin is genuine and important. But it is in principle intelligible only in a larger context that involves both generality and anaphoric repeatability structures relating immediately authoritative episodes to ones that inherit that authority in a way that is *not* immediate. This latter recollective structure picks up on a theme from Hegel's *Introduction*, and foreshadows the structure that will be attributed to agency in the *Reason* chapter. The former point is already fully present in Kant, who treats judgments involving both intuitions and concepts as the minimal units of awareness or experience, and intuitions without concepts as blind.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that the overall structure Hegel discerns in this chapter is *also* already foreshadowed in Kant. For it can be seen as a development of the structure of transcendental syntheses culminating in experience that Kant offers in the A edition deduction of the categories in the first Critique.<sup>29</sup> To yield anything recognizable as experience, he says, *apprehension in intuition* must be capable of *reproduction in imagination*, and these reproductions must then be suitable for *recognition in a concept*. To be cognitively significant, the sort of pointing-out that we would express explicitly by the use of demonstratives must be capable of being picked up and reproduced (preserved) by an act of the sort we would express explicitly by the use of anaphorically dependent pronouns. To amount to anything recognizable as even minimally determinate contents, the repeatables so constituted must then be capable of being classified under various distinguishable and contrasting kinds or universals. The two senses in which we are to conclude that the contents of our sensory experiences can not be construed as immediate then correspond to denying that in order to apprehend them we must be able to reproduce or to recognize them. The denial of that is just what I have been interpreting Hegel as arguing in *Sense Certainty*.

The overall lesson of the Sense Certainty chapter is that immediacy can be cognitively significant only when embedded in a structure of mediation. I have argued that to understand this lesson properly, we must distinguish three orthogonal dimensions of immediacy,

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<sup>29</sup> A98-106.

corresponding to three roles Kant's notion of intuition plays in contrast to and concert with his notion of concept. Immediacy of origin is a matter of the act sensing being immediate in that it is noninferentially elicited as the result of the passive exercise of reliable differential responsive dispositions. The structure of mediation such acts must be situated in to be cognitively significant is the necessary condition of their having semantic content. That structure in turn, I argued, comprises two dimensions along which immediate intuition contrasts with mediating concepts. One is the contrast of particularity with generality syntactically marked by the difference between singular terms and predicates. The other is that between token-reflexives and type-repeatable expressions. The first points to the implicit involvement of sense universals in noninferentially acquired knowledge. The second points to the implicit dependence of demonstratives on anaphoric repeatability. The first lesson is followed out in the subsequent *Perception* chapter. Anaphoric recollective repeatability turns out to be the key to the final movement of the whole *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*.

[8286 words in large type.]