

## Week 13 Notes: Conclusion II

### 1. *Absolute Knowing:*

We are to understand these passages in terms of the *process of experience*. It has two aspects or phases:

- a) The first we now understand not only as the *experience of error*, as in the *Introduction*, but as the full *cycle of perception, thought, and action* (followed by perception of the result of the action, initiating a new cycle).
- b) The second is the process of *recollection*, retrospectively rationally reconstructing that experience in an expressively progressive way, making it visible as the gradual, inexorable emergence into explicitness of what shows up as having been all along implicit. This is at once the reality responsible for its appearances and the *Absicht* implicit in the *Tat*.
- c) What emerges from this recollection is both in one sense the *product* of the two-phase process (prospective and retrospective, lived forward and understood backward), present only at the (always provisional) *end* of the process, and in another sense is revealed as the *presupposition* of the process, present already at the *beginning* of the process.

It is in the one sense *made* and in the other *found*.

It is the *in-itself* whose process of becoming *for consciousness* is experience with recollection. What emerges from this process after each two-stage cycle of experience and recollection is both what the objective world is *in itself* and what the subjective self is *in itself*. The revelation of the one is always also the revelation of the other.

It is the determination of subjective conceptual contents as the revelation of what *really* follows from what and is incompatible with what.

That determination (a making that is a finding) of conceptual contents incorporates contingent immediacy in the necessary (normative) universal conceptual (thoroughly mediated) form.

[798] "...the Notion [*Begriff*], has become the element of existence, or has become the *form of objectivity* for consciousness."

This is conceptual realism: that the subjective and objective poles of the intentional nexus are equally conceptually articulated.

[799] "**The content is**...the very **movement** just spoken of; for **the content is Spirit that traverses its own self** and does so *for itself* as Spirit by the fact that it has the 'shape' of the Notion in its objectivity."

“Spirit traversing itself,” (also “rehearsing the moments”) is Spirit going through the cycle of perception-thought-action and the perception of the results of action, which is the first, prospective, destructive phase of the experience of error and failure, and then the second, recollective-reconstructive, retrospective constructive phase of experience. This movement is the *determination* of the content, in the sense both of a *making* of it and of a *finding* of it.

[802] “For *experience* is just this, that the **content—which is Spirit—is in itself substance**, and therefore an *object of consciousness*. But this substance which is Spirit is the **process** in which **Spirit becomes what it is in itself**; and it is only as this process of reflecting itself into itself that it is in itself truly Spirit. It is in itself the **movement** which is cognition—**the transforming of that in-itself into that which is for itself, of Substance into Subject, of the object of consciousness into an object of self-consciousness**, i.e. into an object that is just as much superseded, or into **the Notion**.”

The two-phase process of experience is both the determination of conceptual content as found cognitively and as made in action, and the actualization of the subject through the determination of the *Absicht* implicit in its *Tat*. This is “Spirit becoming what it is in itself.” The recollective phase is “this process of reflecting itself into itself.” That is the form of self-consciousness of itself as the “movement of cognition” and action. It is the grasping of substance, including its immediacy as the aspect of opacity to cognition and recalcitrance to action, as in itself determinately conceptually articulated, hence in itself what it comes to be *for consciousness*. In knowing in and acting on the substantial objective world, consciousness as recollectively self-conscious finds only facts that are in the determinately contentful conceptual shape native to its own thoughts.

[804] “Spirit, however, has shown itself to us to be neither merely the *withdrawal* of self-consciousness into its pure inwardness, nor the mere *submergence* of self-consciousness into substance...but Spirit is this **movement** of the Self which empties itself of itself and sinks itself into its substance, and also, as Subject, has gone out of that substance into itself, **making the substance into an object and a content at the same time as it cancels this difference between objectivity and content**.”

“Cancelling the difference between objectivity and content” is conceptual realism. In addition, we have learned about the “movement” that is experience, and its role in “*making* the substance into an object and a content.”

[805] “In this knowing, then, Spirit has concluded the movement in which it has shaped itself, in so far as this shaping was burdened with **the difference of consciousness** [i.e. of the latter from its object], a difference now overcome.

The **content**, in accordance with the **freedom** of its being, is **the self-alienating Self**, or the immediate unity of self-knowledge.

**The pure movement of this alienation, considered in connection with the content, constitutes the necessity of the content.**

**The distinct content, as determinate, is in relation, is not 'in itself'; it is its own restless process of superseding itself, or negativity;**

**therefore, negativity or diversity, like free being, is also the Self; and in this self-like form in which existence is immediately thought, the content is the Notion.”**

The difference that consciousness essentially involves, between what things are in themselves and what they are for it, as well as the corresponding difference that agency necessarily involves, have now shown themselves to be aspects of a relational whole that also includes the *identity* of determinate contents between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves, both on the side of cognition and on the side of action (the identity of *Absicht* that ties together *Vorsatz* and *Tat*).

Determinate conceptual content is now to be understood not atomistically, but in terms of the dual-phased *process* of experience, in virtue of which the relations (involving both moments of identity of content and diversity of form—alethic and deontic) between contents (including those between its objective and subjective forms) are to be understood.

Material incompatibility, when acknowledged by the subject, is the motor of this experiential process and it is what articulates the determinate conceptual contents recovered by the recollective phase of experience.

Experiential activity is both the actualization of the (now adequately self-conscious) self or subject and the determination of the conceptual contents alike of thoughts and facts.

The *Begriff* is the whole constellation of commitments (cognitive and practical) and their objects (what they show themselves to be responsible to) as evolving in the dual-phase process of experience.

[805] “...the form of the Notion...unites the objective form of Truth and of the knowing Self in an immediate unity. ...[T]he pure Notion and its onward movement, depends solely on its pure determinateness.”

The form of the *Begriff* is two-fold: objective alethic and subjective deontic. Its movement is the movement of determination of conceptual content, both making it determinate and finding determinate contents as always already implicit.

[807] “Yet this externalization is still incomplete; it expresses the connection of its self-certainty with the object which, just because it is thus connected, has not yet won its complete freedom. The self-knowing Spirit knows not only itself but also the negative of itself, or its limit: **to know one's limit is to know how to sacrifice oneself**. This sacrifice is the externalization in which **Spirit displays the process of its becoming Spirit in the form of free contingent happening**, intuiting its pure Self as Time outside of it, and equally its Being as Space. This last becoming of Spirit, Nature, is its living immediate Becoming; **Nature, the externalized Spirit**, is in its existence nothing but this eternal externalization of its continuing existence and **the movement which reinstates the Subject**.”

The limit or boundary of a self-conscious subject or self is something it *makes* for itself. It does that by *identifying* with some cognitive and practical commitments, investing its authority in them, making itself responsible for them. It does that by *sacrificing* other commitments, giving up other claims to authority, acknowledging the authority of contingent, objective facts. It does that as part of the process of experience, which it now understands to be *both* the process of

actualizing itself and the process of determining conceptual contents. That process of experience is its doing, and it is “giving contingency the form of necessity,” that is, *normative, conceptual* form. This is incorporating contingent objective immediacy into conceptual content as part of the process of determining that content. This is the “reinstating of the Subject.”

[808] “History, is a conscious, self-mediating process—Spirit emptied out into Time. its fulfilment consists in perfectly knowing what it is, in knowing its substance, this knowing is its withdrawal into itself in which it abandons its outer existence and gives its existential shape over to **recollection**.”

The recollective phase of the experiential process is what turns a *past* into a *history*: something *comprehended*, in the sense of put into an expressively progressive coming to determinate conceptual explicitness (*for consciousness*) of what shows up retrospectively as having been all along implicit (*in itself*).

“the new existence, a new world and a new shape of Spirit...”

“[R]ecollection, the inwardizing, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance.”

Recollection is the aspect of the experiential process in which both substance and self become explicitly, *for consciousness*, what they turn out (according to the recollective story) to have been all along *in themselves* (implicitly).

“The goal, Absolute Knowing, or Spirit that knows itself as Spirit, has for its path the **recollection** of the Spirits as they are in themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their realm. Their preservation, regarded from the side of their free existence appearing in the form of contingency, is History; but regarded from the side of their [philosophically] comprehended organization, it is the Science of Knowing in the sphere of appearance: the two together, comprehended History, form alike the inwardizing and the Calvary of absolute Spirit, the actuality, truth, and certainty of his throne, without which he would be lifeless and alone.”

## 2. The Preface:

### 1. Overview:

Hegel is recoiling from a broadly *Cartesian* view. (Such characterization will surprise no-one.) The particular aspect of Descartes’s view that he is recoiling from is its *dualism*. (Again, no surprise.) But it is not his *ontological* dualism that matters most to Hegel. It is what we might call the *semantic* dualism that underwrites and articulates his ontological (and epistemic) dualism. This is a picture of the intentional nexus, which includes and relates knowers-and-agents (subjects, selves), on the one hand, and an objective world on the other. On the one side are representers and their representings. On the other are things that can only be represented. The key feature of Descartes’s conception that orients Hegel is that he takes it that the two poles of this intentional nexus can be understood independently of one another. The

intentional nexus is to be understood as a way of bolting together these two antecedently and independently intelligible components. It is because the mind could be and be understood to be what it is quite apart from any relation between its representings and anything represented that *skepticism* looms, not only as an epistemic problem but as a threat to the intelligibility of knowledge as successful representation.

We have come to appreciate—though this is a surprisingly late-coming appreciation—that the idea that the mind, its thoughts, and all their contents, could be what they are independently of any relation to what those contentful thoughts are *about*, is a radical mistake. What is often called “semantic externalism” teaches that we must understand minds as capable of grasping “wide contents”: contents that could not be what they are unless the things they represent are as they are in at least some respects. The most nuanced version of this thought is that of John McDowell. He does not use the term “semantic externalism” because that term builds in a contrast between the semantically external and a supposed semantic *internal*, a notion of “narrow content” that contrasts with “wide content.” That terminology is inapt and inept if the only sort of intentional content that is intelligible as such is “wide” or “externalist” content. McDowell argues that a notion of mental states or episodes that could have just the contents they do regardless of how it is with things they supposedly represent cannot intelligibly be taken to represent at all. The sort of intentional “pointing beyond themselves” that representings as such do—their specifically representational properties—cannot be understood globally apart from actual relations to the things they represent, to how things are with what they are committed to being thus-and-so. The possibility of local *misrepresentation* and error should not be understood to underwrite the intelligibility of properties conceived of as at once representational and independent of what they represent. The cost of construing the mind as self-contained in the sense that it and all its contentful thoughts could be just what they are regardless of how things are “outside” of it, in the realm of merely represented things, inevitably renders the notion of representation and the possibility of successful representation unintelligible.

We have begun to get used to the idea that for this reason, the Cartesian semantic dualistic picture of intentional, representational relations being made sense of in terms of antecedently and independently subjective and objective relata cannot be made to work. Hegel wants to insist that the problems with trying to understand the mind as consisting of representings independently of their relation to what is represented are mirrored on the objective side of what is represented. The idea of an objective world as having all the features in virtue of which it is representable (sometimes correctly, sometimes not) is also not intelligible antecedently to and independently of understanding the processes and practices of representing it. This is not to say that the objective world could not *exist* without knowers-and-agents to represent it (or that it did not exist before there were such knowers-and-agents). It is a sense-dependence, not a reference-dependence claim. It is a claim about the dependence of what we *mean* by “objective world” on our understanding of the role it plays in the experience of knowing and acting consciousnesses. His radical lesson is that this side of the Cartesian semantic dualism of representing and represented, no less than the representing pole, must be de-Cartesianized. We must overcome the temptation to think that the objective realm of what is known and acted

on is intelligible as being just what it is independently of consideration of its involvement in processes of knowing and acting, just as we have learned (are learning) to overcome the temptation to think that the subjective realm of knowers and agents is intelligible as being just what it is independently of its relations to the objective realm that are instituted by activities of knowing and acting.

I used to think that a form of this general point best comes into view if one thinks of the world as a world of *facts*—of *Die Welt* as “alles, was der Fall ist.” For *facts* are evidently conceptually structured. They are statable, thinkable. “A fact is a thought that is true,” Frege says, meaning “thought” in the sense of “thinkable”, not a thinking of it. And I contrasted this with a view of the world as a collection of “things” or “objects”—a reistic picture, of the sort whose paradigm we find in Kotarbinski, but which is developed also in model-theoretic ways of thinking about possible worlds. Sellars, too, saw a difference of this kind. But in fact, to think of the world as a world of *things* is already to construe it as fully conceptually structured. For things, too, must be individuated by sortal concepts. Just as facts must be understood in terms of the possibility of *stating* them, objects must be understood in terms of the possibility of *referring* to them. The route to this conclusion from a world-of-objects view might be harder to follow than the route from a world-of-facts view, but this is largely because one way of taking the former path leads through the latter one.

In the *Preface*, Hegel uses the concept of substance [Substanz] to urge this change of view. Objective substance is what the objects of knowledge are in themselves. Subjective substance is what the contents of our thoughts and intentions are in themselves. For the distinction between what things are in themselves and what they are for consciousness applies just as much to the contents of our thoughts and intentions as it does to what those thoughts and intentions answer to representationally for their correctness. The process of experience (including the whole repeating TOTE cycle of perception, thought, action, and the perception of the results of action, and the retrospective recollective rational reconstruction of such cycles) is at once the process of clarifying, determining, and actualizing the contents of our thoughts and intentions and the process of finding out how things actually are, in themselves. On the side of intentions, the *Vorsatz* is what an intention initially is for consciousness. The *Absicht* is what it turns out to be in itself. And it is only by finding out what it represents that a consciousness can advance from what a representing is for it to what it is in itself.

[Next: The two basic claims are conceptual realism and objective idealism. The latter is a reciprocal sense-dependence thesis. What the *Preface* focuses on is an account of *why* that reciprocal sense-dependence thesis holds. It holds because the representational relations of hylomorphic conceptual realism—representings as deontically related forms of content and represented as alethically related forms of content—are instituted by the two-phased process of experience. In particular, the recollective phase shows us what we *mean* by “objectivity” or “what things (and thoughts, including, crucially, intentions) are in themselves.” It is in terms of this process alone that we can understand how we grasp the notion of a determinately contentful

way things are in themselves, and at the same time of our thoughts and intentions as determinately contentful.]

[Then: speculative sense of “identity” in Hegel. As applied to “substance is self” claim.]

Features that emerge in this story about the *Preface*:

The *Preface* (like *Absolute Knowing*: the two bracketing sections of the book) is principally an exposition of what I have been calling “**conceptual idealism**.” This is an *explanation* of both conceptual realism and objective idealism.

Overall theme is the two-phased conception of experience.

Phase 1: the experience of error and failure, in the form of the repeated TOTE cycle of perception, thought, action, and perception of the results of action.

Phase 2: the retrospective *recollection* of that repeated cycle, rationally reconstructing it as an expressively progressive cumulative trajectory by which what emerges at the end as explicit is seen as having been all along implicit.

Emerging themes in articulation of significance of two-phase conception of experience.

Substance.

Of two kinds: objective and subjective, determinately contentful lawfully related states of affairs and determinately contentful thoughts and intentions.

Subject.

This we understand as the subject of *experience*: the experiencing subject, the one who engages in the two-phase the process of experience.

This has the two dimension of:

Movement, process.

Negation (in relation to movement and to self-hood).

Circularity. [18], [29], [33], [36]. The result of the process of recollection is a set of currently endorsed commitments that one takes the process of experience as having been normatively governed by all along, retrospectively rationally reconstructing the process of experience as an expressively progressive revelation of what was implicit, a gradual, cumulative, making explicit of it. Thus the same content is presented as present throughout, as implicit at the beginning and explicit at the end.

Self-movement of content (immanent, not externally driven). [37], [53], [55], [59], [60].

Here key consequence is that the content, which is self-moving, is the “object’s own self.” *It* shows up as the agent, with the subject playing only a complementary role. At this point, substance is revealed as self-like.

Discussion of *Preface* Passages:

“...everything turns on grasping and expressing the True not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*. At the same time it is to be observed that substantiality embraces the universal, or the *immediacy of knowledge* itself, as well as that which is *being* or *immediacy for knowledge*.” [17] [BB: Cf. [18], [25], [32], [37] (“Substance shows itself to be essentially Subject.”), [39] (“The substance is itself essentially the negative, partly as a distinction and determination of the content, and partly as a *simple* [process of] distinguishing, i.e. as self and knowledge in general...”), [54] (“substance is in itself or implicitly Subject”), and [65] (“essentially the True is Subject. As such it is merely the dialectical movement, this course that generates itself, going forth from and returning to, itself.”).]

The “immediacy of knowledge” is what is immediately grasped in knowing, or the dimension along which our thoughts are immediately graspable. This is the conceptual content of thoughts, which is why it is identified with “the universal”.

Being, or “immediacy for knowledge” is the brute, recalcitrant presence of what objectively is: the source of cognitive error and practical failure, but also the contingency that, when incorporated in (given the form of) necessity (=a normative conceptual form), is the source of the *determinateness* of conceptual content.

What we are to understand is how and in what sense substantiality of *both* these sorts is to be understood in terms of the activity of selves or subjects.

This is the two-phase activity whose first phase is the experience of error and failure, but whose second, recollective phase is also the positive determination of content that is the truth-process. This final, encompassing insight about the dependence of the intelligibility of the purest forms of objectivity and subjectivity (their immediacy = substantiality) on the process of experience is what I’ve been calling “conceptual idealism.”

“Further, the living Substance is being which is in truth *Subject*, or what is the same, is in truth actual only in so far as it is the **movement** of positing itself, or is the **mediation of its self-othering** with itself.” [18]

The “movement of positing itself” is the recollective phase of experience, in which what things are in themselves, and what its doings are in themselves (Absicht, not just Vorsatz, which is what the doing is *for* consciousness) emerge. This is the conceptualizing of the otherness of substance (its recalcitrance, as the source of error and failure), taking it back into wholly conceptual form.

“**This Substance is, as Subject, pure, simple negativity**, and is for this very reason **the bifurcation of the simple**; it is the doubling which sets up opposition.

Only **this self-restoring sameness**, or this **reflection in otherness within itself**—not an *original* or *immediate* unity as such—is the True.

**It is the process of its own becoming, the circle that presupposes its end as its goal, having its end also as its beginning; and only by being worked out to its end, is it actual.”** [18]

This last refers to the recollective phase. It is the product at the end of the process of recollection, a set of currently endorsed conceptual contents (either cognitive or practical) that

one then positions at the beginning of the whole process of experience, as what was all along implicit in it, as the reality all those appearances were more-or-less complete and correct appearances *of*, as what those senses were representing or referring to, as the in-itself behind their for-consciousness, the noumena revealed by those phenomena.

**“The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development...**

**For mediation is nothing beyond self-moving selfsameness, or is reflection into self, the moment of the 'I' which is for itself pure negativity or, when reduced to its pure abstraction, *simple becoming*. The 'I', or becoming in general, this mediation, on account of its simple nature, is just immediacy in the process of becoming, and is the immediate itself.”**

[21]

Recollection rationally reconstructs the course of experience as “the essence consummating itself through its development.” This is the “circle that presupposes its end as its goal, having its end also as its beginning,” from [18].

Mediation, the conceptual structure and contentfulness of thought and fact alike, becomes determinate only in “immediacy in the process of becoming.”

**Reason is purposive activity.** [22]

[BB: Here is an explanation of a metaphor that is informing his language:]

Still, in the sense in which Aristotle too defines Nature as purposive activity, purpose is what is immediate and *at rest*, the unmoved which is also *self-moving*, and as such is Subject. Its power to move, taken abstractly, is *being-for-self*, or pure negativity.

a) **The result is the same as the beginning, only because the beginning is the purpose;**

[BB: This *beginning* is, in the image-allegory he is appealing to Aristotle for the fixed end of, what for the Begriff becomes the recollectively rationally reconstructed (RRR) noumenon-referent that is (taken to be) implicit all along and so a ‘purpose’, in relation to the *result*, which is (according to that same RRR) that purpose made explicit.]

in other words, the actual is the same as its Notion only because the immediate, as purpose, contains the self or pure actuality within itself.

b) **The realized purpose**, or the existent actuality, is **movement** and **unfolded becoming**;  
but

c) it is just this **unrest** that is the **self**; and

d) **the self is like that immediacy and simplicity of the beginning because it is the result, that which has returned into itself, the latter being similarly just the self.**

e) And the self is the sameness and simplicity that relates itself to itself. [22]

“Already something thought, the **content** is the property of **substance**; existence [Dasein] has no more to be changed into the form of what is in-itself and implicit [Ansichseins], but **only the implicit—no longer merely something primitive, nor lying hidden within existence, but already present as a recollection—into the form of what is explicit, of what is objective to self** [Fursichseins].” [29]

Substance of both sorts—the immediacy of being and the immediacy of thought—is always already in conceptual shape, is conceptually contentful.

Recollection rationally reconstructs a course of experience as the emergence into explicitness of what is retrospectively revealed as having been all along implicit, as being what the experience was *of* or *about*, what things were in themselves represented by all the different appearances for consciousness.

“But the Life of Spirit is not the life that shrinks from death and keeps itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself in it. **It wins its truth only when, in utter dismemberment, it finds itself.**

It is this power, not as something positive...On the contrary, **Spirit is this power only by looking the negative in the face and tarrying with it.** This **tarrying with the negative** is the magical power that converts it [the negative] into being. This power is identical with what we earlier called **the Subject, which by giving determinateness an existence in its own element supersedes abstract immediacy**, i.e. the immediacy which barely is, and thus is **authentic substance: that being or immediacy whose mediation is not outside of it but which is this mediation itself.**” [32]

Key here is the last: the Subject by its recollective reconstruction transforms abstract immediacy into determinate conceptual content, and so becomes authentic substance (substance genuinely *comprehended*) “being or immediacy whose mediation is not outside of it but which is this mediation itself.” It is immediacy *as* playing the functional role at once of *determining* conceptual content (*finding* what the content implicitly was all along and *making* the appearances more determinate appearances of that) and actualizing the subject.

**“Determinate thoughts have the 'I', the power of the negative, or pure actuality, for the substance and element of their existence,** whereas sensuous determinations have only powerless, abstract immediacy, or being as such. Thoughts become fluid when pure thinking, this inner *immediacy*, recognizes itself as a moment...**by giving up** not only the fixity of the pure concrete, which the 'I' itself is, in contrast with differentiated content, but also **the fixity of the differentiated moments which, posited in the element of pure thinking, share the unconditioned nature of the 'I'.** Through this movement the pure thoughts become **Notions**, and are only now what they are in truth, self-movements, circles, spiritual essences, which is what their **substance** is.” [33]

The medium of determinate thoughts is the two-phase process of experience, culminating in recollection. The two-phase process of experience is what both makes thoughts determinately contentful and reveals them as such. That is turning them into genuine *Begriffe*, what is comprehended. This is giving substance the form of “spiritual essences,” that is, discursive norms. This process is a “self-movement” of the content because it is driven by the material incompatibilities and consequences that articulate that content, which are what set the normative constraints that issue in the experience of error and failure. They are “circles” in the sense that what is explicitly arrived at at the end of recollection is then posited as having been from the beginning implicit.

“...experience is the name we give to just this movement, in which the immediate, the unexperienced, i.e. the abstract, whether it be of sensuous [but still unsensed] being, or only thought of as simple, becomes alienated from itself and then returns to itself from this alienation,

and is only then revealed for the first time in its actuality and truth, just as it then has become a property of consciousness also.” [36]

This says what the “movement” is that Hegel has been talking about: experience. It is the process whereby what is immediate gets mediated, i.e. shows up in conceptual form *for* consciousness, and through gradually more adequate appearances (as recollected) becomes fully explicit in that conceptual form.

“The disparity which exists in consciousness between the 'I' and the substance which is its object is the distinction between them, the *negative* in general.

**...Now although this negative appears at first as a disparity between the 'I' and its object, it is just as much the disparity of the substance with itself. Thus what seems to happen outside of it, to be an activity directed against it, is really its own doing, and Substance shows itself to be essentially Subject.**

**Being is then absolutely mediated; it is a substantial content which is just as immediately the property of the 'I', it is self-like or the Notion.**

With this the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is concluded.” [37]

To know something falsely means that there is a disparity between knowledge and its Substance. But **this very disparity is the process of distinguishing in general, which is an essential moment [in knowing]. Out of this distinguishing...comes their identity, and this resultant identity is the truth...Disparity, rather, as the negative, the self, is itself still directly present in the True as such.** [39]

This truth therefore includes the negative also, what would be called the false, if it could be regarded as something from which one might abstract. **The evanescent itself must, on the contrary, be regarded as essential, not as something fixed, cut off from the True...**

**Appearance is the arising and passing away that does not itself arise and pass away**, but is in itself, and constitutes actuality and the movement of the life of truth.

**The True is thus a vast Bacchanalian revel, with not a one sober; yet because each member collapses as soon as he drops out, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose.** Judged in the court of this movement, the single shapes of Spirit do not persist any more than determinate thoughts do, but they are as much positive and necessary moments, as they are negative and evanescent.

**In the whole of the movement, seen as a state of repose, what distinguishes itself therein, and gives itself particular existence, is preserved as something that recollects itself**, whose existence is self-knowledge, and whose self-knowledge is just as immediately existence. [47]

Science dare only organize itself by the life of the Notion itself. The **determinateness**, which is taken from the schema and externally attached to an existent thing, is, in Science, **the self-moving soul of the realized content**. The **movement** of a being that **immediately** is, consists partly in **becoming** an **other** than itself, and thus becoming its own immanent **content**; partly in **taking back into itself this unfolding** [of its **content**] or this existence of it, i.e. in making **itself** into a moment, and **simplifying** itself into something **determinate**. In the former movement, **negativity** is the **differentiating** and positing of *existence*; in this **return** into self, it is the becoming of the **determinate simplicity**.

It is in this way that the **content** shows that its **determinateness** is not received from something else, nor externally attached to it, but that it determines itself, and ranges itself as a moment having its own place in the whole. [53]

**The determinateness seems at first to be due entirely to the fact that it is related to an *other*, and its movement seems imposed on it by an alien power; but having its otherness within itself, and being self-moving, is just what is involved in the simplicity of thinking itself; for this simple thinking is the self-moving and self-differentiating thought.** It is its own inwardness, it is the pure Notion. Thus common thought [BB: representational thought] [Verständigkeit] too is a becoming, and, as this becoming, it is *reasonableness* [Vernünftigkeit]. [55]

...in speculative [begreifenden] thinking, as we have already shown, **the negative belongs to the content itself**, and is the *positive*, both as the **immanent movement** and determination of the **content**, and as the whole of this **process**.

Looked at as a result, **what emerges from this process is the determinate negative** which is consequently a positive content as well. [59]

Speculative [begreifendes] thinking behaves in a different way. Since **the Notion is the object's own self, which presents itself as the coming-to-be of the object**, it is not a passive Subject inertly supporting the Accidents; it is, on the contrary, **the self-moving Notion which takes its determinations back into itself**. In this movement the passive Subject itself perishes; **it enters into the differences and the content, and constitutes the determinateness, i.e. the differentiated content and its movement, instead of remaining inertly over against it**. The solid ground which argumentation has in the passive Subject is therefore shaken, and **only this movement itself becomes the object**. [60]

### 3. Features that emerge in this story:

The *Preface* (like *Absolute Knowing*: the two bracketing sections of the book) is principally an exposition of what I have been calling “**conceptual idealism**.” This is an *explanation* of both conceptual realism and objective idealism.

Overall theme is the two-phased conception of experience.

Phase 1: the experience of error and failure, in the form of the repeated TOTE cycle of perception, thought, action, and perception of the results of action.

Phase 2: the retrospective *recollection* of that repeated cycle, rationally reconstructing it as an expressively progressive cumulative trajectory by which what emerges at the end as explicit is seen as having been all along implicit.

Substance.

Of two kinds: objective and subjective, determinately contentful lawfully related states of affairs and determinately contentful thoughts and intentions.

Subject.

This we understand as the subject of *experience*: the experiencing subject, the one who engages in the two-phase the process of experience.

This has the two dimension of:

Movement, process.

Negation (in relation to movement and to self-hood.

Circularity. [18], [29], [33], [36]. The result of the process of recollection is a set of currently endorsed commitments that one takes the process of experience as having been normatively governed by all along, retrospectively rationally reconstruing the process of experience as an expressively progressive revelation of what was implicit, a gradual, cumulative, making explicit of it. Thus the same content is presented as present throughout, as implicit at the beginning and explicit at the end.

Self-movement of content (immanent, not externally driven). [37], [53], [55], [59], [60]. Here key consequence is that the content, which is self-moving, is the “object’s own self.” *It* shows up as the agent, with the subject playing only a complementary role. At this point, substance is revealed as self-like.