

## Handout for Reason I

1. Reason is purposive action. [PG§22]
2. Reason is consciousness's certainty of being all reality. So does idealism express its concept. [Die Vernunft ist die Gewißheit des Bewußtseins, alle Realität zu sein: so spricht der Idealismus ihren Begriff aus.] [PG§233]
3. Since self-consciousness is reason, what had so far been its negative relation to otherness is now converted into a positive relation. Until now it had occupied itself only with its self-sufficiency and its freedom in order to save and preserve itself for itself at the cost of the *world* or its own actuality, both of which appeared to it as the negative of its own essence. However, as reason assured of itself, it has come to be at rest with regard to both of them, and it can sustain them, for it is certain of itself as being reality. That is, it is certain that all actuality is nothing but itself, that its thought itself is immediately actuality, and it is therefore as idealism that it conducts itself in relation to actuality. Since it grasps itself in this way, in its own eyes it is as if the world had only now come to be for it for the first time.

Formerly, it did not understand the world; it desired it and worked on it...it discovers here for the first time the world as *its* newly actual world. In its continuing existence, this world interests it in the way it previously was only interested in the world's disappearance, for that world's *durable existence* comes to be in its eyes its own *truth* and *present moment*, and it is certain that it experiences only itself within it. [PG§232]

4. Action simply translates an initially implicit being into a being that is made explicit...

Consciousness must act merely in order that what it is in itself may become explicit for it...

An individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a reality through action. [PG§401]

5. the true being of man is...his deed; in this the individual is *actual*.... [PG§322]

6. The deed [Tat] is the actual self, [PG§464]

7. The agent "only gets to know...his End, from the deed." [PG§401]

8. The deed does away with the inexpressibility of what is 'meant'. [PG§322]

9. Therefore, feelings of exaltation or lamentation, or repentance are altogether out of place. For all that sort of thing stems from a mind which imagines a content and an in-itself which are different from the original nature of the individual and the actual carrying-out of it in the real world. Whatever it is that the individual does, and whatever happens to him, that he has done himself, and he *is* that himself. He can have only the consciousness of the simple transference of *himself* from the night of possibility into the daylight of the present, from the *abstract in-itself* into the significance of *actual* being. [PG§404]

10. The analysis of this being into intentions and subtleties of that sort, whereby the actual man, i.e. his deed, is to be explained away again in terms of a being that is only 'meant', just as the individual himself even may create for himself special intentions concerning his actuality, all this must be left to the laziness of mere conjecture. [PG§322]

11. From what has now been said, we may learn what to think of a man who, when blamed for his shortcomings, or, it may be, his discreditable acts, appeals to the (professedly) excellent intentions and sentiments of the inner self he distinguishes therefrom. There certainly may be individual cases where the malice of outward circumstances frustrates well-meant designs, and disturbs the execution of the best-laid plans. But in general even here the essential unity between inward and outward is maintained. We are thus justified in saying that a man is what he does; and the lying vanity which consoles itself with the feeling of inward excellence may be confronted with the words of the Gospel: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' That grand saying applies primarily in a moral and religious aspect, but it also holds good in reference to performances in art and science... if a daub of a painter, or a poetaster, soothe themselves by the conceit that their head is full of high ideals, their consolation is a poor one; and if they insist on being judged not by their actual works but by their projects, we may safely reject their pretensions as unfounded and unmeaning. [*Encyclopedia* §140]

12. "Action itself is a content only when, in this determination of simplicity, it is contrasted with its character as a transition and a movement." [396]

13. There are "two aspects possessed by the practical consciousness, intention and deed (what is 'meant' or intended by the deed and the deed itself)," [PG§319]

14. It is the right of the will to recognize as its *action* [Handlung], and to accept *responsibility* for, only those aspects of its *deed* [Tat] which it knew to be presupposed within its end, and which were present in its *purpose* [Vorsatz]—I can be made *accountable* for a deed only if *my will was responsible* for it—the right of knowledge. [RP§117]

15. So far as the action comes into immediate touch with existence, my part in it is to this extent formal, that external existence is also independent of the agent. This externality can pervert his action and bring to light something else than lay in it. Now, though any alteration as such, which is set on foot by the subjects' action, is its deed [Tat], still the subject does not for that reason recognize it as its action [Handlung], but only admits as its own that existence in the deed which lay in its knowledge and will, which was its purpose. Only for that does it hold itself responsible. [Encyclopedia §504]

16. The *heroic* self-consciousness (as in ancient tragedies like that of Oedipus) has not yet progressed from its unalloyed simplicity to reflect on the distinction between *deed* [Tat] and *action* [Handlung], between the external event and the purpose and knowledge of the circumstances, or to analyse the consequences minutely, but accepts responsibility for the deed in its entirety. [RP§118Z]

17. Davidson:

- 1) One and the same event can be described or specified in many ways.
- 2) One important way of identifying or singling out an event is in terms of its *causal consequences*.
- 3) Some, but not all, of the descriptions of an action may be privileged in that they are ones under which it is *intentional*.
- 4) What makes an event, performance, or process an *action*, something *done*, is that it is *intentional* under *some* description.
- 5) What distinguishes some descriptions as ones under which a performance was intentional is their role as conclusions in processes of *practical reasoning*.

18. Hegel's 'Tat' refers to the deed done, with *all* of its accorded descriptions, and that his 'Handlung' is that same deed as the agent's doing, that is, as specifiable by the restricted set of descriptions under which it is intentional.

19. Action has multiple *consequences* in so far as it is translated into external existence; for the latter, by virtue of its context in external necessity, develops in all directions. These consequences, as the *shape* whose *soul* is the *end* to which the action is directed, belong to the action as an integral part of it. But the action, as the end translated into the external world, is at the same time exposed to external forces which attach to it things quite different from what it is for itself, and impel it on into remote and alien consequences. The will thus has the right to *accept responsibility* only for the first set of consequences, since they alone were part of its *purpose* [Vorsatz]. [RP§118]

20. The *deed* posits an alteration to this given existence, and the will is entirely *responsible* [hat schuld] for it in so far as the predicate 'mine' attaches to the existence so altered...But responsibility involves only the wholly external judgment as to whether I have done something or not; and the fact that I am responsible for something does not mean that the thing can be imputed to me. [RP§115 and §115H]

21. Absicht : Vorsatz :: Tat : Handlung

22. Consciousness, therefore, through its experience in which it should have found its truth, has really become a riddle to itself: the consequences of its deed are for it not the deeds themselves. What befalls it is, for it, not the experience of what it is in itself, the transition is not a mere alteration of the form of the same content and essence, presented now as the content and essence, and again as the object or [outwardly] beheld essence of itself. [PG§365]

23. The Sache selbst is only opposed to these moments in so far as they are supposed to be isolated, but as an interfusion of the reality and the individuality it is essentially their unity. It is equally an action and, qua action, pure action in general, hence just as much an action of this particular individual; and this action as still his in antithesis to reality, is a purpose. Equally, it is the transition from this determinateness into the opposite, and, lastly, it is a reality which is explicitly present for consciousness. The Sache selbst thus expresses the spiritual essentiality in which all these moments have lost all validity of their own, and are valid therefore only as universal, and in which the certainty consciousness has of itself is an objective entity, an objective fact for it, an object born of self-consciousness as its own, without ceasing to be a free object in the proper sense. [PG§410]

24. The "distinction that action implies," the "first division [Bruch] in action," is "that between what is purposed and what is accomplished in the realm of existence." [RP§114Z]

25. The simple original nature now splits up into the distinction which action implies. Action is present at first...as End, and hence opposed to a reality already given. The second moment is the movement of the End...hence the idea of the transition itself, or means. The third moment is...the object, which is no longer in the form of an End directly known by the agent to be his own, but as brought out into the light of day and having for him the form of an 'other'. [PG§400]

26. An action as an external event is a complex of connected parts which may be regarded as divided into units *ad infinitum*, and the action may be treated as having touched in the first instance only one of these units. The truth of the single, however, is the universal; and what explicitly gives action its specific character is not an isolated content limited to an external unit, but a universal content, comprising in itself the complex of connected parts. Purpose, as issuing from a thinker, comprises more than the mere unit; essentially it comprises that universal side of the action, i.e. the *intention*. [*Philosophy of Right* §119]

27. The universal quality of the action is the manifold content of the action as such, reduced to the simple form of universality. But the subject, an entity reflected into himself and so particular in correlation with the particularity of his object, has in his end his own particular content, and this content is the soul of the action and determines its character. [*Philosophy of Right* §121]

28. Actuality is touched in the first instance only at one individual point (just as in arson the flame is applied directly only to a small portion of the wood)... [*Philosophy of Right* §119Z]

29. [W]hat the arsonist sets on fire is not the isolated area of wood an inch wide to which he applies the flame, but the universal within it—i.e. the entire house... [*Philosophy of Right* §132Z]

30. “actions, in their external existence, include contingent consequences.” [*Philosophy of Right* §120Z]

31. It is certainly the case that a greater or lesser number of circumstances may intervene in the course of an action. In a case of arson, for example, the fire may not take hold, or conversely, it may spread further than the culprit intended. Nevertheless, no distinction should be made here between good and ill fortune, for in their actions, human beings are necessarily involved in externality. An old proverb rightly says, “The stone belongs to the devil when it leaves the hand that threw it.” By acting, I expose myself to misfortune, which accordingly has a right over me and is an existence of my own volition. [*Philosophy of Right* §119H]

32. How does Hegel understand the difference between the different kinds of what I have been calling ‘descriptions’ or ‘specifications’ of the deed?

- a) It is a distinction of *social perspective*, between the agent, who acknowledges a specifically contentful responsibility, and an audience, who attributes and assesses it.
- b) That difference of social perspective is a *normative* one in a dual sense. What they are perspective on is a normative status: a question of the imputation of a specific *responsibility*. And the perspectives are defined by distinct seats of *authority* concerning the characterization of what the agent is responsible for.
- c) The ultimate determinate *identity* (unity) of the content of the action—what we should understand as common to its inner form and the outer form that translates, actualizes, and expresses it—is the product of a process of reciprocal specific *recognition*, in which the competing complementary socially distinct authorities negotiate and their claims are adjudicated and reconciled.

33. The work is, i.e. it exists for other individualities. [PG§405]

34. The work produced is the reality which consciousness gives itself; it is that in which the individual is explicitly for himself what he is implicitly or in himself, and in such a manner that the consciousness for which the individual becomes explicit in the work is not the particular, but the universal, consciousness. [PG§ 405]

35. Actualization is...a display of what is one's own in the element of universality whereby it becomes, and should become, the affair of everyone. [PG§ 417]

36. The work produced is the reality which consciousness gives itself; it is that in which the individual is explicitly for himself what he is implicitly or in himself, and in such a manner that the consciousness for which the individual becomes explicit in the work is not the particular, but the universal, consciousness. [PG§405]

37. The *Sache selbst* is present as the in-itself or the reflection into itself of consciousness; the supplanting of the moments by one another finds expression there, however, in their being established in consciousness, not as they are in themselves, but only as existing for another consciousness. One of the moments of the content is exposed by it to the light of day and made manifest to others; but consciousness is at the same time reflected back from it into itself and the opposite is equally present within consciousness which retains it for itself as its own. [PG§416]

38. Consciousness experiences both sides as equally essential moments, and in doing so learns what the nature of the *Sache selbst* really is, viz. that it is neither merely something which stands opposed to action in general, and to individual action...Rather is its nature such that its being is the action of the single individual and of all individuals and whose action is

immediately for others, or is a Sache and is such only as the action of each and everyone: the essence which is the essence of all beings, viz. spiritual essence. [PG§418]

39. The existent reality of conscience, however, is one which is a self, an existence which is conscious of itself, the spiritual element of being recognized and acknowledged. The action is thus only the translation of its individual content into the objective element, in which it is universal and recognized, and it is just the fact that it is recognized that makes the deed a reality. The deed is recognized and thereby made real because the existent reality is directly linked with conviction or knowledge; or, in other words, knowing one's purpose is directly the element of existence, is universal recognition. [PG§640]

40. ...the *distinction* and *dichotomy* that lie in action as such and so constitute a stubborn actuality confronting action. [PG§793]

41. The necessity of the action consists in the fact that purpose is related simply to actuality, and this unity is the Notion of action. [PG§408]

42. Action alters nothing and opposes nothing. It is the pure form of a transition from a state of not being seen to one of being seen, and the content which is brought out into the daylight and displayed is nothing else but what this action already is in itself. [PG§396]

43. Action simply translates an initially implicit being into a being that is made explicit....[PG§401]

44. The Notion of this sphere requires that these various aspects be grasped in such a way that the content in them remains the same without any distinction, whether between individuality and being in general,

or between End as against individuality as an original nature,

or between End and the given reality;

or between the means and that reality as an absolute End,

or between the reality brought about by the agent as against the End, or the original nature or the means. [PG§400]

45. This unity is the true work. [PG§409]

46. Consciousness...in doing its work, is aware of the antithesis of doing and being...This *disparity* between Notion and reality, which lies in its essence, is learnt by consciousness from experience in its work; in work, therefore, consciousness becomes what it is in truth...this [is the] fundamental contradiction inherent in work....[PG§406-7]

47. The simple original nature now splits up into the distinction which action implies.

Action is present at first...as End, and hence opposed to a reality already given.

The second moment is the movement of the End...hence the idea of the transition itself, or means.

The third moment is...the object, which is no longer in the form of an End directly known by the agent to be his own, but as brought out into the light of day and having for him the form of an 'other'. [PG§400]

48. Two Conceptions: The relation between the unity and the disparity that agency involves can be understood either as:

- a) Local, contingent, and disjunctive (LCD) or
- b) Global, necessary, and conjunctive (GNC).

49. ...the two aspects possessed by the practical consciousness, intention and deed. [PG§319]

50. what the subject *is*, is the series of its actions, [RP§124]

51. individuality is the cycle of its action, [PG§401]

52. an individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a reality through action. [PG§401]

53. [T]he essential nature of the work...is to be a self-expression of...individuality. [PG§403]