A Pragmatist Semantic Reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*: Lectures from *A Spirit of Trust*

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Part One

Knowing and Representing:
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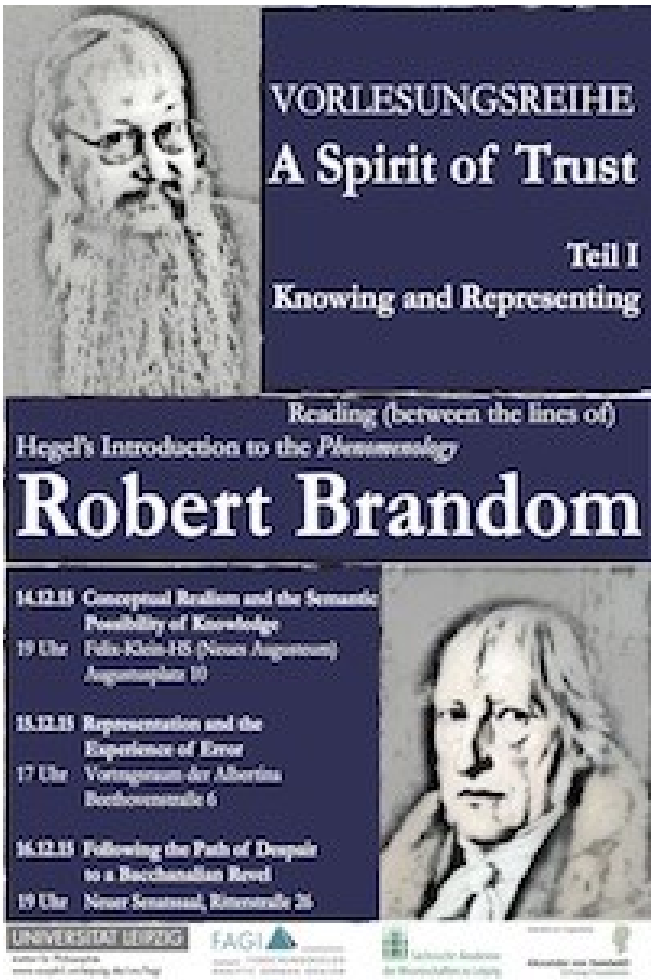

Knowing and Representing: Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's *Introduction*
Lecture 1 Handout:

Conceptual Realism and the Semantic Possibility of Knowledge

1. Knowledge…tends to be regarded as the instrument with which one takes hold of the absolute or as the medium through which one discovers it. [PG §73]
2. [I]f knowledge is the instrument to take hold of the absolute essence, one is immediately reminded that the application of an instrument to a thing does not leave the thing as it is, but brings about a shaping and alteration of it. Or, if knowledge is not an instrument for our activity, but a more or less passive medium through which the light of truth reaches us, then again we do not receive this truth as it is in itself, but as it is in and through this medium. In both cases we employ a means which immediately brings about the opposite of its own end; or, rather, the absurdity lies in our making use of any means at all. [PG§73]
3. [This model]…presupposes notions *about knowledge* as an instrument and a medium, and also the notion that there is a *difference between ourselves and this knowledge;* but above all, it presupposes that the absolute *stands on one side* and that *knowledge,* though it is *on the other side,* for itself and separated from the absolute, is nevertheless something real. Hence it assumes that knowledge may be true despite its presupposition that knowledge is outside the absolute and therewith outside the truth as well. By taking this position, what calls itself the fear of error reveals itself as a fear of the truth. [PG §74]
4. Descartes's *two-stage*, representational story sharply distinguishes between two kinds of things, based on their intrinsic intelligibility. Some things, paradigmatically physical, material, extended things, can by their nature only be known by being *represented*. Other things, the contents of our own minds, are by nature *representings* and are known in another way entirely. They are known *immediately*, not by being represented, by just by being *had*. They are intrinsically intelligible, in that their mere matter-of-factual occurrence counts as knowing or understanding something. Things that are by nature knowable only as represented are not in this sense intrinsically intelligible. Their occurrence does not entail that anyone knows or understands anything.
5. The gulf, the "difference," "separation," the two "sides" of one divide separating appearance and reality, knowing and the known, that he complains about is this gulf of intelligibility. His critical claim is that any theory of this form is doomed to yield skeptical results.
6. Kant shares with Descartes the two-stage representational structure, but does not take over the idea that our relation to our own representations is one of immediate awareness. His view still falls within the range of Hegel's criticisms, however, because he maintains the differential intelligibility of representings and representeds.

7. Kant has a new model of intelligibility: to be intelligible is to have a content articulated by *concepts*.

8. Hegel learned from Kant that the soft underbelly of *epistemological* theories is the *semantics* they implicitly incorporate and depend upon. And he thinks that two-stage representational theories committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representings and what they represent *semantically* preclude genuine knowledge of those representeds.

9. The "Genuine Knowledge Condition" (GKC): Epistemological theories must not be committed to a semantics—in particular, a theory of representation—that rules out as unintelligible the very possibility of knowing how things really are ("genuine" knowledge).

10. The Intelligibility of Error Condition (IEC): Epistemological theories must make intelligible the possibility of error.

11. The Mode of Presentation Condition (MPC): Appearances (senses, representings) must be essentially, and not just accidentally, appearances *of* some purported realities. One does not count as having grasped an appearing unless one grasps it *as* the appearance of something.

12. The Rational Constraint Condition (RCC): Any adequate theory of representation must portray what is represented as exerting *rational* constraint on representings of it. That is, how it is with what is represented must, when the representation relation is not defective, provide a *reason* for the representing to be as it is.

13. Hegel learns from Kant to think about representation in *normative* terms. What is represented exercises a distinctive kind of *authority* over representings. Representings are *responsible* to what they represent. What is represented serves as a kind of *normative standard* for assessments of the *correctness* of what count as representings of it (correct or incorrect) just in virtue of being subject to assessments of their correctness in which those representeds provide the standard.

14. If the RCC must be satisfied in order to satisfy the GKC and the IEC (if the RCC really is a semantically necessary condition on satisfying these epistemological criteria of adequacy)—perhaps because it is a necessary condition of satisfying the MPC, which itself is a necessary semantic condition on satisfying the GKC and the IEC—then those conditions cannot be satisfied by a two-stage representational theory that is committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representing and represented. If not only representings, but the representation relation must be intelligible in a sense that requires their conceptual articulation, then both ends of the representation relation must be conceptually contentful. Only in that way is it intelligible how what is represented can exert rational constraint on representings, in the sense of providing *reasons* for assessments of their correctness or incorrectness.

15. "When we say, and mean, that such-and-such is the case, we—and our meaning—do not stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: this—is—so." [*Philosophical Investigations* §95]

16. Hegel gets his concept of <u>conceptual content</u> from thinking about Kant's theory of judgment, and taking on board his understanding of concepts as functions of judgment. Kant understands judging in *normative* and *pragmatic* terms. On the normative side, he understands judging as *committing* oneself, taking *responsibility* for something, *endorsing* the judged content.

On the pragmatic side, he understands these normative doings in *practical* terms: as a matter of what one is committed or responsible for *doing*. What on is responsible for doing is integrating the endorsed content into a constellation of other commitments that exhibits the distinctive unity of apperception.

17. Hegel's non-psychological conception of the conceptual understands conceptual content as articulated by relations of material incompatibility ("determinate negation") and material consequence ("mediation").

18. Not only thoughts, but objective properties, and so the facts concerning which objects exhibit which properties, *also* stand in relations of material incompatibility and consequence.

19. *Modal* realism, the claim that some states of affairs necessitate others and make others impossible, the acknowledgment of laws of nature, entails *conceptual* realism: the claim that the way the world objectively is is conceptually articulated.

20. Hegel thinks that the idea of <u>determinateness</u> itself is to be understood in terms of standing in relations of incompatibility and consequence to other things that are determinate in the same sense. He endorses Spinoza's principle "Omnis determinatio est negatio."

21. The relations of material incompatibility and consequence in virtue of which objective facts and properties are determinate are *alethic modal* relations: a matter of what is conditionally (im)possible and necessary. The relations of material incompatibility and consequence in virtue of which the commitments undertaken and predicates applied by discursive subjects are determinate are *deontic normative* relations: a matter of what one is conditionally entitled and committed to.

22. What one needs to *do* in order thereby to count as practically taking or treating two objective states of affairs (or properties) as alethically incompatible is to acknowledge that if one finds oneself with both the corresponding commitments, one is deontically obliged to reject or reform at least one of them.

23. In this lecture I have aimed to do six things:

- To demarcate explicitly the exact range of epistemological theories, epitomized by those of Descartes and Kant, that fall within the target-area of Hegel's criticism;
- To set out clearly the objection that he is making to theories of that kind, in a way that does not make it obviously miss its mark;
- To formulate Hegel's criteria of adequacy for a theory that would not be subject to that objection he is implicitly putting in play;
- To lay out the non-psychological conception of the conceptual that will form the backbone of Hegel's response (even though it is not officially introduced in the *Introduction* itself, but must wait for the opening chapters of *Consciousness*);
- To sketch the general outlines of an epistemological and semantic approach based on that conception of the conceptual;
- To indicate how such an approach might satisfy the criteria of adequacy for a theory that is not subject to Hegel's objection.

Knowing and Representing:

Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's *Introduction*

Lecture 1:

Conceptual Realism and the Semantic Possibility of Knowledge

I. Classical Representational Epistemology

1. Hegel opens the first paragraph of the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* by introducing a model of cognitive faculties that he supposes will be most familiar to his readers in its Kantian form:

> Knowledge…tends to be regarded as the instrument with which one takes hold of the absolute or as the medium through which one discovers it.[1]

He thinks no account that has this general shape can meet basic epistemological criteria of adequacy. By showing that, he hopes to make his readers appreciate the need for an alternative model, which he will then supply.

The general character of his complaint against construing cognitive faculties on the instrument-or-medium model seems clear enough. He offers a two-fold summary. That model leads to:

a) the conviction that there is an absurdity in the Concept of even beginning a process of knowledge designed to gain for consciousness that which is in-itself, and

[1] [73]

b) that there is a strict line of demarcation separating knowledge and the absolute.[2]

The first objection alleges that theories of the sort he is addressing must lead to a kind of skepticism: a failure to make intelligible the idea of knowing how things are in themselves. The second complaint points to a diagnosis of the reason for this failure: the model excavates a gulf separating consciousness from what it is consciousness of.

He expands on both these points. He fills in the charge that instrument-or-medium theories lead to skepticism by saying:

> [I]f knowledge is the instrument to take hold of the absolute essence, one is immediately reminded that the application of an instrument to a thing does not leave the thing as it is, but brings about a shaping and alteration of it. Or, if knowledge is not an instrument for our activity, but a more or less passive medium through which the light of truth reaches us, then again we do not receive this truth as it is in itself, but as it is in and through this medium. In both cases we employ a means which immediately brings about the opposite of its own end; or, rather, the absurdity lies in our making use of any means at all.[3]

In either case, there is going to be a distinction between what things are *for* consciousness (the product of the exercise of cognitive faculties) and what they are *in* themselves (the raw materials on which the cognitive faculties are exercised). Something about the character of this distinction, Hegel seems to be arguing, is incompatible with what things are for consciousness according to such a picture counting as *genuine knowledge* of how things really are ("in themselves").

He elaborates the problem diagnosed in passage (b) above. It is that the instrument-or-medium picture

> presupposes notions *about knowledge* as an instrument and a medium, and also the notion that there is a *difference between ourselves and this knowledge;* but above all, it presupposes that the absolute *stands on one side* and that *knowledge,* though it is *on the other side,* for itself and separated from the absolute, is

[2] [73]
[3] [73]

nevertheless something real. Hence it assumes that knowledge may be true despite its presupposition that knowledge is outside the absolute and therewith outside the truth as well. By taking this position, what calls itself the fear of error reveals itself as a fear of the truth.[4]

It is apparently of the essence of the instrument-or-medium model to see such a "difference," "separation," two "sides" of one divide, and to understand the job of cognitive faculties to consist in bridging that divide.

This, he thinks, is just the predicament that calls forth an inquiry into the nature of the transformation effected by the exercise of cognitive faculties. But he claims that it is a mistake to think such an investigation can remove the difficulty.

To be sure, it does seem that an acquaintance with the way the instrument functions might help overcome this difficulty. For then it would seem possible to get the truth in its purity simply by subtracting from the result the instrument's part in that representation of the absolute which we have gained through it. In fact, however, this correction would only lead us back to our point of departure. For [i], if we remove from a thing which has been shaped by an instrument the contribution of that instrument to it, then the thing (in this case the absolute) is for us exactly as it was before this now obviously superfluous effort. Or [ii], were the absolute only to be brought a bit *closer* to us by an instrument, perhaps as a bird is trapped by a lime-twig, without being changed at all, it would surely laugh at this ruse if it were not, in and for itself, already close to us of its own accord. For in this case knowledge itself would be a ruse, pretending through its multifarious effort to do something other than merely bring forth a relation which is immediate and thus effortless. Or [iii], if the examination of knowledge, which we now represent as a medium, makes us acquainted with the law of light- refraction in the medium, it is likewise useless to subtract this factor from the result; for knowledge, through which the truth touches us, is the ray of light itself rather than

[4] [74]

its refraction; and if this be subtracted, we would be left with no more than an indication of pure direction or empty place.[5]

The argument here seems to be that if there is a gulf separating how things are in themselves from how they are for consciousness that requires the operation of cognitive faculties to bridge it or re-unite the two sides, then all that investigation of those faculties can do is re-institute the gulf or separation.

I think we can see in these passages the general shape of an argument. But it is hazy, and it is hard to discern both the exact outlines of the class of views it targets and just how the criticism of them is supposed to work. (The haziness of the argument is due partly to the compression of its exposition, and partly to the metaphorical terms in which it is conducted.) To fill in the details, one would have to specify what criteria of adequacy for epistemological theories Hegel is insisting on, what class of theories he claims cannot satisfy those criteria, what features of those theories are responsible for that failure, and how, exactly, the argument for that conclusion works. In the rest of this lecture, I offer one way of sharpening the argument Hegel is putting on the table here along these four dimensions, and an initial characterization of the shape of the alternative model that Hegel proposes to replace the instrument-or-medium model.

2. To get a better specification of the range of epistemological theories that fall within the target-area of Hegel's argument (metaphorically labeled as the "instrument-or-medium" model), it will help to begin further back. The theories he is addressing are *representational* theories of the relations between appearance and reality. Representation is a distinctively modern concept. Premodern (originally Greek) theories understood the relations between appearance and reality in terms of *resemblance.* Resemblance, paradigmatically one of the relations between a picture and what it pictures, is a matter of sharing properties. A portrait resembles the one portrayed insofar as it shares with its object properties of color and shape, for instance of nose, ear, and chin (perhaps as seen from some perspective). The thought behind the resemblance model is that appearance is veridical insofar as it resembles the reality it is an appearance of. Insofar as it does not resemble that reality, it is a false appearance, an error.

[5] [73]

The rise of modern science made this picture unsustainable. Copernicus discovered that the reality behind the appearance of a stationary Earth and a revolving Sun was a stationary Sun and a rotating Earth. No resemblance, no shared properties there. The relationship between reality and its appearance here has to be understood in a much more complicated way. Galileo produces a massively productive and effective way of conceiving physical reality in which periods of time appear as the lengths of lines and accelerations as the areas of triangles. The model of resemblance is of no help in understanding *this* crucial form of appearance. The notion of shared property that would apply would have to be understood in terms of the relations between this sort of mathematized (geometrized) theoretical appearance and the reality it is an appearance of. There is no antecedently available concept of property in terms of which that relationship could be understood.[6]

Descartes came up with the more abstract metaconcept of representation required to make sense of these scientific achievements—and of his own. The particular case he generalized from to get a new model of the relations between appearance and reality (mind and world) is the relationship he discovered between algebra and geometry. For he discovered how to deploy algebra as a massively productive and effective appearance of what (following Galileo) he still took to be an essentially geometrical reality. Treating something in linear, discursive form, such as "$ax + by = c$" as an appearance of a Euclidean line, and "$x^2 + y^2 = d$" as an appearance of a circle allows one to calculate how many points of intersection they *can* have and what points of intersection they *do* have, and lots more besides. These sequences of symbols do not at all *resemble* lines and circles. Yet his mathematical results (including solving a substantial number of geometrical problems that had gone unsolved since antiquity, by translating them into algebraic questions) showed that algebraic symbols present geometric facts in a form that is not only (potentially and reliably) *veridical*, but conceptually *tractable*.

6 The idea of couching this story as the transition from a model of *resemblance* to one of *representation* is from the first chapter of my long-time colleague John Haugeland's *Artificial Intelligence*: *The Very Idea* [MIT—Bradford Press [ref.]].

In order to understand how strings of algebraic symbols (as well as the Copernican and Galilean antecedents of his discoveries) could be useful, veridical, tractable appearances of geometrical realities, Descartes needed a new way of conceiving the relations between appearance and reality. His philosophical response to the scientific and mathematical advances in understanding of this intellectually turbulent and exciting time was the development of a concept of representation that was much more abstract, powerful, and flexible than the resemblance model it supplanted. He saw that what made algebraic understanding of geometrical figures possible was a global *isomorphism* between the whole system of algebraic symbols and the whole system of geometrical figures. That isomorphism defined a notion of form shared by the licit manipulations of strings of algebraic symbols and the constructions possible with geometric figures. In the context of such an isomorphism, the particular material properties of what now become intelligible as representings and representeds become irrelevant to the semantic relation between them. *All* that matters is the correlation between the rules governing the manipulation of the representings and the actual possibilities that characterize the representeds. Inspired by the newly emerging forms of modern scientific understanding, Descartes concluded that this *representational* relation (of which resemblance then appears merely as a primitive species) is the key to understanding the relations between mind and world, appearance and reality, quite generally.

This was a fabulous, tradition-transforming idea, and everything Western philosophers have thought since (no less on the practical than on the theoretical side) is downstream from it, conceptually, and not just temporally—whether we or they realize it or not. But Descartes combined this idea with another, more problematic one. This is the idea that if *any* things are to be known or understood representationally (whether correctly or not), by being represented, then there must be *some* things that are known or understood *non*representationally, *immediately*, *not* by means of the mediation of representings. If representings could only be known representationally, by being themselves in turn represented, then a vicious infinite regress would result. For we would only be able to know about a represented thing by knowing about a representing of it, and could only count as knowing about it if we already knew about a

representing of it, and so on. In a formulation that was only extracted explicitly centuries later by Josiah Royce, if even *error* (*mis*representation), never mind knowledge, is to be possible, then there must be something about which error is *not* possible—something we know about *not* by representing it, so that error in the sense of misrepresentation is not possible. If we can know (or be wrong about) anything representationally, by means of the mediation of representings of it, there must be some representings that we grasp, understand, or know about *immediately*, simply by *having* them.

The result was a *two-stage*, representational story that sharply distinguished between two kinds of things, based on their intrinsic intelligibility. Some things, paradigmatically physical, material, extended things, can by their nature only be known by being *represented*. Other things, the contents of our own minds, are by nature *representings*, and are known in another way entirely. They are known *immediately*, not by being represented, by just by being *had*. They are intrinsically intelligible, in that their mere matter-of-factual occurrence counts as knowing or understanding something. Things that are by nature knowable only as represented are not in this sense intrinsically intelligible. Their occurrence does not entail that anyone knows or understands anything.

As I have indicated, I think that Descartes was driven to this picture by two demands. On the one hand, making sense of the new theoretical mathematized scientific forms in which reality could appear—the best and most efficacious forms of understanding of his time—required a new, more abstract notion of representation, and the idea that it is by an appropriate way of representing things that we know and understand them best. So we must distinguish between representings and representeds, and worry about the relations between them in virtue of which manipulating the one sort of thing counts as knowing or understanding the other. On the other hand, such a two-stage model is threatened with unintelligibility in the form of a looming infinite regress of explanation if we don't distinguish between how we know representeds (by means of our relations to representings of them) and how we know at least some representings (immediately, at least, not by being related to representings of them). The result was a two-stage model in which we are immediately related to representings, and in virtue of their relation to

representeds stand in a mediated cognitive relation to those represented things. The representings must be understood as intrinsically and immediately intelligible, and the representeds as only intelligible in a derivative, compositional sense: as the result of the product of our immediate relations to representings and their relations to representeds.

I want to say that it is this epistemological model that Hegel takes as his target in his opening remarks in the *Introduction* of the *Phenomenology*. **What he is objecting to is two-stage, representational theories that are committed to a fundamental difference in *intelligibility* between appearances (representings, how things are for consciousness) and reality (representeds, how things are in themselves), according to which the former are immediately and intrinsically intelligible, and the latter are not.** The gulf, the "difference," "separation," the two "sides" of one divide separating appearance and reality, knowing and the known, that he complains about is this gulf of intelligibility. His critical claim is that any theory of *this* form is doomed to yield skeptical results.

3. Of course, Descartes's view is not the only one Hegel means to be criticizing. Kant, too, has a two-stage, representational theory. Cognitive activity needs to be understood as the product of both the mind's activities of manipulating representations (in the sense of representings) and the relations those representings stand in to what they represent. Both what the mind does with its representations and how they are related to what they represent must be considered in apportioning responsibility for features of those representings to the things represented, as specified in a vocabulary that does not invoke either the mind's manipulation of representations or the relations between representings and representeds (that is, things as they are "in themselves" [an sich]) or to the representational relations and what the cognitive faculties do with and to representings. The latter for Kant yields what the represented things are "for consciousness," in Hegel's terminology: contentful representings.

Kant's theory is not the same as Descartes's. But it shares the two-stage representational structure that distinguishes the mind's relation to its representings and its relation to representeds that is mediated by those representings. Although Kant does

sometimes seem to think that we have a special kind of access to the products of our own cognitive activity, he does not think of our awareness of our representings as *immediate* in any recognizably Cartesian sense. Awareness is apperception. The minimal unit of apperception is judgment. To judge is to integrate a conceptually articulated content into a constellation of commitments exhibiting the distinctive synthetic unity of apperception. Doing that is extruding from the constellation commitments incompatible with the judgment being made and extracting from it inferential consequences that are then added to that constellation of commitments. This is a process that is mediated by the relations of material incompatibility and consequence that relate the concepts being applied in the judgment to the concepts applied in other possible judgments.

So Kant shares with Descartes the two-stage representational structure, but does not take over the idea that our relation to our own representations is one of immediate awareness.[7] His view would still fall within the range of Hegel's criticisms, however, insofar he maintains the differential intelligibility of representings and representeds: that representings are as such intelligible, and what is represented is, as such, not.[8] I will call this commitment to a "***strong* differential intelligibility of appearance and reality**": the claim that the one is the right sort of thing to be intelligible, and the other is not. Kant has a new model of intelligibility: to be intelligible is to have a content articulated by

7 Descartes's commitment to the mind's awareness of its own representings being immediate in the sense of nonrepresentational (justified by the regress of representation argument) did not preclude his treating the contents of those representings as essentially involving their relations to other such contents. Indeed, his view of representation as a matter of isomorphism between the whole system of representings and the whole system of representeds entails just such a semantic holism. He never, I think, resolves the residual tension between the immediacy of his pragmatics (his account of what one is doing in thinking) and the holism of his semantics. Kant's pragmatics of judging as integration into a whole exhibiting the synthetic unity of apperception is not similarly in tension with his version of the holistic semantic thought.

8 Attribution of a view of this description to Kant is quite unfair. A more plausible reading restricts the representation relation to what holds between the empirical, representing self, and nature. It is the essence of transcendental idealism to understand both of these as being in conceptual, hence intrinsically intelligible, shape. Kant's side-remarks about "Dingen an sich" are better understood as making purely negative points along the lines of the sense-dependence claims I mention in the next chapter. The unfairness here is Hegel's, however, as his language makes clear that this sort of vulgar kantianism is squarely in his target area. In general Hegel goes back and forth between sophisticated readings of Kant--when he is claiming, with some justice, that all he is doing is making explicit Kantian insights and ideas--and quite flatfooted vulgarizations, depending on his local expository and even polemical purposes.

concepts. It is the concepts applied in an act of awareness (apperception) that determine what would count as successfully integrating ("synthesizing") that judgment into a whole exhibiting the unity distinctive of apperception. But the conceptual articulation of judgments is a form of represent*ings* contributed by the cognitive faculty of the understanding. It is not something we can know or assume to characterize what is represent*ed* by those conceptual representings, when the representeds are considered apart from their relation to such representitongs, that is, as they are in themselves. On Hegel's reading, Kant is committed to a gulf of intelligibility separating our representings from what they are representings of, in the form of the view that the representings are in conceptual shape, and what is represented is not.

Just to remind ourselves how much is at stake in Hegel's criticism of two-stage representational theories of the relations between appearance and reality that are committed to the differential intelligibility of the relata, it is worth thinking in this connection also about Frege. For Frege, discursive symbols *express* a sense [*Sinn*] and thereby *designate* a referent [*Bedeutung*]. Senses are what is grasped when one understands the expression, and referents are what is thereby represented: what expressing that sense is talking or thinking *about*. A sense is a representing in that it is a "mode of presentation" [*Art des Gegebenseins*] of a referent. No more than Kant does Frege construe grasp of a sense as immediate in a Cartesian sense—according to which the mere occurrence of something with that sense counts as the mind's knowing or understanding something). Grasping a judgeable content requires mastering the inferential and substitutional relations it stands in to other such contents. But like Descartes and Kant, Frege thinks that grasping senses, understanding representations as representations, does not require representing them in turn, and that representings in the sense of senses are graspable in a sense in which what they represent is not (apart from the special case of indirect discourse, where what is represented is senses). So if, as I have claimed, Hegel's argument is intended to be directed at two-stage representational models committed to treating representings as intelligible in a sense in which representeds are in general not, then it seems Fregean sense-reference theories, as well as the Kantian and Cartesian versions, will be among the targets.

II. Genuine Knowledge and Rational Constraint

4. In order to see whether there is an argument of the sort Hegel is after that tells against theories of this kind—two-stage representational theories committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representings and representeds—we must next think about what criteria of adequacy for such theories Hegel is appealing to. In general, we know that what Hegel thinks is wrong with them is that they lead to skepticism. Further, he tells us that what he means by this is that such theories preclude knowing things as they are "in themselves." I think what is going on here is that Hegel learned from Kant that the soft underbelly of *epistemological* theories is the *semantics* they implicitly incorporate and depend upon. And he thinks that two-stage representational theories committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representings and what they represent *semantically* preclude genuine knowledge of those representeds. I will call the criterion of adequacy on epistemological theories that Hegel is invoking here the "Genuine Knowledge Condition" (GKC). Obviously, a lot turns on what counts as *genuine* knowledge. But it is clear in any case that this requirement demands that an *epistemological* theory not be committed to a *semantics*—in particular, a theory of representation—that when looked at closely turns out to rules out as unintelligible the very possibility of knowing how things really are ("genuine" knowledge). This is what I take Hegel to mean when he says that epistemological theories of this kind show themselves as surreptitiously expressing a "fear of the truth." I do not take it that the very existence of a contrast between how we know what is represent*ed* and how we know represent*ings* by itself demonstrates such a failure. His specific claim is that **when that difference is construed as one of intelligibility in the strong sense—representings are intrinsically intelligible and representeds are not—then skepticism about genuine knowledge is a consequence**. And he takes from Kant the idea that intelligibility is a matter of *conceptual* articulation: to be intelligible is to be in specifically *conceptual* shape. If this reading is correct, then Hegel's argument must show that to satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition, an epistemological theory must treat not only *appearance* (how things *subjectively* are, *for* consciousness), but also *reality* (how things *objectively* are, *in* themselves) as

conceptually articulated. Again, what could count as a good argument for this claim obviously turns on what is required to satisfy that requirement.

Both resemblance and representation models of the relations between appearance and reality have a story about what *error* consists in. That is what happens when antecedently intelligible properties are not shared, so that resemblance breaks down, or when there are local breakdowns in the globally defined isomorphism between the systems of representings and representeds. In the middle paragraphs of the *Introduction*, in which Hegel begins to present his alternative to two-stage representational epistemological theories committed to strong differential intelligibility of representings and representeds, the treatment of *error* looms large. (This is the topic of Lecture II.) I think we can take it as an implicit criterion of adequacy Hegel is imposing on epistemological theories that they make intelligible the phenomenon, not only of genuine knowledge, but also of error. I will call this the Intelligibility of Error Condition (IEC).

The Genuine Knowledge Condition and the Intelligibility of Error Condition are *epistemological* constraints. The semantics presupposed by or implicit in an epistemological theory must not preclude the intelligibility either of genuine knowledge, or of error: being wrong about how things really are. We must be able to understand both what it is for what there is to appear *as* it is, and for it to appear as it is *not*. An epistemological theory that does not make both of these intelligible is not adequate to the phenomenon of our efforts to know and understand how things really are.

Approaching epistemology from this semantic direction suggests that behind these *epistemological* constraints are deeper *semantic* ones. I think that is in fact the case here. We cannot read these off of Hegel's extremely telegraphic remarks in the text of the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction*, but must infer them from the solution he ultimately proposes to the challenges he sets out there. First is what we could (looking over our shoulders at Frege) call the Mode of Presentation Condition (MPC). This is the requirement that appearances (senses, representings) must be essentially, and not just accidentally, appearances *of* some purported realities. One does not count as properly having grasped an appearing unless one grasps it *as* the appearance *of* something. When all goes well, grasping the appearance must

count as a way of knowing about what it is an appearance *of*. Appearances must make some reality semantically visible (or otherwise accessible). The claim is not that one ought not to reify appearances, think of them as things, but rather, for instance, adverbially: in terms of being-appeared-to-*thus*-ly. That is not a silly thought, but it is not the present point. That is that if the epistemological Genuine Knowledge Condition is to be satisfied by a two-stage, representational model, representings must be semantic presentations of representeds in a robust sense, in which what one has grasped is not a representation unless it is grasped *as* a representing *of* some represented. Further along we'll see how Hegel, following Kant, understands this requirement: taking or treating something in practice *as* a representing is taking or treating it as subject to *normative* assessment as to its *correctness*, in such a way that what thereby counts as represented serves as a *standard* for *assessments* of correctness.

A second semantic constraint on epistemological theories that I take to be implicitly in play in Hegel's understanding of the epistemological GKC is that if the representational relation is to be understood semantically in a way that can support genuine knowledge, it must portray what is represented as exerting *rational* constraint on representings of it. [ftnt. McD MW and our exchange on this.] That is, how it is with what is represented must, when the representation relation is not defective, provide a *reason* for the representing to be as it is. What we are talking (thinking) about must be able to provide reasons for what we say (think) about it. We can call this the Rational Constraint Condition (RCC). Though he does not argue for this constraint in the *Introduction*, I think in many ways it is the key premise for the argument he *does* offer. The thought is that the difference between merely responding differentially to the presence or absence of a fact or property and *comprehending* it, having thoughts that are representationally *about* it in the sense that, if everything goes well, counts as *knowledge of* it, depends on the possibility of that fact or property being able to serve for the knower as a *reason* for having a belief or making a commitment. The central sort of semantic aboutness depends on being able *rationally* to take in how things are, in the sense of taking them in *as* providing reasons for our attitudes, which in virtue of that rationally accountability count as being *about* how those things are.

Hegel learns from Kant to think about representation in *normative* terms. What is represented exercises a distinctive kind of *authority* over representings. Representings are *responsible* to what they represent. What is represented serves as a kind of authoritative *normative standard* for assessments of the *correctness* of what count as representings *of* it (correct or incorrect) just in virtue of being subject to assessments of their correctness in which those representeds provide the standard. The RCC adds that the standard, what is represented, must provide *reasons* for the assessments. In fact, in the context of Kant's and Hegel's views, this is not a further commitment. For neither of them distinguishes between norms (or rules) and norms (or rules) that are *rational* in the sense of being *conceptually* articulated. *All* norms are understood as conceptual norms. Norms or rules, and concepts are just two ways of talking about the same topic. Conceptual norms are norms that determine what is a reason for what. For a norm to contentful is for it to have *conceptual* content: a matter of what it can be a reason for or against, and what can be a reason for or against it. This is the only kind of content they acknowledge. The German Idealists are rationalists about norms, in that norms (rules) are contentful exclusively in the sense of being *conceptually* contentful.

The Rational Constraint Condition accordingly fills in the sense of 'representation' or 'aboutness' on which the Mode of Presentation Condition depends. And these two *semantic* conditions provide the crucial criteria of adequacy for satisfying the two *epistemological* conditions: the Genuine Knowledge Condition and the Intelligibility of Error Condition. For the intelligibility of genuine knowledge of or error about how things really are turns on the rational normative constraint those realities exert on what count as appearances or representings of those realities just insofar as they are subject to normative assessments of correctness and incorrectness (knowledge or error) in which those realities serve as the standard, in the sense of providing reasons for those assessments.

5. Supposing that these four conditions represent the relevant criteria of adequacy for epistemological theories (and their implicit semantics), what is the argument against two-stage representational theories that are committed to a strong difference of intelligibility between representings and representeds (appearance and reality)? Why can't theories of this form satisfy

the four criteria of adequacy? It is characteristic of two-stage theories, not just Descartes's but also those of Kant and Frege, that they incorporate a distinction between two ways of knowing or understanding things. Some things are known (only) representationally: by being represented. Other things—at least some representings, according to the regress argument—are known nonrepresentationally: in some way other than by being represented. If we are interested in investigating cognitive faculties in the context of theories like this, we are interested in the representation relation. For cognitive faculties are the instrument or medium that produces representings of the real. But then we must ask: is the representational relation, the relation between representings and what they represent, itself something that is known representationally, or nonrepresentationally? If it is itself something that is knowable or intelligible only by being represented, it seems that we are embarked on a vicious Bradleyan regress (a successor to the one Descartes was worried about). The epistemological enterprise is not intelligible unless we can make sense of the relation between representations of representational relations (what they are *for* representers) and those representational relations themselves, and then representations of *those* relations, and so on. Until we have grasped all of that infinite chain of representings of representings of representings…, we are not in a position to understand the representational relation, and hence not the "instrument or medium" of representation. *Semantic* skepticism—skepticism about what it is so much as to *purport* to represent something—must then be the result. This argument is essentially the Cartesian regress-of-representation argument for nonrepresentational knowledge of representings, applied now not just to the representings, but to the representational *relations* they stand in to what they represent.

So if epistemology, and so knowledge, is to be intelligible, it seems that within this sort of framework we must embrace the other horn of the dilemma, and take it that the representation relation is something that can itself be known or understood *non*representationally—that in this respect it belongs in a box with the representations or appearances themselves. Responding this way to the dilemma concerning our understanding of the representational relation is, in effect, acknowledging the Mode of Presentation Condition. For it is saying that part of our nonrepresentational understanding of appearances (representings) must be understanding them *as* appearances (representings) *of* something. Their representational properties, their 'of'-ness, their

relation to what they at least purport to represent, must be intelligible in the *same* sense in which the representings themselves are.

The Rational Constraint Condition says that for appearances to be intelligible *as* appearances, representings, modes of presentation, *of* something they must be intelligible as *rationally* constrained by what they then count as representing. This means that what is represented must be intelligible as providing *reasons* for assessments of correctness and incorrectness of appearances or representings. Reasons are things that can be thought or said: cited *as* reasons, for instance, for an assessment of a representing as correct or incorrect, as amounting to knowledge or error. That is to say that what provides reasons for such assessments must itself, no less than the assessments, be in *conceptual* form. Giving reasons for undertaking a commitment (for instance, to an assessment of correctness or incorrectness) is endorsing a sample piece of reasoning, an inference, in which the premises provide good reasons for the commitment. It is to exhibit premises the endorsement of which entitles one to the conclusion. So the reasons, no less than what they are reasons for, must be conceptually articulated.

Put another way, appearances are to be intelligible, graspable, in the sense that they are conceptually articulated. Understanding the judgment that things are thus-and-so requires knowing what concepts are being applied, and understanding those concepts. One only does that insofar as one practically masters their role in reasoning: what their applicability provides reasons for and against, and the applicability of what other concepts would provide reasons for or against their applicability. If the relation between appearances and the realities they are appearances of—what they represent, how they represent things as being ("thus-and-so")—is to be intelligible in the same sense that the appearances themselves are (so that a regress of representation is avoided), this must be because that relation itself is a *conceptual* relation: a relation among concepts or concept-applications, a relation between things that are conceptually articulated.

The conclusion is that if the Rational Constraint Condition must be satisfied in order to satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition and the Intelligibility of Error Condition (if the RCC really is a semantically necessary condition on satisfying these epistemological criteria of adequacy)—perhaps because it is a necessary condition of satisfying the Mode of Presentation Condition, which itself is a necessary semantic condition on satisfying the epistemological GKC and the IEC—then those conditions cannot be satisfied by a two-stage representational theory that is committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representing and represented. If not only representings, but the representation relation must be intelligible in a sense that requires their conceptual articulation, then both ends of the representation relation must be conceptually contentful. Only in that way is it intelligible how what is represented can exert rational constraint on representings, in the sense of providing *reasons* for assessments of their correctness or incorrectness.

III. A Non-Psychological Conception of the Conceptual

6. I have been working to find structure beneath what appears on the telegraphic, metaphor-laden surface of the text of the opening paragraphs of Hegel's *Introduction*. I claim so far only to have sketched a potentially colorable argument. Further exploration is required in particular of the reasons for accepting the RCC, which this exposition reveals as the principle load-bearing premise. A key component of that enterprise would be clarifying the concepts of conceptual articulation and conceptual content—what the RCC says must characterize both representing and represented, which commitment to a representational theory with a strong difference of intelligibility denies. It will help to begin on this latter task by looking at what sorts of theories might be thought to be available, once the strong difference of intelligibility of appearance and reality has been denied—that is, once one is committed to not excavating a gulf of intelligibility between representings and what they represent.

One place to begin is with Frege's proposed definition in "The Thought": "a fact is a thought that is true."[9] Thoughts for Frege are the senses of declarative sentences. They are claims, in the sense of claimable contents, rather than claimings. A fact, he is saying, is not something that *corresponds* to or is *represented* by such a sense. It just *is* such a sense; one that is true. Facts are a subset of claimables, senses, representings, cognitive appearings. I take it, though, that Frege retains the two-stage representational model for the relation between senses and their referents—for thoughts, truth-values. And this matters for what he thinks senses *are*: modes of presentation of referents. But as far as the relations between thoughts and *facts* are concerned, he does not appeal to that model. Again, Wittgenstein says: "When we say, and mean, that such-and-such is the case, we—and our meaning—do not stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: this—is—so."[10] In these cases, the content of what we say, our meaning, *is* the fact. Such an approach is sometimes talked about under the title of an "identity theory of truth."[11] It is sometimes attributed, under that rubric, to John McDowell.[12]

On such an approach, there is no principled gulf of intelligibility between appearance and reality (mind and world), because when all goes well the appearances inherit their content from the realities they are appearances of. Thoughts (in the sense of thinkings) can share their content with the true thoughts (in the sense of thinkables) that are the facts they represent. (As indicated above, this is not the way Frege would put things. For him, facts are a kind of representing, not in the first instance of representeds.) Representings are distinct from representeds, so the two-stage representational model is still endorsed. But they are understood as two forms in which one content can be manifested.

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9 [ref. to "The Thought"]

10 *Philosophical Investigations* [ref.] §95.

11 For instance, by Jennifer Hornsby: (1997), 'Truth: The Identity Theory', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* XCVII, pp. 1-24; reprinted in Michael P. Lynch (ed.), *The Nature of Truth: Classic and Contemporary Perspectives* (Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 2001), pp. 663-81. Also J. Dodd (2000), *An Identity Theory of Truth* (London: Macmillan).

12 For instance, by J. Dodd "McDowell and identity theories of truth" *Analysis* (1995) 55(3): 160-165. I doubt McDowell would be happy with this characterization of his views in *Mind and World* about the necessity of understanding ourselves as conceptually open to the layout of reality.

What is most striking about views of this stripe is that they are committed to the claim, as McDowell puts it in *Mind and World*, that "the conceptual has no outer boundary."[13] What is thinkable is identified with what is conceptually contentful. But the objective facts, no less than the subjective thinkings and claiming about them, are understood as themselves already in conceptual shape. The early Wittgenstein, no less than the later, thought of things this way. "The world is everything that is the case, the totality of facts…." And what is the case can be *said* of it. Facts are essentially, and not just accidentally, things that can be *stated*.[14] Views with these consequences provide a very friendly environment in which to satisfy the Rational Constraint Condition and so (in the context of a suitable Kantian normative understanding of aboutness) the Mode of Presentation Condition on understandings of the relations between cognitive appearances and the realities of which they are appearances.

The defensibility and plausibility of this sort of approach depend principally on the details of the understanding of the (meta-)concept of the conceptual (conceptual contentfulness, conceptual articulation) in terms of which it is explicated.[15] For on some such conceptions, it is extremely implausible and indefensible. For instance, if one's understanding of concepts is ultimately *psychological*, then the idea that thoughts (thinkings, believings) and facts might have the same conceptual content, would seem to have undesirable consequences. If one thinks that what is in the first instance conceptually contentful is beliefs and thoughts, and that other things, such as visual and auditory sign designs (marks and noises) can count as conceptually contentful only at one remove, by being expressions of beliefs and thoughts, then the claim that the facts those beliefs and thoughts (and derivatively, marks and noises) express (when all goes well) are themselves conceptually contentful threatens to make the existence of those facts (including ones that will never be expressed or represented) objectionably dependent on the existence of

[13] [ref. in *MW*]

[14] [ref. to Proposition 1 of *Tractatus*, and then quote (not just cite) passages for the other claims.]

[15] One of the grounds on which McDowell has, with some justice, been criticized is his unwillingness to supply such details for the conception of the conceptual in play in *Mind and World*.

thinkings and believings.[16] The same unfortunate sort of implication results from conjoining the RCC version of the MPC with Davidson's claim that "Only a belief can justify a belief."[17] Berkeley claims that the only things we can intelligibly be understood to represent by our thoughts are other thoughts (the thoughts of God). Some of the British Idealists thought that the reality that appeared to us in thought and belief consisted of the thought of the Absolute—and thought they had learned that lesson from Hegel. More recently, Derrida (using de Saussure's conceptually pre-Kantian and pre-Fregean terminology) offers a picture of a world consisting only of signifiers, with the only things available to be signified being further signifiers. At this point things have gone badly wrong. All these arguments involving ignoring what Sellars called "the notorious 'ing'/'ed' ambiguity", which turns on the distinction between thoughts and beliefs in the sense of acts of thinking and believing and thoughts and beliefs in the sense of what is thought or believed, what is thinkable or believable. If Hegel's opening argument has to be filled in in a way that has *this* sort of idealism as its consequence, we ought to exploit it by *modus tollens*, not *modus ponens*.

7. In fact, though, Hegel's idea is that the criteria of adequacy for accounts of the relations between appearance and reality that underlie his argument can be satisfied without untoward consequences in the context of quite a different, wholly *non*psychological conception of conceptual contentfulness. The kind of idealism that requires a "world-thinker" on the objective side, no less than a finite thinker on the subjective side is indeed a *reductio.* But what it should lead us to reject is not the claim that two-stage representational theories must avoid making strong distinctions of intelligibility between representings and representeds (because they cannot then satisfy the RCC and MPC, and so not the GKC and IEC either) but the particular conception of conceptual articulation (and hence intelligibility) with which they have been conjoined.

Hegel gets his concept of conceptual content from thinking about Kant's theory of judgment, and taking on board his understanding of concepts as functions of judgment. Kant

[16] Here one can and should, however, invoke the distinction between reference-dependence (objectionable) and sense-dependence (not objectionable)—about which more later.

[17] [ref.]

understands judging in *normative* and *pragmatic* terms. On the normative side, he understands judging as *committing* oneself, taking *responsibility* for something, *endorsing* the judged content. On the pragmatic side, he understands these normative doings in *practical* terms: as a matter of what one is committed or responsible for *doing*. What one is responsible for doing is integrating the endorsed content into a constellation of other commitments that exhibits the distinctive unity of apperception. Doing that ("synthesizing" the unity) is extruding from the dynamically evolving unity commitments that are materially *incompatible* with the new commitment, and extracting and endorsing, so adding, commitments that are its material *consequences*. Judging that *p* is committing oneself to *integrating p* with what one is already committed to, synthesizing a new constellation exhibiting that *rational* unity characteristic of apperception. From Hegel's point of view, that extrusion or expulsion of incompatible commitments and extraction of and expansion according to consequential commitments is the inhalation and exhalation, the breathing rhythm by which a rational subject lives and develops.

Synthesizing a normative subject, which must exhibit the synthetic unity distinctive of apperception, is a *rational* process because if one judgment is materially incompatible with another, it serves as a *reason* against endorsing the other, and if one judgment has another as a material inferential consequence, it serves as a reason for endorsing the other. Understanding the activity of judging in terms of synthesis-by-integration into a rational unity of apperception requires that judgeable *contents* stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility and consequence. For it is such relations that normatively constrain the apperceptive process of synthesis, determining what counts as a proper or successful fulfilling of the judging subject's integrative task-responsibility or commitment. Concepts, as functions of judgment, determine what counts as a reason for or against their applicability, and what their applicability counts as a reason for or against. Since this is true of *all* concepts, not just formal or logical ones, the incompatibility and inferential consequence relations the concepts determine must in general be

understood as *material* (that is having to do with non-logical *content* of the concepts), not just *logical* (having to do with their logical *form*).[18]

8. I have introduced the idea of conceptual content as articulated by relations of material incompatibility and consequence in Kantian terms of the norms such contents impose on the process of judgment as rational integration: their providing standards for the normative assessment of such integration as correct or successful, settling what one has committed oneself to do or made oneself responsible for doing in endorsing a judgeable content. But I also said that Hegel's notion of conceptual content is *not* a *psychological* one. One could mean by that claim that what articulates conceptual content is *normative* relations, a matter of what one *ought* to do, rather than something that can be read immediately off of what one *actually* does or is disposed to do. That distinction is indeed of the essence for Kant (and for Hegel). But in Hegel's hands this approach to conceptual content shows itself to be nonpsychological in a much more robust sense. For he sees that it characterizes not only the process of thinking on the subjective side of the intentional nexus, but also what is thought about, on the objective side.

For objective properties, and so the facts concerning which objects exhibit which properties, *also* stand in relations of material incompatibility and consequence. Natural science, paradigmatically Newton's physics, reveals objective properties and facts as standing to one another in *lawful* relations of exclusion and consequence. That two bodies subject to no other forces collide is materially (non-logically, because of laws of nature) incompatible with their accelerations not changing. That the acceleration of a massive object is changed has as a material consequence (lawfully necessitates) that a force has been applied to it. In the first case, the two ways the world could be do not just *contrast* with one another (differ). It is *impossible*—so Newtonian physics, not logic, tells us, hence *physically* impossible—that both should be facts.

[18] I have discussed Kant's normative, pragmatic theory of judging, the way it leads to a notion of conceptual content, and what Hegel made of all of this in the first three chapters of *Reason in Philosophy* [Harvard University Press, 2009].

And in the second case it is physically necessary—a matter of the laws of physics—that *if* a fact of the first kind were to obtain, so *would* a fact of the second kind.

It follows that if by "conceptual" we mean, with Hegel, "standing in relations of material incompatibility and consequence," then the objective facts and properties natural science reveals to as physical reality are themselves in conceptual shape. *Modal* realism, the claim that some states of affairs necessitate others and make others impossible, the acknowledgment of laws of nature, entails *conceptual* realism: the claim that the way the world objectively is is conceptually articulated. This is a non-psychological conception of the conceptual in a robust sense, because having conceptual content, standing in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, does not require anyone to *think* or *believe* anything. If Newton's laws are true, then they held before there were thinkers, and would hold even if there never were thinkers. The facts governed by those laws, for instance early collisions of particles, stood in lawful relations of relative impossibility and necessity to other possible facts, and hence on this conception of the conceptual had conceptual content, quite independently of whether any subjective processes of thinking had gone on, were going on, or ever would go on (in this, or any other possible world).

As I am using the term, a "psychological" theory of the conceptual understands concepts as something like mental particulars, or aspects of mental particulars: as essentially features of psychological or intentional states, paradigmatically thinkings and believings. Hegel's non-psychological understanding of the conceptual, as a matter of standing in relations of non-logical incompatibility and consequence allows for psychological and intentional states and episodes to count as conceptually contentful, but does not restrict the applicability of conceptual predicates to such states and episodes. It is important to keep this point firmly in mind when considering his conceptual realism. For the result of conjoining conceptual realism about the objective world with a psychological understanding of the conceptual is a kind of Berkeleyan idealism, according to which objective facts require a world-thinker whose thinkings they are.[19] This is emphatically

[19] There is a route to a similar conclusion via the Rational Constraint Condition. Conjoined with a psychological construal of the conceptual, it supports the Davidsonian view that "only a belief can justify another belief." Then it seems one must reject the RCC—which results, McDowell claims in *Mind and World*, is a picture of beliefs

not Hegel's thought (nor is it Frege's, Wittgenstein's, or McDowell's)—although his use of the term 'Weltgeist' (which appears three times in the *Phenomenology*) has misled some (including some of his admirers, such as Royce, and even Bradley) on this point. I say something below about how else we might understand his remarks in the *Preface* about the necessity of "construing Substance also as Subject."

9. Hegel thinks that underlying this point about the conceptual character of objective reality is a deeper one. For he thinks that the idea of determinateness itself is to be understood in terms of standing in relations of incompatibility and consequence to other things that are determinate in the same sense. He endorses Spinoza's principle "Omnis determinatio est negatio." For something to be determinate is for it to be one way *rather than* another. This thought is incorporated in the twentieth-century concept of information (due to Shannon[20]), which understands it in terms of the partition each bit establishes between how things are (according to the information) and how they are not. Everyone would I agree, I take it, that if a property does not *contrast* with any properties, if it is not even *different* from any of them, then it is *in*determinate. To know that an object had *such* a property would be to know *nothing* about it. Beginning already in the *Perception* chapter of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel argues that determinateness requires more than mere difference from other things. It requires he calls "exclusive" [ausschließend] difference, and not mere or "indifferent" [gleichgültig] difference. **Square** and **circular** are exclusively different properties, since possession by a plane figure of the one excludes, rules out, or is materially incompatible with possession of the other. **Square** and **green** are merely or indifferently different, in that though they are distinct properties, possession of the one does not preclude possession of the other. An essential part of the determinate content of a property—what makes it the property it is, and not some other one—is

(representations, now not really intelligible as *appearances* at all) as "spinning frictionlessly in the void." For the only alternative appears to be envisaging the world as somehow consisting of intentional states: the thinkings of a Berkeleyan God or Bradleyan or Roycean Absolute. (Compare Derrida's picture of a world of Saussurean signifiers, with all the signifieds being simply more signifiers: the world as text. A non-psychological conception of what it is to be in conceptual shape, hence intelligible, interpretable, provides the essential context for a parsing of the underlying thought as a reasonable one.)

[20] Claude E. Shannon and Warren Weaver: *The Mathematical Theory of Communication.* The University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Illinois, 1949. ISBN 0-252-72548-4

the relations of material (non-logical) *modally robust* incompatibility it stands in to other determinate properties (for instance, shapes to other shapes, and colors to other colors). We can make sense of the idea of merely different properties, such as **square** and **green** only in a context in which they come in families of shapes and colors whose members are exclusively different from one another.

An important argument for understanding determinateness Hegel's way, in terms of exclusive difference or material incompatibility (one pursued in the *Perception* chapter), is that it is required to underwrite an essential aspect of the structural difference between the fundamental ontological categories of *object* and *property* (particular and universal). Aristotle had already pointed out a structural asymmetry between these categories. It makes sense to think of each property as coming with a *converse*, in the sense of a property that is exhibited by all and only the objects that do *not* exhibit the index property. **Has a mass greater than 5 grams** is a property that has a converse in this sense. But it does *not* make sense to think of *objects* as coming with converses, in the analogous sense of an object that exhibits all and only the properties that are *not* exhibited by the index object. This is precisely because some of those properties will be incompatible with one another, and so *cannot* be exhibited by a single object. The number 9 has the properties of being a number, not being prime, being odd, and not being divisible by 5. If it had a converse, that object would have to have the properties of not being a number, being prime, being even, and being divisible by 5. But nothing can have all of *those* properties.

It follows that a world that is *categorially determinate*, in that it includes determinate properties (and relations) and objects (distinguishable by their properties and relations), so facts (about which objects exhibit which properties and stand in which relations) must be determinate in Hegel's sense: the properties must stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility. If they do that, they will also stand to one another in relations of material consequence, since a property **P** will have the property **Q** as a consequence if everything incompatible with **Q** is incompatible with **P**. So **being a bear** has **being a vertebrate** as a

consequence, since everything incompatible with **being a vertebrate**, for instance **being a prime number**, is incompatible with **being a bear**.

Since Hegel understands being conceptually contentful as standing to other such items in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, to take the objective world to be minimally determinate, in the sense of consisting of facts about what objects have what properties (and stand in what relations to each other) *is* to take it to be *conceptually* structured. For him, only conceptual realists are entitled to think of objective reality as so much as determinate. (Modal realism comes for free. We didn't need Newtonian physics to get to conceptual realism in this sense; the barest Aristotelian metaphysics is already enough.) This conception of the conceptual is non-psychological in a very strong sense.

IV. Alethic Modal and Deontic Normative Material Incompatibility

10. In this sense, there is no problem seeing both sides of the appearance/reality distinction as conceptually structured.[21] So we are not on that account obliged to excavate a gulf of intelligibility between them. For the same reason, the principal obstacle to satisfying the Rational Constraint Condition, and therefore the Mode of Presentation Condition, is removed. (Though I haven't said anything positive about how they might be satisfied, either.) That means in turn that the *semantic* presuppositions that I have been reading Hegel as taking to make it impossible to satisfy the *epistemological* criteria of adequacy expressed by the Genuine Knowledge Condition and the Intelligibility of Error Condition can also be avoided. Access to all of these desirable consequences is to be opened up by the non-psychological structural

[21] 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]

understanding of the conceptual in terms of relations of material incompatibility and (so) consequence.

Hegel's term for what I have been calling "material incompatibility" is "determinate negation" [bestimmte Negation].[22] His term for what I have been calling "material consequence" is "mediation" [Vermittlung]—after the role of the middle term in classical syllogistic inference.[23] The first is the more fundamental concept for Hegel—perhaps in part because, as I argued in the previous section, wherever there are relations of incompatibility, there will also be relations of consequence. Hegel often contrasts *determinate* negation, (*material* incompatibility) with "formal" or "abstract" negation (logical inconsistency): **square** is *a* (not the) determinate negation of **circular**, where **not-circular** is *the* (not a) formal negation of it. (These are Aristotelian contraries, rather than contradictories.) We are in a position to see that the choice of the term "determinate" to mark this difference is motivated by Hegel's view that it is just relations of determinate negation in virtue of which anything is determinate at all. This is as true of thoughts as it is of things—of discursive commitments on the side of subjective cognitive activity no less than of facts on the side of the objective reality the subject knows of and acts on. That is why, though the conception is at base non-psychological, Hegel's metaconcept of the conceptual does apply to psychological states and processes. Thinkings and believings, too, count as determinately, and *so* conceptually contentful, in virtue of standing to other possible thinkings and believings in relations of material incompatibility and consequence.

But are subjective commitments conceptually contentful in the *same sense* that objective facts are—even given Hegel's definition? When we say that **being pure copper** and **being an electrical insulator** are materially incompatible we mean that it is (physically, not logically) *impossible* that one and the same object, at one and the same time, has both properties. But when we say that the *commitments* to a's being pure copper and a's being an electrical insulator are materially incompatible, we do *not* mean that it is *impossible* for one and the same subject, at

[22] For instance, in [M79] of the *Introduction*.
[23] For instance, in [M91].

one and the same time, to undertake both commitments. We mean rather that one *ought* not to do so. That 'ought' has the practical significance that violating it means that one is subject to adverse normative assessment, that any subject with two commitments that are materially incompatible in this sense is obliged to *do* something, to relinquish (or modify) at least one of them, so as to repair the inappropriate situation. But it is entirely *possible* for a subject to find itself in this inappropriate normative situation. There is a similar disparity on the side of consequences. That **conducting electricity** is objectively a consequence of **being pure copper** then it is *necessary* that any object that has the one property (at a time) has the other (at that time). But if one acknowledges a commitment to some object's being pure copper, it is still *possible* that one not acknowledge commitment to that object's conducting electricity. It is just that one *ought* to.

This is to say that the relations of material incompatibility and consequence in virtue of which objective facts and properties are determinate are *alethic modal* relations: a matter of what is conditionally (im)possible and necessary. The relations of material incompatibility and consequence in virtue of which the commitments undertaken and predicates applied by discursive subjects are determinate are *deontic normative* relations: a matter of what one is conditionally entitled and committed to. We may think of these as alethic and deontic *modalities*, if we like, but they are still very *different* modalities. Hegel is writing downstream from Kant's use of "necessity" [Notwendigkeit] as a genus covering both cases. "Notwendig" for Kant means "according to a rule." He can accordingly see "natural necessity" and "practical necessity" as species of one genus. (They correspond to different uses of the English "must.") Nonetheless, these are very different modalities, substantially different senses of "necessary" (or "must"). The worry accordingly arises that two quite distinct phenomena are being run together, and that the attempted assimilation consists of nothing more than the indiscriminate use of the same verbal label "conceptual."

11. One of the metacommitments for which I claimed Kant's authority is that to be *intelligible* (in a successor-sense to Descartes's) is to be conceptually structured or—what on this broadly structuralist-functionalist account of content amounts to the same thing—conceptually contentful. Once again following Kant, Hegel understands understanding (and so intelligibility) in ultimately *pragmatic* terms: as a matter of what one must be able practically to *do* to count as exercising such understanding. *What* one must do in order to count thereby as grasping or understanding the conceptual content of a discursive commitment one has undertaken (or is considering undertaking) is to be sensitive in practice to the normative obligations it involves. That means acknowledging commitments that are its consequences, and rejecting those that are incompatible with it. This is in one sense, *immediate* intelligibility of commitments, in that it is *commitments* that one acknowledges, and so has in the first instance attitudes towards. In another sense, of course, this sort of intelligibility is not at all immediate, since it is mediated by the relations to all the other possible commitments, whose relations of material incompatibility and consequence articulate the content acknowledged.[24]

What about the intelligibility of objective states of affairs, which are conceptually contentful in virtue of the alethic modal connections of incompatibility-and-consequence they stand in to other such states of affairs, rather than the deontic normative relations that articulate the conceptual content of discursive commitments (which are "immediately" intelligible in that practical sense I've just been talking about)? The key point is that what one needs to *do* in order thereby to count as practically taking or treating two objective states of affairs (or properties) as *alethically* incompatible is to acknowledge that if one finds oneself with both the corresponding commitments, one is *deontically* obliged to reject or reform at least one of them. And what one needs to *do* in order thereby to count as practically taking or treating one objective state of affairs as a *necessary* (lawful) consequence of another is to acknowledge the corresponding *commitment* to one as a consequence of the corresponding commitment to the other. Here "corresponding" commitments are those whose deontic normative conceptual relations track the alethic modal

[24] I discuss two senses of "noninferential"—one in which observation reports are, and one in which they are not (essentially the two senses Sellars implicitly distinguishes in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind"—in my treatment of the *Consciousness* chapter of the *Phenomenology* (in Chapter Four of *A Spirit of Trust*).

conceptual relations of the objective states of affairs. Isomorphism between *deontic normative* conceptual relations of incompatibility-and-consequence among commitments and *alethic modal* relations of incompatibility-and-consequence among states of affairs determines how one takes things objectively to be. Practically acquiring and altering one's commitments in accordance with a certain set of deontic norms of incompatibility-and-consequence is taking the objective alethic modal relations articulating the conceptual content of states of affairs to be the isomorphic ones.[25]

Because of these relations, normatively acknowledging a commitment with a certain conceptual content *is* taking it that things objectively are thus-and-so—that is, it *is* taking a certain fact to obtain. And that is to say that in immediately grasping the deontic normative conceptual content of a commitment, one is grasping it *as* the appearance *of* a fact whose content is articulated by the corresponding (isomorphic) alethic modal relations of incompatibility-and-consequence. This is how the Mode of Presentation Condition is satisfied in this sort of two-stage representational model while eschewing a strong distinction of intelligibility. The Rational Constraint Condition is satisfied, because if the subject is asked *why*, that is, for what *reason*, one is obliged to give up a commitment to *Q(a)* upon acknowledging a commitment to *P(a)* (something we express explicitly by the use of deontic normative vocabulary), the canonical form of a responsive answer is: because it is *impossible* for anything to exhibit both properties *P* and *Q* (something expressible explicitly by the use of alethic modal vocabulary).[26] And similarly for consequential relations among commitments.

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[25] Really, I should say "homomorphic," since in general subjects need not take it that they are aware of (apperceive, conceptually represent) all the alethic modal relations of incompatibility-and-consequence that objectively obtain. But I mean "homomorphic" in the technical mathematical sense of a structure-preserving mapping from one relational structure (whose elements are subjective commitments labeled by declarative sentences, and whose relations are deontic normative relations of incompatibility and consequence) to another (whose elements are objective states of affairs—in virtue of the homomorphism, labellable by the *same* declarative sentences, and whose relations are alethic modal relations of incompatibility and consequence). The structure preserved is those relations. To say that the homorphism *h* is "structure-preserving" in this sense means that if *aRb* in the commitment-structure, where *R* is normative incompatibility (or consequence) in that structure, then *h(a)R'h(b)*, where *R'* is alethic incompatibility (or consequence) in the objective conceptual structure.

[26] I suppress temporal references here. Note that "simultaneously" is not a sufficient qualification. Rather, the predicates-properties themselves should be thought of as including temporal specifications. For having property

The Genuine Knowledge Condition is satisfied on this model in the sense that it is not *semantically* precluded by the model that the *epistemic* commitment to isomorphism of the subjective norms of incompatibility-and-consequence and the objective modal facts, which is implicit in the semantic relation between them (according to the model's construal of representation), should hold objectively—at least locally and temporarily.[27] The model also makes sense of the possibility of *error* (it satisfies the Intelligibility of Error Condition). For, following Kant, it construes the representation relation in *normative* terms. In manipulating (acquiring and rejecting) commitments according to a definite set of conceptual norms (*deontic* relations of incompatibility-and-consequence) one is *committing* oneself to the objective modal facts (*alethic* relations of incompatibility-and-consequence) being a certain way—as well as to the gound-level empirical determinate facts they articulate being as one takes them to be. So the model also says what must be the case for that isomorphism (or homomorphism) relation to *fail* to hold in fact. Then one has gotten the facts *wrong*—perhaps including the facts about what concepts articulate the objective world.

12. In this lecture I have aimed to do six things:

- To demarcate explicitly the exact range of epistemological theories, epitomized by those of Descartes and Kant, that fall within the target-area of Hegel's criticism;
- To set out clearly the objection that he is making to theories of that kind;
- To formulate Hegel's criteria of adequacy for a theory that would *not* be subject to that objection he is implicitly putting in play;
- To lay out the *non-psychological* conception of the conceptual that will form the backbone of Hegel's response (even though it is not officially introduced in the *Introduction* itself, but must wait for the opening chapters of *Consciousness*);

P at time *t* can be incompatible with having property *Q* at time *t'*: it's raining now is incompatible with the streets being dry in 2 minutes.

[27] That it can*not* in principle hold globally and permanently is a deep feature of Hegel's understanding of sensuous and matter-of-factual *immediacy*. This point is discussed in "Sketch of a Program for a Critical Reading of Hegel," Chapter One of *A Spirit of Trust*, and also in Lecture II of this discussion of the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology*. The *Vernunft* conception of genuine knowledge is not that of *Verstand*.

- To sketch the general outlines of an epistemological and semantic approach based on that conception of the conceptual;
- To indicate how such an approach might satisfy the criteria of adequacy for a theory that is not subject to Hegel's objection.

In the next lecture, I look more closely at the account of *representation* that I take Hegel to construct out of elements put in play by this discussion.

Knowing and Representing:
Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's *Introduction*

Lecture 2 Handout:

Representation and the Experience of Error:
A Functionalist Approach to the Distinction between Appearance and Reality

1. Hegel begins the *Phenomenology* proper with the claim that the two-stage representational epistemological explanatory strategy leads inexorably to skeptical conclusions *if* it is combined with a particular auxiliary hypothesis concerning the difference between representings and represenetds: the idea that only representings (appearances, phenomena) are in conceptual shape, while what is represented by them (reality, noumena) is not.
2. The constructive suggestion Hegel offers as an alternative to this assumption is a radically new, nonpsychological conception of the conceptual. According to this conception, to be conceptually contentful is to stand in relations of material incompatibility ("determinate negation") and material consequence ("mediation") to other such contentful items.
3. Our ordinary, presystematic, nontheoretical thought and talk about thinking and talking distinguishes between what we are thinking or saying, on the one hand, and what we are thinking or talking *about*, on the other.
4. Kant: What distinguishes judgments from the responses of merely natural creatures is that we are in a distinctive way *responsible* for our judgments. They express *commitments* of ours. Judging is a kind of *endorsement,* an exercise of the subject's *authority*. Responsibility, commitment, endorsement, and authority are all *normative* concepts.
5. The integrative task-responsibility to synthesize a unity of apperception has three dimensions: critical, ampliative, and justificatory. These are species of *rational* obligations, for they are articulated by which commitments serve as *reasons* for or against which others.
   - One's *critical* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to reject commitments that are materially *incompatible* with other commitments one has acknowledged.
   - One's *ampliative* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to acknowledge commitments that are material consequences of other commitments one has acknowledged.
   - One's *justificatory* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to be able to provide reasons for the commitments one has acknowledged, by citing other commitments one acknowledges of which they are material consequences.
6. Hegel sees that this account of the *activity* of judging has immediate consequences for the understanding of the *contents* judged: for what one has taken responsibility for, committed oneself to, in judging that *p*. The *rational* articulation of the normative synthetic-integrative task-responsibility Kant identifies as the kind of endorsement distinctive of judging means that we can understand judgeable contents in terms of what we are *doing* in judging. Hegel extracts his conception of conceptual contentfulness from what is required to synthesize a constellation of commitments exhibiting the rational, normative unity distinctive of apperception. This is a

broadly *functionalist* idea. For it is the idea of understanding judgeable contents in terms of the role judgings play in the integrative process that is Kantian apperceiving.

7. Hegel sees that Kant envisages a normative approach not only to the expressive-conceptual dimension of intentionality ('that'-intentionality), but also to the representational dimension ('of'-intentionality). The conceptual content of a judgment is what one makes oneself responsible *for* in judging, and its representational content (what is represented by it) is what one makes oneself responsible *to*. What the judgment is *about*, what is represented by it, is what exercises a distinctive kind of *authority* over assessments of its correctness—*as*, we might want to say, a representing of that represented.

8. The logical flow of the last two-thirds of the *Introduction*, as I see it, is:

- The starting-point is Kant's *normative* conception of judgment, which sees judging as endorsing, committing oneself to, taking responsibility for some judgeable content.
- This idea is made more definite by the Kantian account of judging as integrating a new commitment into a constellation of prior commitments, so as to maintain the rational normative unity distinctive of apperception.
- That idea in turn is filled in by understanding the synthetic-integrative activity as having the tripartite substructure of satisfying critical, ampliative, and justificatory task-responsibilities.
- To this idea is conjoined the *functionalist* strategy of understanding judgeable contents as articulated by the relations they must stand in in order to play their role in that activity, as what one is endorsing, committing oneself to, or taking responsibility for.
- In light of the tripartite substructure of synthesizing a constellation of commitments exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception (intentionality), this thought yields a conception of judgeable contents as articulated by rational relations of material incompatibility (appealed to by the critical task-responsibility) and material consequence (appealed to by the ampliative and justificatory task-responsibilities). The result is Hegel's conception of conceptual contentfulness in terms of determinate negation and mediation (which he will develop and motivate in more detail in the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*).
- The strategy for implementing the conceptualist order of explanation is to treat this account of the expressive-conceptual dimension of intentionality both as providing the raw materials and the model for an account of the representational dimension of intentionality and conceptual content.
- Alongside Kant's normative conception of judgment, a normative conception of representation is discerned. A judgment counts as representing some represented object insofar as it is responsible to that object for its correctness, insofar as that object exercises authority over or serves as a standard for assessments of its correctness.
- The strategy is then to apply the functionalist idea again, to understand representational content in terms of what is required to serve as a normative standard for assessments of the correctness of judgments, as an aspect of the synthetic process of integrating those

commitments into constellations of antecedent commitments exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception.

9. Saying what role in the synthetic-integrative process of judging a judgeable content must play in order to count as purporting to represent something is then satisfying what in the first lecture I called the "mode of presentation" condition (MPC). For it is saying what it is to be or purport to be a mode of presentation of something else: a representing of that represented. Hegel's preferred way of talking about what I have called "representings" is "what things are *for* consciousness."

10. Hegel offers a functionalist account of representational purport and representational content that is modeled on, embedded in, and a development of the functionalist account of propositional content in terms of the activity of judging that he sees as implicit in Kant's way of proceeding.

11. What we must understand, then, is the sense in which, as Hegel says, which "consciousness provides itself with its own standard," how "in what consciousness within its own self designates as the *in-itself* or the true, we have the standard by which consciousness itself proposes to measure its knowledge." [PG §84] How is it that: "the difference between the in-itself and the for-itself is already present in the very fact that consciousness knows an object at all. Something is *to it* the in-itself*,* but the knowledge or the being of the object for consciousness is *to it* still another moment." [PG §85]

12. What Hegel tells us is something *to* consciousness (using the dative "ihm") is just the distinction between what things are *for* consciousness and what they are *in* themselves. I take it that what something is *for* consciousness is the content of a judgment: something that is *explicit*. By contrast, what things are *to* consciousness is a functional matter of how they are *implicitly* taken or practically treated by consciousness.

13. Consciousness is, on the one hand, consciousness of the object, and on the other, consciousness of itself; consciousness of what to it is the True, and consciousness of its knowledge of the truth. [PG §85]

14. The normative construal of representation teaches us that the role something must play in practice in order to be functioning as a reality that is represented by or appearing in a judgment is that of a normative *standard* for the assessment of its correctness. What in the first lecture I called the "rational constraint condition" tells us that what serves as a *standard of assessment* of judgeable contents must be able to serve as a *reason* for the assessment.

15. Hegel's term for the process by which new commitments are integrated into a constellation of old ones is 'experience' (Erfahrung).

16. Triangulation: In treating the two shape-commitments as materially incompatible (in the context of the collateral commitments to rigidity and shape-constancy), the subject is implicitly treating them as having a common subject: as being *about* one and the same object. For commitments to stick A being bent and to stick B being straight are *not* incompatible. It is only if it is the *same* stick to which one is attributing those incompatible properties that the resulting judgeable contents are incompatible with one another.

17. The first stage of the process that is the experience of error is *acknowledgment* of the material incompatibility of some commitments the subject has made.
The second, *rectification*, stage of the experience of error consists in doing what at the first stage one acknowledged one's practical obligation to do: repair the acknowledged incompatibility by revising or rejecting some of the offending commitments. In relinquishing the bent-stick belief and retaining the straight-stick belief, the subject is treating the first as presenting a mere *appearance*, and the second as presenting the corresponding *reality*.
18. The triangulation point ensures that the rejected bent-stick judgment is practically construed not just as an appearance, but as an appearance *of* the reality presented by the retained commitment: What appeared as bent (the stick) has been revealed as really straight.
19. When we look at the role played by various commitments in the experience of error, we see that the mode of presentation condition is satisfied in the sense required by the normative construal of representing.
20. Furthermore, the rational constraint condition is also satisfied by understanding representational purport functionally in terms of the role conceptually articulated judgeable contents play in processes that have the structure of the experience of error. For, in the context of the constellation of collateral commitments in our example, the straight-stick belief provides a *reason* for rejecting the bent-stick belief.
21. On Hegel's model the conceptual content shared by representing and represented, appearance and reality, phenomenon and noumenon, commitment and fact is abstracted from the two different forms that relations of material incompatibility and consequence can take: the subjective form made explicit by deontic normative vocabulary and the objective form made explicit by alethic modal vocabulary. Conceptual content is essentially, and not just accidentally, what can take these two forms. The central metaphysical concept that incorporates and expresses this point is determinate negation. It articulates the sense in which anything (thoughts, facts, properties, conceptual contents) can be *determinate*: by strongly contrasting with, precluding, excluding, other determinates (Spinoza: "Omnis determinatio est negatio.").
22. Hegel regards the subjective articulation of the conceptual content of commitments by deontic normative relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence and the objective articulation of the conceptual content of commitments by alethic modal relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence as two sides of one coin, two aspects of one conception.
23. How are we to understand the conception of conceptual content (articulated by relations of determinate negation and mediation) as *amphibious* between its two forms: subjective-normative and objective-modal? I think it should be understood in terms of two claims.

a) Deontic normative vocabulary is a *pragmatic metavocabulary* for alethic modal vocabulary.

b) As a consequence, there is a kind of *sense-dependence* relation between these vocabularies.

24. The claimed dependence of modal properties (via their amphibiously corresponding concepts) on norm-governed activities of accepting and rejecting commitments is of the sense-dependence, rather than the reference-dependence kind.

We are now in a position to understand the relation between propositional commitments (judgments, beliefs) articulated by normative deontic relations of incompatibility, on the subjective side of certainty, what things are for consciousness, and facts and possible states of affairs, articulated by alethic modal relations of incompatibility, on the objective side of truth, what things are in themselves, as itself a *representational* one: a matter of representings and representeds. We can see how our commitments are intelligible as *appearances of* an objective reality. That intelligibility is *functionalist*, and *pragmatist*. Now we know what we must *do* in order thereby implicitly to be practically taking or treating our commitments *as* appearances *of* a reality—so that the distinction between what things are *for* consciousness and what they are *in* themselves is something *to* consciousness.

Knowing and Representing:
Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's *Introduction*

Lecture 2:

Representation and the Experience of Error:
A Functionalist Approach to the Distinction between Appearance and Reality

Part One: Strategy

I. Introduction

1. I began my previous lecture by formulating a central criterion of adequacy for theories of conceptual content that Hegel sees as put in place by the crucial role they play in theories of knowledge. He opens his *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* by insisting that our *semantic* theory must not already doom us to *epistemological* skepticism. Our understanding of discursive contentfulness must at least leave open the possibility that by undertaking conceptually contentful commitments we can (in some cases, when all goes well) come to know how things really are.[28] He then argues that that condition cannot be met by any account that opens up a gulf of intelligibility separating how things subjectively appear to us (how they are "for consciousness") from how they objectively are ("in themselves").

Modern epistemological theories since Descartes's have understood knowledge as the product of two factors: the knower's grasp of subjective thoughts, and those thoughts' representational relations to objective things. Knowers' cognitive relations to those represented

[28] I use "commitment" for what Hegel will come to talk about as "setzen": positing.

things are accordingly mediated by representings of them. On pain of an infinite regress, the relations between the knowers and their representings cannot then in general be understood as themselves mediated and representational. At least some of the representings must be grasped immediately, in the sense of nonrepresentationally.

I do not think that Hegel rejects as in principle broken-backed all epistemological theories exhibiting this two-stage representational structure (though some of his rhetoric invites us to think otherwise). Rejecting theories of this form is *not* an essential element—and certainly not *the* essential element—in the metaconceptual revolution from thinking in terms of categories with the structure of *Verstand* to thinking in terms of categories with the structure of *Vernunft*, which he is recommending. Rather, Hegel begins the *Phenomenology* proper with the claim that the two-stage representational epistemological explanatory strategy leads inexorably to skeptical conclusions *if* it is combined with a particular auxiliary hypothesis concerning the difference between representings and representeds—one that is tempting and in many ways natural.[29] This is the idea that only representings (appearances, phenomena) are in conceptual shape, while what is represented by them (reality, noumena) is not. On such a view, cognitive processes must transform or map nonconceptual reality into or onto conceptual presentations, since the representational relations those processes institute relate nonconceptual representeds to conceptual representings. Getting this picture in view is, I take it, the point of Hegel's metaphors of knowing as an "instrument" or a "medium" in the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction*. The culprit, the semantic assumption that threatens to enforce epistemological skepticism by excavating a gulf of intelligibility between thought and the world thought about, is the idea that only what we think, and not the world we think about, is conceptually articulated.

2. The constructive suggestion Hegel offers as an alternative to this assumption is a radically new, nonpsychological conception of the conceptual. According to this conception, to be conceptually contentful is to stand in relations of material incompatibility ("determinate negation") and material consequence ("mediation") to other such contentful items. I call this a "nonpsychological" conception of the conceptual because it can be detached from consideration of the processes or practices of applying concepts in judgment and intentional action. Objective

[29] The *Preface*, like most prefaces, was written after the body of the book ("the *Phenomenology* proper") was completed. Unlike most, I think it is also best read after the rest of the book.

states of affairs and properties, too, stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, and are accordingly intelligible as already in conceptual shape, quite apart from any relations they might stand in to the cognitive and practical activities of knowing and acting subjects. Indeed, if objective states of affairs and properties did not stand to one another in such relations, they would not be intelligible as so much as *determinate*. We could not then make sense of the idea that there is some definite way the world actually is. For that idea essentially involves the contrast with other ways the world might be (other properties objects might have). And the contrasts in virtue of which states of affairs and properties are determinate must involve modally exclusive differences ("It is impossible for a piece of pure copper to remain solid at temperatures above 1085° C.") as well as mere differences. (**Red** and **square** are different, but compatible properties.)

This nonpsychological conception of the conceptual is not elaborated in the *Introduction* itself. Rather, it is the principal topic of the succeeding chapters on *Consciousness*. I nonetheless discussed it in my first lecture, because it is important to understand how Hegel proposes to avoid the danger of excavating a gulf of intelligibility separating subjective conceptual representings from objective nonconceptual representeds. It is the danger of excavating such a gulf in the semantic theory of representation that he sees as potentially fatal to the epistemological enterprise. If the process of knowing must span such a gap, then, Hegel thinks, the possibility of genuine knowledge—knowledge of how things are "in themselves," not just how they are "for consciousness"—will be ruled out in principle as unintelligible. Conceptual realism about the objective world, understood in terms of the new, nonpsychological conception of the conceptual, is Hegel's alternative response.

As I read it, the job of the last two-thirds of the *Introduction* is to sketch a way of thinking about representation, once the two-stage representational semantic model has been shorn of the objectionable collateral commitment to understanding representation as relating conceptual representings to nonconceptual representeds. This means showing how to satisfy two of the key criteria of adequacy identified in the previous lecture. The Mode of Presentation Condition (MPC) requires an account of what it is to be, or even to purport to be, a representing *of* some represented: an appearance *of* something. Satisfying this condition is explaining what representation is. Laying out the structure and rationale of Hegel's account of representational

purport and success will also shed light on the second *desideratum*. The Rational Constraint Condition (RCC) requires that we explain how what knowing subjects ("consciousness") is talking or thinking *about* (what is represented) can provide *reasons* for what they say or think about it.[30] Explaining the account of representation Hegel sketches in the *Introduction*, and how it proposes to satisfy these conditions, is the task of this lecture.

II. Two Dimensions of Intentionality and Two Orders of Explanation

3. Our ordinary, presystematic, nontheoretical thought and talk about thinking and talking distinguishes between what we are thinking or saying, on the one hand, and what we are thinking or talking *about*, on the other. We may accordingly say that intentionality, the contentfulness of thought and talk, has two dimensions: what we express when we say or think something, and what we represent in doing so.[31] We can say both "Kant came to believe *that* Lampl was betraying him," and "Kant believed *of* his faithful servant that he was betraying Kant." In the first, the declarative sentence that follows the 'that' expresses the content of the belief, and in the second, the noun-phrase within the scope of the 'of' says what the belief is about.

What I have called "Hegel's nonpsychological conception of the conceptual," which construes conceptual contentfulness as consisting in standing in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, is a model of what one says or thinks: the first dimension of intentionality or contentfulness ('that'-intentionality). For that reason, I will call this the

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[30] Hegel's undifferentiated talk of "consciousness" in the *Introduction* carefully does not distinguish between *a* consciousness and consciousness in general. Later on, in the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, we will see that the *social* articulation of consciousness in general into mutually recognizing individual *self*-consciousnesses is essential to understanding either one.

[31] Saying much more than this immediately raises more systematic and theoretical questions. Can this distinction be paraphrased as that between what we represent and how we represent it? Does the rough and ready distinction of ordinary language involve running together two distinctions that ought to be kept apart: that between Sinn and Bedeutung, and that between the content expressed by declarative sentences and that possessed by singular terms? What further commitments are involved in taking it that in thinking or saying that things are thus-and-so I am representing a state of affairs? My principal purpose here—rationally reconstructing the fundamental considerations, commitments, and ideas that shape the views Hegel expounds in his *Introduction*—is best served by not rushing to engage such theoretically sophisticated semantic issues.

"conceptual dimension" of intentional contentfulness.[32] The question on the table now is how he understands the other, representational dimension ('of'-intentionality).

The empiricists pursued an order of explanation that begins with representational contentfulness and seeks, in effect, to understand and explain conceptual contentfulness more generally in terms of it. One potential advantage of such an approach is that representation shows up as a genus, of which *conceptual* representation is only one species. As I understand him, Hegel pursues a complementary order of explanation. The project he outlines in the *Introduction* is to explain the notion of representation in terms of his nonpsychological concept of conceptual contentfulness. In what follows, I want to explain how I understand his strategy for pursuing this *conceptualist* order of explanation. For one of the principal lessons I think we ought to learn from Hegel concerns his working out of an alternative to the *representationalist* order of explanation of the two dimensions of intentionality, which has dominated the philosophical semantics of the philosophical tradition of the past century that we inherit, as much as it did the (necessarily somewhat shorter) philosophical tradition he inherited.[33]

III. Two Kantian Ideas

4. Hegel has a big new idea about how to explain representational content in terms of conceptual content, understood nonpsychologically, as he does, in terms of articulation by relations of material incompatibility and consequence. The way he fills in that conceptualist idea is best understood as a way of combining and jointly developing two Kantian ideas. The first is Kant's *normative* account of judgment. What distinguishes judgments from the responses of merely natural creatures is that we are in a distinctive way *responsible* for our judgments. They express *commitments* of ours. Judging is a kind of *endorsement,* an exercise of the subject's *authority*. Responsibility, commitment, endorsement, and authority are all *normative* concepts.

[32] This usage has the potential to mislead, since, as we will see, Hegel takes it that conceptual contentfulness essentially, and not just accidentally, exhibits also a representational dimension.

[33] Of course, these complementary reductive approaches are not the only strategic possibilities. One might offer independent accounts of conceptual and representational intentionality, and then explain how they relate to one another. Or one might, perhaps most plausibly, insist that the two can only be explained together and in relation to one another.

Kant understands concepts as "functions of judgment" in the sense that the concepts applied in a judgment determine *what* the subject has made itself responsible for, committed itself to, endorsed, or invested with its authority. In judging, subjects normatively bind themselves by rules (concepts) that determine the nature and extent of their commitments.

By pursuing an account with this shape, Kant makes urgent the question of how to understand the normative bindingness (his "Verbindlichkeit") of the concepts applied in judging. Where the early Modern tradition, beginning with Descartes, had worried about our ("immediate", i.e. non-representational) grip on concepts, for Kant the problem becomes understanding their normative grip on us. What is it to be committed to or responsible for the claim that *p*? The second Kantian idea on which Hegel's conceptualist approach to the representational dimension of intentionality is based is that the responsibility in question should be understood as a kind of *task* responsibility: it is the responsibility to *do* something. What one is responsible for doing in committing oneself to *p* is *integrating* that new commitment into the constellation of prior commitments, so as to sustain its exhibition of the kind of unity distinctive of apperception. (Apperception is cognitive or sapient awareness, awareness that can amount to knowledge. Apperceiving is judging. Judgment is the form of apperception because judgments are the smallest unit for which one can take cognitive responsibility.) This integration is a species of the genus Kant calls 'synthesis' (which is why the structural unity in question is a *synthetic* unity of apperception).

This integrative task-responsibility has three dimensions: critical, ampliative, and justificatory. These are species of *rational* obligations, for they are articulated by which commitments serve as *reasons* for or against which others.

- One's *critical* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to reject commitments that are materially *incompatible* with other commitments one has acknowledged.
- One's *ampliative* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to acknowledge commitments that are material consequences of other commitments one has acknowledged.
- One's *justificatory* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to be able to provide reasons for the commitments one has acknowledged, by citing other commitments one acknowledges of which they are material consequences.

These are ought-to-do's that correspond to the ought-to-be's that one's cognitive commitments, judgments, or beliefs ought to be consistent, complete, and justified. They are norms of rationality. When explicitly acknowledged, they are the norms of *systematicity*. Since judging consists in implicitly committing oneself to fulfill the critical, ampliative, and justificatory integrative-synthetic task responsibilities, in judging at all one implicitly undertakes these rational, systematic commitments. Collectively, they define the rational, normative, synthetic unity of apperception.

III. Hegel's Functionalist Idea

5. Hegel sees that this account of the *activity* of judging has immediate consequences for the understanding of the *contents* judged: for what one has taken responsibility for, committed oneself to, in judging that *p*. The *rational* articulation of the normative synthetic-integrative task-responsibility Kant identifies as the kind of endorsement distinctive of judging means that we can understand judgeable contents in terms of what we are *doing* in judging. For those contents must determine the rational relations such judgeable contents stand in to one another: what is a reason for and against what. The critical integrative-synthetic task-responsibility requires that judgeable contents stand to one another in relations of material *incompatibility*. The ampliative and justificatory integrative-synthetic task responsibilities require that judgeable contents stand to one another in relations of material *consequence*. And that is to say that judgeable contents must have *conceptual* content, in just the sense Hegel himself endorses. That concept of the conceptual is already implicit in Kant's account of judging.

Hegel extracts his conception of conceptual contentfulness from what is required to synthesize a constellation of commitments exhibiting the rational, normative unity distinctive of apperception. This is a broadly *functionalist* idea. For it is the idea of understanding judgeable contents in terms of the role judgings play in the integrative process that is Kantian apperceiving. This functionalist explanatory strategy is of the first importance in understanding not only Hegel's conception of the expressive dimension of intentionality ('that'-intentionality), but also

the way he builds on that to offer an account of the representational dimension ('of'-intentionality).

What is functionally reconstructed in terms of role in the synthesis of apperception is, of course, at most a part of Kant's understanding of the conceptual. For this abstract, top-down approach to concepts does not essentially depend on their contrast and collaboration with intuitions. Kant himself would insist that for this reason, understanding concepts solely in terms of relations of material incompatibility and consequence apart from any relation to intuitions must be a purely formal one. So conceived, concepts would be empty in the sense of being devoid of representational content. From the point of view of Hegel's conceptualist explanatory strategy, this conception of the *expressive* or *conceptual* dimension of intentionality provides the raw materials in terms of which the *representational* dimension is to be understood.

6. Hegel sees that Kant envisages a *normative* approach not only to the *expressive-conceptual* dimension of intentionality (*de dicto*, 'that'-intentionality), but also to the *representational* dimension (*de re*, 'of'-intentionality). The conceptual content of a judgment is what one makes oneself responsible *for* in judging, and its representational content (what is represented by it) is what one makes oneself responsible *to*. For Hegel's Kant, we have seen, being responsible for a judgment to the effect that *p* consists in being responsible for integrating it into the constellation of one's prior commitments, so as to sustain the rational normative unity characteristic of apperception. What the judgment is *about*, what is represented by it, is what exercises a distinctive kind of *authority* over assessments of its correctness—*as*, we might want to say, a representing of that represented. Something (paradigmatically, a judging) is intelligible as being a representing just insofar as it is responsible for its correctness to something that thereby counts as represented by it.

In Kant's terms, the objective form of judgment is the "object=X" which every judgment as such is responsible to (for its correctness). (The subjective form of judgment, the "I think" which can accompany every judging, marks the knower who is responsible for the judgment—that is, responsible for integrating it with the others for which that knower takes the same kind of responsibility.) In the form in which this thought appears in Hegel's *Introduction*, represented objects are what serves as a normative *standard* [Maβstab] for assessments of commitments that

count as representing those objects just in virtue of that constellation of authority and responsibility. Hegel's idea is to apply the functionalist explanatory strategy, which looked to normative role in the synthetic-integrative activity of judging for understanding the *conceptual* dimension of judgeable contents, also to the understanding of the *representational* dimension of content. That is, he looks to what knowing subjects need to *do* in order thereby to count as acknowledging the authority of something to serve as a standard for assessing the correctness of a judgment, in order to understand representational relations. If he can exhibit that kind of doing as an aspect of the synthetic-integrative activity in terms of which the conceptual dimension of content is explained, he will have carried out the conceptualist explanatory strategy of understanding the representational dimension of intentionality in terms of the expressive-conceptual dimension ('of'-intentionality in terms of 'that'-intentionality).

I take it that the main task of the last two-thirds of the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* is to sketch this way of working-out the conceptualist explanatory strategy for understanding the relations between the two dimensions of intentionality. The logical flow as I see it is this.

1. The starting-point is Kant's *normative* conception of judgment, which sees judging as endorsing, committing oneself to, taking responsibility for some judgeable content.
2. This idea is made more definite by the Kantian account of judging as integrating a new commitment into a constellation of prior commitments, so as to maintain the rational normative unity distinctive of apperception.
3. That idea in turn is filled in by understanding the synthetic-integrative activity as having the tripartite substructure of satisfying critical, ampliative, and justificatory task-responsibilities.
4. To this idea is conjoined the *functionalist* strategy of understanding judgeable contents as articulated by the relations they must stand in in order to play their role in that activity, as what one is endorsing, committing oneself to, or taking responsibility for.
5. In light of the tripartite substructure of synthesizing a constellation of commitments exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception (intentionality), this thought yields a conception of judgeable contents as articulated by rational relations of material incompatibility (appealed to by the critical task-responsibility) and material consequence (appealed to by the ampliative and justificatory task-responsibilities). The result is Hegel's conception of conceptual contentfulness in terms of determinate negation and

mediation (which he will develop and motivate in more detail in the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*).

The strategy for implementing the conceptualist order of explanation is to treat this account of the expressive-conceptual dimension of intentionality both as providing the raw materials and the model for an account of the representational dimension of intentionality and conceptual content.

6. Alongside Kant's normative conception of *judgment*, a normative conception of *representation* is discerned. A judgment counts as representing some represented object insofar as it is responsible to that object for its correctness, insofar as that object exercises authority over or serves as a standard for assessments of its correctness.
7. The strategy is then to apply the functionalist idea *again*, to understand representational content in terms of what is required to serve as a normative standard for assessments of the correctness of judgments, as an aspect of the synthetic process of integrating those commitments into constellations of antecedent commitments exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception.

Part Two: Implementation

IV. The Mode of Presentation Condition

7. The task of making sense of the representational dimension of intentionality according to the conceptualist strategy is explaining what it is for some judgeable conceptual content, articulated by its relations of material incompatibility and consequence to other such contents, to function as representing some worldly state of affairs. Saying what role in the synthetic-integrative process of judging a judgeable content must play in order to count as purporting to represent something is then satisfying what in the first lecture I called the "mode of presentation" condition (MPC). For it is saying what it is to be or to purport to be a mode of presentation of something else: a represent*ing* of some represent*ed*. Hegel's preferred way of talking about what

I have called "representings" is "what things are *for* consciousness." What things are for consciousness purports to be the appearance of a reality: what things are *in* themselves. Satisfying the MPC is saying what it is for something to show up as an appearance *of* something. The representing/represented, appearance/reality, what things are *for* consciousness/what things are *in* themselves, and certainty/truth distinctions also line up for Hegel with the Kantian phenomena/noumena distinction.

The question Hegel is asking is: What is it for something to be something *for* consciousness? This is asking the deepest and most important question about the representational dimension of intentionality. Hegel is not at all presupposing the notion of <u>things being something *for* consciousness</u>. It is not one of his primitives. Rather, he offers a functionalist account of representational *purport* and representational *content* that is modeled on, embedded in, and a development of the *functionalist* account of propositional content in terms of the activity of judging that he sees as implicit in Kant's way of proceeding. There Hegel answers the question that would later be put as that of specifying the distinctive "unity of the proposition" holistically, in terms of standing to other such judgeable contents in relations of material incompatibility and material consequence. Those relations show up as *rational* relations because they articulate what judgments serve as reasons for and against what others. That "unity of the proposition" is understood functionally, in terms of the synthetic unity of a constellation of commitments that is characteristic of apperception: the dynamic unity that is created and sustained by integrating new commitments with old ones subject to the triadic systematic critical, ampliative, and justificatory task-responsibilities. That the unity of propositional *content* can be so understood in terms of the unity that defines the rational norms that must govern what one *does* in order for such doings to count as judgings having contents exhibiting the unity characteristic of the propositional is what it means to say that, in the end "there is only one unity": ultimately, the synthetic unity of apperception.[34]

We have seen that the first piece of the puzzle is the idea that for something to be something *for* consciousness is to be understood in normative terms of the distinctive kind of

[34] [ref.] to Kant "there is only one unity" from transcendental deduction.

authority it exercises over assessments of the *correctness* of the judgments consciousness consists in. Judgments must be *responsible to* what is represented, for their correctness, for them to be intelligible as representing it, being about it, being an appearance of it. As Hegel puts the point, what is represented must serve as a normative *standard* for judgings. The next question is how this thought can be operationalized in a functionalist spirit—that is, understood in terms of what one must *do* to count as acknowledging that authority, the responsibility of what things are *for* consciousness, which is to say judgments, to what things are *in* themselves. Consciousness itself must take its judgments to be representations *of* some reality—that is, to point beyond themselves to something that they answer to for their correctness. Otherwise it would not be taking it that in judging a consciousness is taking a stand on how things are in themselves. Its judgments would not be how things really are *for* consciousness.

What we must understand, then, is the sense in which, as Hegel says, "consciousness provides itself with its own standard," how "in what consciousness within its own self designates as the *in-itself* or the true, we have the standard by which consciousness itself proposes to measure its knowledge."[35] How is it that: "the difference between the in-itself and the for-itself is already present in the very fact that consciousness knows an object at all. Something is *to it* the in-itself*,* but the knowledge or the being of the object for consciousness is *to it* still another moment."[36] The distinction between what things are *in* themselves and what they are *for* consciousness must itself be something *to* consciousness. This passage marks an absolutely crucial (if seldom acknowledged) distinction: between things being something *for* consciousness and things being something *to* consciousness. It is easy to miss this distinction, because unlike the phrases "*for* consciousness" ("für Bewußtsein") "*in* themselves" ("an sich"), "*to* consciousness" is expressed without an explicit preposition, in the dative (and anaphoric) construction "ihm."[37]

8. What Hegel tells us is something *to* consciousness is just the distinction between what things are *for* consciousness and what they are *in* themselves. I take it that what something is *for*

[35] M§84.
[36] M§85.
[37] For instance "daß ihm etwas das *An-sich*…ist," in M§85.

consciousness is in the first instance the content of a judgment: something that is *explicit*. Judgeable contents are explicit in the sense of being thinkable and statable in declarative sentences (or 'that'-clauses). They are *propositional* contents. As we have seen, Hegel understands such contents in terms of the relations of material incompatibility and (hence) material consequence they stand in to one another. And he understands those relations in turn in terms of the role judgeable contents play in the rational synthetic process of integration and rectification of commitments so as to maintain the unity characteristic of apperception. By contrast, what things are *to* consciousness is a functional matter of how they are *implicitly* taken or practically treated by consciousness. In what it *does*, consciousness practically distinguishes between what things are *for* it and what they are *in* themselves: between appearance and reality. Consciousness, he says, *is* their comparison.[38] We must understand how what consciousness *does* that is essential to its being intelligible *as* consciousness can be understood as practically acknowledging this distinction. This will be understanding how "consciousness is, on the one hand, consciousness of the object, and on the other, consciousness of itself; consciousness of what to it is the True, and consciousness of its knowledge of the truth."[39] What consciousness as such *does* is judge: engage in the synthetic-integrative activity that creates and maintains the synthetic unity of apperception. So the distinction between appearance and reality, what things are *for* consciousness and what they are *in* themselves, represent*ing*s and represent*ed*s, must be intelligible in terms of functional roles with respect to that activity. What Hegel calls "natural consciousness" itself does not need to have these metaconceptual concepts, does not need to be able to apply them explicitly in judgments.[40] But we (the "phenomenological consciousness") who are thinking about its activity must be able to attribute to it a grasp of what these concepts make explicit, a grasp that is implicit in what consciousness *does*.

The normative construal of representation teaches us that the role something must play in practice in order to be functioning as a reality that is represented by or appearing in a judgment is that of a normative *standard* for the assessment of its correctness.[41] What in the first lecture I called the "rational constraint condition" tells us that what serves as a *standard of assessment* of

[38] M§85.
[39] M§85.
[40] In M§77-78.
[41] The assessment in question is Hegel's 'Prüfung', in M§85.

judgeable contents must be able to serve as a *reason* for the assessment. This is to say that it must, at least in principle, be available *to* consciousness *as* a reason. To be serviceable as a reason, what plays the role of a standard of assessment must be in conceptual shape; it must stand to representings and representables in relations of material incompatibility and consequence. That is what is required for it to be able to serve as a reason for or against judgments, a standard with respect to which they can be assessed as correct or incorrect.

V. The Experience of Error

9. With that thought, we arrive at the crux of Hegel's functionalist account of representational purport. Hegel's term for the process by which new commitments are integrated into a constellation of old ones is 'experience' (Erfahrung). The aspect of that process on which his account of the representational purport of judgeable contents turns is the critical one, in which incompatibilities that result from adding a new judgment are acknowledged and resolved. The systematic normative obligation along this dimension is a task responsibility: the responsibility to do something. What one is obliged to do is to restore the synthetic unity characteristic of apperception by repairing the incoherence that results when a subject finds itself with incompatible commitments. This process is the experience of *error*.

Consider an example. A naïve subject looks at a stick half-submerged in the water of a pond and perceptually acquires a belief that the stick is bent. Upon pulling it out, she acquires the belief that it is straight. Throughout she has believed that it is rigid, and that removing it from the water won't change its shape. These judgments are jointly incompatible. Acknowledging that is acknowledging that a mistake has been made. Those acknowledgements are acknowledgements of the practical responsibility to restore compatibility to one's commitments (the critical task-responsibility). What one must do is reject or modify at least one of the commitments in the offending constellation. Suppose our subject gives up the belief that the stick is bent, keeping the belief that it is straight (as well as the other collateral

commitments). Our subject might have made the choice she did concerning what to retain and what to reject in the light of her belief that she is much more experienced and reliable at visually judging shapes looked at through air or water than through both.

Notice first that in treating the two shape-commitments as materially incompatible (in the context of the collateral commitments to rigidity and shape-constancy), the subject is implicitly treating them as having a common subject: as being *about* one and the same object. For commitments to stick A being bent and to stick B being straight are *not* incompatible. It is only if it is the *same* stick to which one is attributing those incompatible properties that the resulting judgeable contents are incompatible with one another. (Hegel discusses this issue at some length in the *Perception* chapter of the *Phenomenology*.) Taking two commitments to be incompatible (by acknowledging in practice the obligation to revise at least one of them) is treating them as being about one object, and to be attributing incompatible properties to *it*. In other words, it is treating them as representings of a common represented. Practically acknowledging the incompatibility of two commitments involves a kind of representational *triangulation*. It is implicitly treating them as sharing a topic, as being about the same thing. To say that this acknowledgment of common representational purport is *implicit* is to say that the representational purport is acknowledged in what the subject *does*, rather than explicitly, as the propositional content of a judgment—a judgment to the effect that these different senses (conceptual contents, articulated by their relations of material incompatibility and consequence) pick out the same referent. That is, it is a matter of what these commitments are *to* consciousness, not what they are *for* consciousness. (The stick is both bent and straight *for* consciousness, but the incompatibility of those commitments is in this simplest case only something *to* consciousness.)

10. This is a point about the first stage of the process that is the experience of error: *acknowledgment* of the material incompatibility of some commitments the subject has made. At this stage, the incompatible commitments are all on a level. No invidious assessments of their relative authority (credibility) have yet been made. What I have said so far is that even at this stage, we can understand an acknowledgment of the joint representational purport of two commitments as being implicit in the practical acknowledgment of their material

incompatibility.[42] This purely formal dimension of practical representational purport is complemented by another, richer dimension that emerges only at the next stage of the experience of error. For *acknowledgment* of incompatibility (that is, of the presence of some error or other among the commitments being taken to be mutually incompatible) is to be followed by *revision* of at least some of those commitments. The second, *rectification*, stage of the experience of error consists in doing what at the first stage one acknowledged one's practical obligation to do: repair the acknowledged incompatibility by revising or rejecting some of the offending commitments.

In our example, in relinquishing the bent-stick belief and retaining the straight-stick belief, the subject is treating the first as presenting a mere *appearance*, and the second as presenting the corresponding *reality*. For at this stage in the experience of error, the mistake has been localized and identified. The problem, the subject takes it, is the bent-stick commitment. It is in error. Rejecting it is practically taking it *not* to express how things really are. For *endorsing* a judgeable content is what one must do in order thereby to be taking or treating it in practice as expressing how things *really are*. The subject had previously practically accorded that status to the bent-stick judgment. Repudiating that prior commitment is taking it no longer to deserve that status. The subject takes it to have been revealed (by its collision with other commitments) as merely *purporting* to express how things really are, that is, as being a *mere appearance*.

Furthermore, the triangulation point ensures that the rejected bent-stick judgment is practically construed not just as *an* appearance, but as an appearance *of* the reality presented by the retained commitment: What appeared as bent (the stick) has been revealed as really straight. In the experience of error, both the straight-stick and the bent-stick commitments are practically taken or treated as *modes of presentation* of a reality (the stick), one veridically representing and one *mis*representing it. Both of these stages of the process that is the experience of error, the acknowledgment of incompatibility and its rectification, contribute to the satisfaction of the

[42] The point generalizes to constellations of more than two jointly incompatible commitments (so long as all the members of the set are essential to their collective incompatibility, in the sense that dropping them would leave a mutually compatible remainder). For simplicity, I will stick to the two commitment case.

mode of presentation condition on a construal of intentional content. For the way judgments function, the roles they play, in these phases of the experience of error show what it is one must *do* in order thereby to count as acknowledging in practice the representational dimension of conceptual content: what it is to take or treat judgments as representings or appearances of how some represented thing really is.

In the first phase of the experience of error, the authority of the straight-stick belief collides with that of the bent-stick belief. In the second phase, the authority of the straight-stick belief is endorsed, while that of the bent-stick belief is rejected. In the context of collateral beliefs concerning rigidity, what can change the shape of rigid objects, and the relative reliability of visual perception under various conditions, the straight-stick belief is accepted as a *standard* for the assessment of the *correctness* (veridicality) of the bent-stick belief. Since they are incompatible, the latter is rejected as incorrect according to that standard. The bent-stick belief is assessed as responsible to the constellation of commitments that includes the straight-stick belief. All of this is to say that as presented in the straight-stick judgment, the straight stick is performing the *normative* functional office characteristic of the reality represented by some representing: it is practically treated as being, it is *to* consciousness, an authoritative standard for assessments of the correctness of representings that count as *about* it just in virtue of being *responsible to* it for such assessments. So when we look at the role played by various commitments in the experience of error, we see that the mode of presentation condition is satisfied in the sense required by the normative construal of representing.

Furthermore, the rational constraint condition is also satisfied by understanding representational purport functionally in terms of the role conceptually articulated judgeable contents play in processes that have the structure of the experience of error. For, in the context of the constellation of collateral commitments in our example, the straight-stick belief provides a *reason* for rejecting the bent-stick belief. The collision between the two is *rationally* resolved. Belief in the differential reliability of visual perception under the conditions that led to the endorsement of the bent-stick and straight-stick perceptual judgments conjoined with the straight-stick belief constitute an argument against the bent-stick belief. In undergoing the

experience of error, our subject in practice treats reality (the straight stick) as providing *rational* constraint on the assessment of various appearances as veridical.

In proceeding this way, the subject in practice takes or treats the bent-stick belief as expressing just what things are *for* consciousness, and the straight-stick belief as expressing what things are *in* themselves. These statuses, in turn, are what the beliefs are *to* consciousness, or implicitly. For the subject of the experience of error ("natural consciousness") need not explicitly deploy concepts of reality and appearance, represented and representing, what things are *in* themselves and what things are *for* consciousness, noumena and phenomena, in order for what it does in retaining one of the (contextually) materially incompatible dyad of commitments and rejecting the other to be intelligible as practically taking or treating one as presenting how things *really are* and the other as presenting a *mere appearance*. One is *to* consciousness what the stick is in itself (straight), and the other is *to* consciousness what the stick is (was) merely *for* consciousness.[43] This is what Hegel means when he says that "consciousness provides itself with its own standard," how "in what consciousness within its own self designates as the *in-itself* or the true, we have the standard by which consciousness itself proposes to measure its knowledge."[44]

This account of consciousness's practical, implicit grasp of the distinction and relation between what things are *for* it and what those things are *in* themselves, how that distinction is something *to* consciousness, but not yet necessarily *for* consciousness, is the solution to the challenge of the Bradleyan regress, which in the previous lecture I pointed out as a successor to the Cartesian regress of representation. This is the regress that threatens, not when one worries that representings must themselves be known representationally, but rather the one that threatens when one worries that the representational *relation* between representings and representeds must be known representationally. The regress is avoided because the representational relation is not required to be something explicitly *for* consciousness, but only something *to* consciousness, a matter of how it is implicitly treated in what consciousness *does* as part of the experience of error.

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[43] As Hegel puts it in M§84 and M§85, quoted above.

[44] M§84.

VI. The Two Sides of Conceptual Content are Representationally Related

11. On Hegel's model the conceptual content shared by representing and represented, appearance and reality, phenomenon and noumenon, commitment and fact is abstracted from the two different forms that relations of material incompatibility and consequence can take: the *subjective* form made explicit by *deontic normative* vocabulary and the *objective* form made explicit by *alethic modal* vocabulary. Conceptual content is essentially, and not just accidentally, what can take these two forms. The central metaphysical concept that incorporates and expresses this point is determinate negation. It articulates the sense in which anything (thoughts, facts, properties, conceptual contents) can be *determinate*: by strongly contrasting with, precluding, excluding, other determinates (Spinoza: "Omnis determinatio est negatio."). On the objective side, that means that how things are is essentially also a matter of the structure of its alethic modal relations to what it makes impossible and what it makes necessary. On the subjective side, it means that commitments can be understood as determinate only in the context of the functional role they play in the *process* of acquiring and revising commitments. For it is that process that is governed by the deontic normative relations of incompatibility and consequence that articulate the conceptual content of those commitments. One of the things that has always been hard to understand about Hegel's conception of (determinate) negation, and (so) his conception of concepts and their contents, is his connection of these traditional logical notions with *dynamic* categories, of movement, process, and restlessness.[45] What lies behind it is

[45] In the *Phenomenology*, this is a theme emphasized in the *Preface*, in partial explanation of why "everything hangs on apprehending and expressing the truth not merely as *substance* but also equally as *subject*." [M17] Subjects are the ones who must respond to the normative demands implicit in applying a concept whose content is articulated by the relations of determinate negation (material incompatibility) and mediation (inferential consequence) it stands in to other such contents. That they must respond by *doing* something, *changing* their further commitments (rejecting some and accepting others) is the context in which we must understand his talk of the "movement of the Begriff" [M34]. This is what he is talking about when he refers to "…the self-moving concept which takes its determinations back into itself. Within this movement, the motionless subject itself breaks down; it enters into the distinctions and the content and constitutes the determinateness, which is to say, the distinguished

this connection between incompatibility in the normative sense and the process of commitment acquisition and revision.

Hegel regards the *subjective* articulation of the conceptual content of commitments by *deontic normative* relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence and the *objective* articulation of the conceptual content of facts (and properties) by *alethic modal* relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence as two sides of one coin, two aspects of one conception. His substantive claim is that his concepts of determinate negation and conceptual content do not equivocate. Rather, they have a fine structure that is articulated by the relations between the two intimately related forms, subjective and objective, that conceptual contents defined by determinate negation (and mediation) can take. This claim plays a central role in his strategy of understanding the subjective and objective sides of the intentional nexus of knowledge (and later, agency) by abstracting them as complementary aspects of conceptual content—a strategy he contrasts, already in the *Introduction*, with traditional approaches that seek to take antecedently and independently specified conceptions of subject and object and somehow bolt them together to get an intelligible picture of their intentional relations. That approach, he claims, is doomed so long as a psychological conception of the conceptual (and hence of the intelligible) restricts conceptual content to the subjective side of what then inevitably appears as a gulf of intelligibility separating knowing and acting subjects from the objective world they know about and act on and in.

12. How are we to understand the conception of conceptual content (articulated by relations of determinate negation and mediation) as *amphibious* between its two forms: subjective-normative and objective-modal? (This question obviously goes to the heart of our understanding of Hegel's *idealism*.) I think it should be understood in terms of two claims. First, deontic normative vocabulary is a *pragmatic metavocabulary* for alethic modal vocabulary. Second, as a consequence, there is a kind of *sense-dependence* relation between these vocabularies. On the first point, deontic normative vocabulary lets one *say* what one must *do* in order thereby to be

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content as well as the content's movement, instead of continuing simply to confront that movement. [M60] It is why: "Determinate thoughts have the 'I', the power of the negative, or pure actuality, for the substance and element of their existence…" [33]

saying what alethic modal vocabulary let's one say.[46] For what one must do in order to count as grasping the contents expressed by alethic modal vocabulary—by the claims that it is *impossible* that both *p* and *q*, that if *p* then *necessarily r* (which Hegel claims have the expressive function of making explicit the relations in virtue of which *p*, *q*, and *r* have the conceptual contents they do)—is in practice take or treat *commitments* to *p* and *q* as *normatively* incompatible (so one cannot be *entitled* to both) and commitment to *p* as normatively *entailing* commitment to *r* (so if one is committed to the first, one counts as thereby committed to the second). It is only by knowing how to accord with the norms expressed in the *deontic* vocabulary that one can count as able to understand and apply *modal* vocabulary. Practically treating one's commitments as standing in these normative relations to one another *is* implicitly understanding them as commitments concerning what is *objectively* impossible and necessary—that is, as appearances *of* a reality articulated by such alethic modal relations. As we have seen, engaging in the experience of error, governed by practical norms that respect deontic relations of incompatibility, is what taking or treating one's commitments as appearances (representings) of some (represented) reality consists in.

That deontic normative vocabulary in this way plays the expressive role of being a pragmatic metavocabulary for alethic modal vocabulary means that one cannot understand *alethic modal* vocabulary, cannot deploy it with understanding, unless one has mastered the *normatively* governed practices made explicit by *deontic* vocabulary. This is a claim about practically *grasping* what is expressed by alethic modal vocabulary—about what one must be able to *do* in order to *say* what it says. It is *not* a claim about what must be *true* for what one *says* using that modal vocabulary to be true. That is, the claim is *not* that unless some claims formulable in deontic normative vocabulary were true, no claims formulable in alethic modal vocabulary could be true. It is not, and does not entail, the claim that unless some concept-users could apply normative vocabulary, no modal claims would be true. The claim is that unless one *practically* understands what is said by normative vocabulary—can *do* the things, engage in the practices, that are specifiable in normative vocabulary—one cannot understand what is *said* by

[46] I offer some background, clarification, and examples of the concept of pragmatic metavocabulary in Chapter One of *Between Saying and Doing* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

modal vocabulary. That is, the claim is that there is a kind of *sense*-dependence of modal vocabulary on what is expressed by normative vocabulary, not a kind of *reference*-dependence.

That distinction can be made clear by an example that has nothing to do with normativity or modality. Regardless of whether or not this would be a good way to think about the concept of beauty, we can define a *response-dependent* concept beauty* by stipulating that some object or situation counts as beautiful* just in case it *would*, under suitable circumstances, produce a response of pleasure in a suitable subject suitably exposed to it. (The use I want to make of the example won't depend on how these various parametric notions of suitability get filled-in.) Then the property of being **beautiful*** is sense-dependent on that of **pleasure**: one could not *understand* the (amphibiously corresponding) *concept* beautiful* unless one *understood* the concept pleasure. For the one is defined in terms of the other. It does not at all follow that something could not *be* beautiful* unless something responded with pleasure. On this definition, there were sunsets that were beautiful* before there were any suitable, pleasure-capable responders, and they would still have been beautiful* even if there never had been such responders. For it still could be the case that *if* there *were* such responders present, they *would* respond (or *would have* responded) with pleasure. In just the same way, if we define a planet or star as "supraterran" just in case it has a mass more than twice that of the Earth, we are not thereby committing ourselves to denying that a planet could have that property in a possible world in which the Earth did not exist. Depending on how they are specified, properties can be *sense-dependent* on other properties (as **beautiful*** is on **pleasure** and **supraterran** is on **has at least twice the mass of the Earth**), without being *reference-dependent* on them. That is, something can exhibit a property P that is sense-dependent, but not reference-dependent, on a property P' in a world in which nothing exhibits the property P'.

The claimed dependence of modal properties (via their amphibiously corresponding concepts) on norm-governed activities of accepting and rejecting commitments is of the sense-dependence, rather than the reference-dependence kind. The objective world would still be conceptually structured in the sense of consisting of facts about objects and their properties and relations, articulated by alethic modal relations of relative compossibility and necessitation, even in worlds that never included knowing and acting subjects who applied normatively articulated concepts in undertaking and rejecting commitments. The mind-dependence of the objective

world asserted by this dimension of Hegel's idealism—call it "objective idealism"—is not the objectionable Berkeleyan reference-dependence kind (Kant calls it "subjective idealism"), but of the much more plausible (or at least colorable) sense-dependence kind. *We* can understand and describe possible worlds without subjects to whom deontic normative vocabulary applies as nonetheless making applicable alethic modal vocabulary. But our capacity to make sense of such possibilities depends on *our* being able to engage in practices made explicit by the application of deontic normative vocabulary.

The sort of model that Hegel constructs to contrast with two-stage representational models committed to a strong difference of intelligibility between representings and representeds depends on an account of conceptual contentfulness committed to the amphibiousness of conceptual content between a *subjective* form articulated by *deontic normative* relations of incompatibility-and-consequence and an *objective* form articulated by *alethic modal* relations of incompatibility-and-consequence. The relation of correspondence between them is that of a pragmatic metavocabulary that induces a kind of practical sense-dependence. According to this approach, *modal* realism entails *conceptual* realism, which entails objective *idealism*. In his *Introduction*, Hegel is introducing us not just to his book, but also to the metaconceptual categorical framework he elsewhere calls "Vernunft," by contrast to the traditional modern metaconceptual categorical framework that reached its most explicit and revealing form in Kant, which he calls "Verstand." Thinking in the *Vernunft* way involves saying things that are strange indeed from the standpoint of the traditional framework of *Verstand*. These are such claims as that since there is some determinate way the world objectively is, it, no less than thought about it, comes in conceptual (hence intelligible) form, and would do even if there never had been concept-applying subjects. Accordingly, thought and being, representing and represented (subject and substance, in the idiom of the *Preface*) are essentially paired forms that conceptual content can take. The concept of negation (incompatibility) in terms of which we should understand determinateness (whether of subjective thought or of objective fact) essentially involves a principle of *motion*, of *change,* of active, practical *doing*—as odd as this seems from the point of view of the logical tradition indigenous to *Verstand*. Subjective practices and processes specifiable in deontic normative vocabulary and objective relations and facts specifiable in alethic modal vocabulary are two complementary aspects or dimensions of whatever is determinate, and hence intelligible. (We are now in a position to see these as claims

about practical sense-dependence relations, consequent upon the pragmatic metavocabulary relation between normative and modal vocabularies.) Hegel's aim in the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* is to convince us that if the epistemological possibility of genuine knowledge and so much as the intelligibility of error are not be semantically ruled out of court at the outset, we must broaden the range of models of the possible relations between appearance and reality so as to encompass not only the familiar *Verstand* semantic paradigm, but also the new, unfamiliar *Vernunft* one—in spite of the initially strange and unpalatable consequences it embraces.

VII. Conclusion

13. I ended my first lecture with a discussion of the two forms conceptual content can be seen to take, once we adopt Hegel's non-psychological conception of it (as articulated by relations of material incompatibility and consequence), namely subjective and objective forms. It is this conception that is to make it possible for us to avoid excavating a gulf of intelligibility between knower and known, appearance and reality, representings and representeds, in our *semantics*, which then must lead to skepticism in our *epistemology*. We are now in a position to understand the relation between propositional commitments (judgments, beliefs) articulated by *normative deontic* relations of incompatibility, on the *subjective* side of *certainty*, what things are *for* consciousness, and facts and possible states of affairs, articulated by *alethic modal* relations of incompatibility, on the *objective* side of *truth*, what things are *in* themselves, as itself a *representational* one: a matter of representings and representeds. We can see how our commitments are intelligible as *appearances of* an objective reality. That intelligibility is *functionalist*, and *pragmatist*. Now we know what we must *do* in order thereby implicitly to be practically taking or treating our commitments *as* appearances *of* a reality—so that the distinction between what things are *for* consciousness and what they are *in* themselves is something *to* consciousness.

The account rehearsed here of representational purport in terms of the experience of error operationalizes what in my first lecture I called the "Intelligibility of Error" and the "Genuine

Knowledge" criteria of *epistemological* adequacy on *semantic* accounts of intentional contentfulness and aboutness. This whole lecture has been an extended discussion of how in the same terms the Mode of Presentation Condition can be satisfied: how to understand the representational dimension of intentionality in terms of the expressive conceptual dimension. I have concluded this lecture by talking about how that first dimension, and so the second, can be understood in terms of what one is *doing* in undergoing the experience of error. That is, I have been talking about how the knowing subject's activity, which is discussed in deontic normative terms of commitment and entitlement (and the subjective aspect of the notion of material incompatibility they articulate), can be understood as involving *representational* purport: as an *appearance* (what things are *for* consciousness) of the *reality* (what things are *in* themselves) constituted by the objective states of affairs discussed in alethic modal terms of necessity and possibility (and the objective aspect of the notion of material incompatibility they articulate).

What in the first lecture I called the "Rational Constraint" condition is the requirement that what is represented be intelligible as providing *reasons* for assessments of the *correctness* of representings. It has shown up here as a consequence of the normative construal of representation that Hegel sees as already introduced by Kant. In the context of the account offered here of representational purport in terms of functional role in cognitive processes characterized by the experience of error, we can see how the reciprocal sense-dependence of the subjective and objective dimensions of the (meta-)concept of material incompatibility (determinate negation), consequent upon deontic normative vocabulary serving as a pragmatic metavocabulary for alethic modal vocabulary, articulates a deep connection between satisfaction of the Mode of Presentation Condition and the Rational Constraint Condition.

In the next lecture, I pursue further Hegel's conception of how our grasp of the concept of truth depends on the practical experience of error, and offer detailed readings of some of the most puzzling passages at the end of the *Introduction*.

Knowing and Representing:

Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's *Introduction*

Lecture 3 Handout:

Following the Path of Despair to a Bacchanalian Revel:

The Emergence of the Second, True, Object

1. In my first lecture, I suggested that the key to the picture Hegel wants to put in place lies in the non-psychological conception of the conceptual he introduces and develops in the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*. According to this conception, conceptual contents are articulated by relations of material incompatibility: his "determinate negation" or "exclusive difference" (Aristotelian contrariety).
2. Starting with the notion of conceptual contents as articulated by the relations of material incompatibility they stand in to other such contents, my second lecture showed both what one must *do* in order thereby to count as *cognitively grasping* such contents, and how doing that amounts to practically acknowledging the *representational purport* of those contents. Grasping or understanding a conceptual content is engaging in the process of *experience*, which is the experience of *error*.
3. Treating two commitments as incompatible in the deontic normative sense *is* representing two properties or states of affairs as incompatible in the alethic modal sense. What one must *do* in order to manifest practically one's grasp or *understanding* of conceptual contents is suitably engage with them in the practice or process of experience, especially the experience of error, by fulfilling one's obligation to resolve acknowledged incompatibilities. Doing that *is* treating incompatible commitments as *representing* incompatible states of affairs.
4. In the experience of error the subject ("consciousness"): …is consciousness of what <u>to</u> it is the true, and consciousness of its knowledge of this truth. Since both are *for consciousness,* consciousness itself is their comparison; whether its knowledge of the object corresponds or fails to correspond with this object will be a matter *for consciousness itself.* [PG §85]
5. Recall the crucial distinction, which Hegel marks grammatically, as was pointed out in Lecture II, between what things are *implicitly*, "*to*" consciousness ["ihm"] and what they are *explicitly*, "*for*" consciousness.
6. Something is <u>*to* it *the in-itself,*</u> but the knowledge or the being of the object for consciousness is <u>*to* it</u> still another moment. It is upon this differentiation, which exists and is present at hand, that the examination [Prüfung] is grounded. And if, in this comparison, the two moments do not correspond, then it seems that consciousness will have to alter its knowledge in order to bring it into accord with the object. [PG §85]
7. In the alteration of the knowledge, however, the object itself becomes to consciousness something which has in fact been altered as well. For the knowledge which existed was essentially a knowledge of the object: with change in the knowledge, the object also becomes an other, since it was an essential part of this knowledge. Hence it comes to pass for consciousness that what had been to it the *in-itself* is not in itself, or, what was *in itself* was so only *for consciousness.* When therefore consciousness finds its knowledge not corresponding with its object, the object itself will also give way. In other words, the standard [Maßstab] of the examination is changed if that whose standard it was supposed to be fails to endure the course of

the examination. Thus the examination is not only an examination of knowledge, but also of the standard used in the examination itself. [PG §85]

8. This *dialectical* movement, which consciousness exercises on its self—on its knowledge as well as its object—is, *in so far as the new, true object emerges to consciousness* as the result of it, precisely that which is called *experience.* [PG §86]

9. Consciousness knows *something,* and this object is the essence or the *in-itself.* But this object is also the in-itself for consciousness; and hence the ambiguity of this truth comes into play. We see that consciousness now has two objects; one is the first *in-itself* and the second is the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself.* The latter seems at first to be merely the reflection of consciousness into its self, a representation, not of an object, but only of its knowledge of the first object. But, as already indicated, the first object comes to be altered for consciousness in this very process; it ceases to be the in-itself and becomes to consciousness an object which is the *in-itself only for it.* And therefore it follows that this, the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself,* is the true, which is to say that this true is the *essence* or consciousness' new *object.* This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object. [PG §86]

10. Hence it comes to pass for consciousness that what had been to it the *in-itself* is not in itself, or, what was *in itself* was so only *for consciousness.* [PG §85]

11. What the subject discovers is that what it had taken to express the way things really are (the stick is bent), actually only expresses an appearance. The role the bent-stick representation plays for consciousness, what it is to consciousness, has changed. It "becomes to consciousness an object which is the in-itself only for it." The "new, true object" is the bent-stick representation revealed *as* erroneous, as a *mis*representation of what is now *to* the subject the way things really are: a straight stick. This representing is "true" not in the sense of representing how things really are, but in the sense that what is now to consciousness is what *it* really is: a mere appearance, a misrepresenting. That is why "This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object."

12. In this presentation of the course of experience, there is a moment in virtue of which it does not seem to be in agreement with the ordinary use of the term "experience." This moment is the transition from the first object and the knowledge of that object to the other object. Although it is said that the experience is made in *this other object,* here the transition has been presented in such a way that the knowledge of the first object, or the being-for-consciousness of the first in-itself, is seen to become the second object itself. By contrast, it usually seems that we somehow discover another object in a manner quite accidental and extraneous, and that we experience *in it* the untruth of our first Concept. What would fall to us, on this ordinary view of experience, is therefore simply the pure *apprehension of* what exists in and for itself. From the viewpoint of the present investigation, however, the new object shows itself as having come into being through an *inversion of consciousness* itself. [PG §87]

13. This way of observing the subject matter is our contribution; it does not exist for the consciousness which we observe. But when viewed in this way the sequence of experiences constituted by consciousness is raised to the level of a scientific progression. [PG §87]

14. As a matter of fact, the circumstance which guides this way of observing is the same as the one previously discussed with regard to the relationship between the present inquiry and skepticism: In every case the result which emerges from an untrue mode of knowledge must not be allowed to dissolve into an empty nothingness but must of necessity be grasped as the nothingness *of that whose result it is,* a result which contains what is true in the previous

knowledge. Within the present context, this circumstance manifests itself as follows: When that which at first appeared as the object sinks to the level of being to consciousness a knowledge of the object, and when the *in-itself becomes a being- for-consciousness of the in-itself,* then this *is* the new object. [PG §87]

15. Spinoza did not appreciate the distinctive *normative* character of the "order and connection of ideas," which distinguishes it from the order and connection of things. Hegel's synthesis of Spinoza with Kant depends on Kant's grounding of semantics in pragmatics: his account of what one must *do* in order to take responsibility for a judgeable conceptual content.

16. In my second lecture, I rehearsed how Hegel's account of the experience of error—what he makes of Kant's critical integrative task-responsibility in synthesizing a constellation of commitments that has the rational unity distinctive of apperception—underwrites an implicit, practical grasp of representational purport. Downstream from Kant, Hegel's conception of determinate negation accordingly incorporates an essentially *dynamic* element. It arises out of the crucial residual *a*symmetry between the order and connection of ideas and that of things. It is *impossible* for one object simultaneously to exhibit materially incompatible properties (or for two incompatible states of affairs to obtain), while it is only *inappropriate* for one subject simultaneously to endorse materially incompatible commitments. Representings are articulated by deontic normative relations, while representeds are articulated by alethic modal ones. Finding oneself with materially incompatible commitments obliges one to *do* something, to revise those commitments so as to remove the incoherence. It is only in terms of that obligation to repair that we can understand what it is practically to *take* or *treat* two objective properties or states of affairs as incompatible in the alethic modal sense. Understanding the *representational* dimension of conceptual content—the relation and connection between the deontic and alethic limbs of the cognitive-practical constellation of subjective and objective—requires understanding how the experience of error, articulated in normative terms, is intelligible as the (re)presentation of objective alethic modal relations of incompatibility.

17. This new object contains the nothingness [Nichtigkeit] of the first, it is what experience has made of it. [PG §86]

18. [T]he presentation of untrue consciousness in its untruth is not a merely *negative* movement, as natural consciousness one-sidedly views it. And a mode of knowledge which makes this onesidedness its basic principle is… the skepticism which sees in every result only pure *nothingness* and abstracts from the fact that this nothingness is determinate, that it is the nothingness *of that from which it results.* In fact, it is only when nothingness is taken as the nothingness of what it comes from that it is the true result; for then nothingness itself is a determinate nothingness and has a *content.* The skepticism which ends up with the abstraction of nothingness, or with emptiness, cannot proceed any further but must wait and see whether anything new presents itself to it, and what this is, in order to cast it into the same abysmal void. But if, on the contrary, the result is comprehended as it truly is, as *determinate* negation, a new form has thereby immediately arisen… [PG §79]

19. Natural consciousness will show itself to be merely the Concept of knowledge, or unreal knowledge. But since it immediately takes itself to be real knowledge, this pathway has a negative significance for it, and what is actually the realization of the Concept is for it rather the loss and destruction of its self: for on this road it loses its truth. The road may thus be viewed as the path of doubt, or, more properly, as the path of despair… [T]his road is the conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal knowledge…[PG §78]

20. Truth…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. [PG §47]
21. The True is thus a Bacchanalian revel, with not a member sober; yet because each member collapses as soon as he drops out, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose. [PG §47]
22. 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. [PG §47]
23. Hegel's invocation of *recollection* [Erinnerung], to which he returns at the very end of the *Phenomenology*, is a gesture at the *third* phase of the experience of error. We have already considered the first two: acknowledging the material incompatibility of some of one's commitments and revising one's commitments (including those concerning what is incompatible with what) so as to repair the discordance. What Hegel calls "recollection" is a subsequent rational reconstruction of the extended process of experience that has led to one's current constellation of commitments. What is reconstructed is a sequence of episodes, each of which exhibits the three-phase structure of acknowledgment, repair, and recollection of materially incompatible commitments one has endorsed. From the actual process of past experience the recollector selects a trajectory that is exhibited as expressively progressive—that is, as having the form of a gradual, cumulative revelation of how things really are (according to the recollector). It is a Whiggish story (characteristic of old-fashioned histories of science) of how the way things are in themselves came to be the way they veridically appeared *for* consciousness. That in this way the *past* is constantly turned into a *history* (differently with each tripartite episode of experience) is how Hegel understands reason as retrospectively "giving contingency the form of necessity."
24. I take it that any understanding of Hegel (or Kant) must start with what he has to teach us about ordinary, ground-level empirical and practical experience—for him (as for Kant) a matter of applying what he calls "determinate concepts". These are concepts like stick and straight, blue and sour. What he calls "speculative," or "logical" concepts are theoretical philosophical metaconcepts whose distinctive expressive role it is to make explicit features of the conceptual contents and use (the semantics and pragmatics) of those ground-level concepts. The *Phenomenology* is a story about the development of those higher-level concepts in terms of which his readers ("phenomenological consciousness") can be brought to comprehend discursive activity in general ("phenomenal consciousness").
25. So far in these lectures I have talked a lot about the experience of consciousness, but not officially about the *science* of the experience of consciousness. Though I have not explicitly been talking *about* it, what I have been doing is an exercise of the "science of the experience of consciousness." For that "science" is the explicit, self-conscious *understanding* of the "experience of consciousness."

26. The *Phenomenology* recounts the *experience* of the science of the experience of consciousness: the process by which meta-concepts adequate to comprehend explicitly the process of experience are themselves developed and determined.
27. When that which at first appeared as the object sinks to the level of being to consciousness a knowledge of the object, and when the *in-itself becomes a being- for-consciousness of the in-itself,* then this *is* the new object. And with this new object a new Shape of consciousness also makes its appearance, a Shape to which the essence is something different from that which was the essence to the preceding Shape. It is this circumstance which guides the entire succession of the Shapes of consciousness in its necessity. But it is this necessity alone—or the emergence of the new object, presenting itself to consciousness without the latter's knowing how this happens to it—which occurs for us, as it were, behind its back. A moment which is both *in-itself and for-us* is thereby introduced into the movement of consciousness, a moment which does not present itself for the consciousness engaged in the experience itself. But the *content* of what we see emerging exists *for it,* and we comprehend only the formal aspect of what emerges or its pure emerging. *For consciousness,* what has emerged exists only as an object; *for us,* it exists at once as movement and becoming. This, then, is the necessity in virtue of which the present road toward science is itself already a *science.* And, in accordance with its content, it may be called the science of the *experience of consciousness.* [PG §87]
28. In these lectures I have focused on what Hegel will have to say about the semantics and pragmatics of the concepts deployed and determined through base-level experience, by way of preparation for understanding the course of the experience of meta-level *self*-consciousness that he recollects for us in the body of the *Phenomenology*.

Knowing and Representing:

Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's *Introduction*

Lecture 3:

Following the Path of Despair to a Bacchanalian Revel:

The Emergence of the Second, True, Object

I. Introduction

1. Hegel opens the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* by considering an epistemological picture according to which our cognitive faculties are regarded as "the instrument with which one takes hold of the absolute or as the medium through which one discovers it."[47] Philosophers otherwise as diverse as Descartes, Locke, and Kant can be seen to work with versions of such a picture. It seems clear that Hegel thinks we need to break out of the confines of this "natural" way of thinking about knowledge. In my first lecture, I tried to say why, and to indicate in general terms the shape of the new picture he will recommend to succeed this traditional one.

[47] [73]

The broadest form of his objection is that theories of the kind he is complaining about make us patsies for skepticism. More specifically, he thinks traditional modern *epistemology* is conducted within the scope of *semantic* assumptions that make it impossible in the end to satisfy what I called the "Genuine Knowledge Condition." This is the requirement that an epistemological theory not make it unintelligible that, at least when all goes well, how things *appear* to us is how they *really* are—in his terms, that how things are *for consciousness* can be how they are *in themselves*. I argued that the crucial feature of the class of theories he takes to fail this requirement (by precluding the intelligibility of genuine knowledge) is not that they construe the relation between appearance and reality ("certainty" and "truth", "knowledge" and "the absolute") in representational terms. It is that they take the termini of the relation to be characterized by a structural difference: representing appearances are construed as *conceptually articulated*, while represented realities are not. Theories with this shape excavate a gulf of intelligibility separating knowing from the known, mind from world.[48]

Of all the differences there might be between how the known world objectively is and how the knowing subject represents it, why should one think *this* possible difference make such a difference? Why would it matter if thought, but not the world thought about, is construed as coming in conceptual shape? Hegel is working in a Kantian idiom, in which there is an internal connection between *conceptual* articulation and *understanding*. Concepts are the form of apperceptive awareness. So what can be understood, what is intelligible, is what is in conceptual shape. Hegel thinks that unless the picture has it that we can understand how things really are, any *relation* we assert between these realities and the appearances we *can* understand or grasp must itself be unintelligible. No relation to what is ultimately and intrinsically *un*intelligible, because not conceptually articulated, could count as a *cognitive* relation. It could not be the basis for an account of knowing that makes sense of the possibility of genuine knowledge. This is the problem with the idea of "getting the truth in its purity simply by subtracting from the result the

[48] This is how I understood his claim that such theories presuppose "the notion that there is a *difference between ourselves and this knowledge*" in the sense that "the absolute *stands on one side* and that *knowledge..* is *on the other side,* for itself and separated from the absolute…Hence it assumes that knowledge…is outside the absolute and therewith outside the truth as well." [74]. In the context of such an assumption, it is a contradiction to treat knowledge as nonetheless genuinely possible.

instrument's part in that representation of the absolute which we have gained through it."[49] The result of "subtracting" its conceptual form from our understanding would be something unintelligible. We cannot understand the relation between what is intelligible and what is not intelligible, for the simple reason that we cannot understand what is not intelligible. A picture of this sort cannot satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition.

2. In my first lecture, I suggested that the key to the alternative picture Hegel wants to put in place lies in the non-psychological conception of the conceptual he introduces and develops in the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*. According to this conception, conceptual contents are articulated by relations of material incompatibility: his "determinate negation" or "exclusive difference" (Aristotelian contrariety). (It will follow that conceptual contents also stand to one another in relations of material consequence: his "mediation.")

This line of thought begins with an understanding of *determinateness* that applies equally to thoughts and things. It is codified in Spinoza's dictum "Omnis determinatio est negatio." Both that there is some determinate way the world is and that a thought has a determinate content are to be understood in terms of what possibilities they *exclude*. A state of affairs whose obtaining would rule out the obtaining of no other, a thought whose truth would rule out the truth of no other, would be *in*determinate ("unbestimmt"). The kind of negation in terms of which determination is understood in Hegel's version of Spinoza's thought is that characterizing relations of what he calls "exclusive" ("ausschließend") difference, as opposed to "indifferent" ("gleichgültig") difference. That is, it is the relation between **circular** and **triangular**, not that between **circular** and **red**. (In the *Perception* chapter, Hegel uses a thought of Aristotle's to show how the notion of exclusive difference can be used to make sense of states of affairs as having the internal structure of objects-with-properties.)

[49] [73].

This way of understanding the metaphysics of determinateness is by no means idiosyncratic to Hegel. Besides its Spinozist (and, indeed, Scholastic) antecedents, it is the master idea behind contemporary information theory, which understands the information conveyed by a signal in terms of the possibilities its receipt excludes for its recipient. And it can be understood as another way of expressing the understanding of a proposition as a partition of possible worlds into those compatible and those incompatible with its truth. But what warrant is there for thinking of this metaphysical conception of determinateness in terms of material incompatibility as a conception of the *conceptual*?

Justifying that identification requires giving an account of two defining characteristics of the conceptual. First, one must show how to justify in its terms the Kantian identification of *intelligibility* in terms of conceptual form, by saying what it is to *grasp* or *understand* something that is in conceptual form in this sense of "conceptual form." Second, one must show how what is conceptually contentful in this sense also exhibits *representational* purport. These correspond to the two dimensions of intentionality I distinguished last time: 'that'-intentionality and 'of'-intentionality, what one can think or say, and what one would thereby be thinking or talking *about*.

My second lecture addressed exactly these two issues. Starting with the notion of conceptual contents as articulated by the relations of material incompatibility they stand in to other such contents, it showed both what one must *do* in order thereby to count as *cognitively grasping* such contents, and how doing that amounts to practically acknowledging the *representational purport* of those contents. Grasping or understanding a conceptual content is engaging in the process of *experience*. This is Hegel's successor-conception of Kantian apperception. For Kant, what one must *do* in order to apperceive (to be cognitively aware) is to *judge*. Judging, in turn, is understood as rationally integrating a commitment into a developing whole that exhibits the distinctive synthetic unity characteristic of apperception. That unity is a *rational* unity, with critical, ampliative, and justificatory dimensions, corresponding to the normative obligation to extrude materially incompatible commitments, acknowledge material consequences, and assess justificatory credentials. The contents commitments must possess in order to be subject to these

rational normative obligations must, accordingly, stand in relations of material incompatibility and consequence to other such contents. Grasping or understanding such a content is practically being able to distinguish what is materially incompatible with it (what it conceptually excludes), what is a material consequence of it (what it conceptually includes), and what it is a material consequence of (what conceptually includes it). That is just to say that it is necessary and sufficient to be graspable in this sense—to be apperceivable—that the contents be *determinate*, in the sense of standing to one another in relations of determinate negation and (so) mediation. What is determinate in this sense is in conceptual form, in Hegel's sense.

In the *Introduction*, Hegel focuses on one dimension of the process of apperceptive experience: the experience of *error*. This sort of experience is occasioned by finding oneself with materially incompatible commitments. Practically acknowledging the error is exercising one's critical task-responsibility to repair it, removing the incompatibility by relinquishing or modifying at least one of the jointly incompatible commitments. In the previous lecture I explained how it is in the experience of error that *representational* purport is practically taken up—that is, that determinate (hence conceptually contentful) commitments are taken or treated *as* representations, as appearances *of* some reality. Incompatible commitments must have a common topic. For if two (or more) properties are incompatible, what is impossible is that they should be exhibited by one and the same object (at the same time). If one attributes incompatible properties to two different objects, one has not yet made a mistake. To take it that one *has* made a mistake, that the commitments *are* incompatible, *is* to take them to refer to or represent one and the same object.

In the second phase of the experience of error, a subject responds to the acknowledgment of error by fulfilling the critical task-responsibility of repairing the incoherence, by amending or discarding one of the commitments. Doing that is treating the amended or discarded commitment *as* a mere appearance, and the retained and resulting commitments as expressing how things really are. In this way, through the experience of error, the distinction between what things are *in themselves* (reality) and what things are merely *for consciousness* (appearance) becomes something *to* consciousness itself. That distinction is practically implicit in the process

that is the experience of error. This is how consciousness incorporates as a basic aspect of the structure of its functioning a practical appreciation of its determinate *subjective commitments* as purporting to represent *how things really, objectively are.* It treats its commitments as *about* things in the sense of answering to how things are *in* themselves for the correctness of how things are *for* it.

3. So Hegel's Spinozist concept of determinateness, in terms of articulation by relations of modally robust exclusion, material incompatibility, or determinate negation, meets the principal requirements for a meta-concept of conceptual contentfulness. It makes sense of what it is to *grasp* a conceptual content, and of what it is for such contents to have a *representational* dimension. Furthermore, the ways these two criteria of adequacy are satisfied are deeply connected. In the context of Hegel's structural critique of traditional modern epistemology, the key explanatory virtue of this non-psychological conception of the conceptual is that it applies not only to *subjective thoughts*, but also to *objective facts*. For both are determinate—there are determinate ways consciousness takes things to be and there are determinate ways things are—in virtue of standing in relations of material incompatibility to other ways one could take things to be or things could be. But the subjective and objective senses of "material incompatibility" are not the same. If two states of affairs are materially incompatible, then it is *impossible* for both to obtain. (If two objective properties are materially incompatible, then it is impossible for one and the same object simultaneously to exhibit both.) But if two thoughts or judgments are materially incompatible, it does not follow that it is impossible for one subject to be simultaneously committed to both. It only follows that the subject *ought not* to be so committed, that such a subject is *obliged* to *do* something to *change* the situation: to fulfill the standing critical task-responsibility to rectify the situation by eliminating the incoherence. On the side of objects, incompatibility of properties is an *alethic modal* matter of *impossibility*; on the side of subjects, incompatibility of commitments is a *deontic normative* matter of *impropriety*.

But the notion of material incompatibility or determinate negation that comes in these two flavors is not simply ambiguous. For what one must *do*, in order thereby to count as practically *taking* or *treating* two objective properties or states of affairs *as objectively* incompatible is

precisely to treat the corresponding commitments as *normatively* incompatible—in the sense that finding oneself with both obliges one to *change* one's commitment, in acknowledgment of an *error*. Treating two commitments as incompatible in the deontic normative sense *is* representing two properties or states of affairs as incompatible in the alethic modal sense. What one must do in order to manifest practically one's grasp or *understanding* of conceptual contents is suitably engage with them in the practice or process of experience, especially the experience of error, by fulfilling one's obligation to resolve acknowledged incompatibilities. Doing that is treating incompatible commitments as *representing* incompatible states of affairs.

The relation between the sense of "materially incompatible" that is articulated by deontic normative relations of what one is obliged or entitled to do, on the subjective side of representings (what things are for consciousness), and the sense that is articulated by alethic modal relations of what is necessary and possible, on the objective side of representeds (what things are in themselves) is one of reciprocal sense-dependence. It is not that there cannot be objective properties and states of affairs standing in relations of modal incompatibility to one another unless there are representings of them. It is that one cannot *understand* what one is saying or thinking in saying or thinking that they stand in such relations, except as part of a story that includes what subjects who *represent* them as so standing, by practically acknowledging their normative obligation to do something to repair the situation when they find themselves with commitments to objects having incompatible properties, or to incompatible states of affairs more generally. And one cannot understand the nature of the obligation to alter one's conceptual commitments when they turn out to be incompatible unless one understands them *as* representing objectively incompatible situations. This relation of reciprocal sense-dependence is responsible for the Janus-faced character of Hegel's metaconcept of <u>determinate negation</u>. On the one hand, it characterizes the alethic modal *relations* that (as Kant taught) structure the objective world. On the other hand, it characterizes the norm-governed subjective *process* or practice that is experience—which is always, *inter alia*, the experience of error. In this latter aspect, it is not a

matter of static relations, but a dynamic principle of movement, change, and development.[50] That one cannot understand the most fundamental structure of the objective world apart from understanding what one must *do* to represent things as being so is an essential element of Hegel's idealism. One can put the point by saying that objective substances, no less than subjects, things no less than thoughts, as determinate, are essentially *conceptually* structured.[51] But unless one keeps in mind the complex fine-structure of Hegel's Janus-faced non-psychological conception of the conceptual in terms of determinateness as articulated by material incompatibility, one will not understand what is meant by such a claim.

II. The Emergence of the Second, New, True Object

4. The greatest hermeneutic challenge in reading the *Introduction* lies in the three paragraphs that precede the final one ([85], [86], and [87], in Miller's numbering). For here Hegel makes two claims that are surprising enough to be worth quoting at length. The first is introduced with the observation, which we have put ourselves in a position to understand, that in the experience of error the subject ("consciousness"):

> …is consciousness of what <u>to</u> it is the true, and consciousness of its knowledge of this truth. Since both are *for consciousness,* consciousness itself is their

[50] 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…[805]

[51] Without endorsing the Hegelian conception of the conceptual in terms of determinate negation, in particular without invoking the fine-structure that relates its objective alethic modal and subjective deontic normative aspects, John McDowell makes a point of this general shape when he says in *Mind and World* [Harvard University Press, 1994] that on the understanding he is recommending (and associates with both Kant and Hegel) "the conceptual has no outer boundary."

> comparison; whether its knowledge of the object corresponds or fails to correspond with this object will be a matter *for consciousness itself.* [85]

The subject assesses the material compatibility of its commitments, exercising its critical rational task-responsibility as a judger. Where an incompatibility is found, a choice must be made. One commitment can still be endorsed as presenting how things really are, in themeselves. But then others must be unmasked as mere appearances. They are now implicitly or practically treated ("to it") as only presenting how things are for consciousness. (Recall here the crucial distinction which, as was pointed out in Lecture II, Hegel marks grammatically, between what things are *implicitly*, "*to*" consciousness ["ihm"] and what they are *explicitly*, "*for*" consciousness.) In the example from the previous lecture, seeing its behavior when the half-immersed stick is fully removed from the water, the subject discards her commitment to its being bent, and substitutes a commitment to its being straight.

It is only slightly hyperbolic to say that the consciousness that is the subject of this experience "*is* their comparison."

> Something is <u>*to*</u> *it the in-itself,* but the knowledge or the being of the object for consciousness is <u>*to*</u> *it* still another moment. It is upon this differentiation, which exists and is present at hand, that the examination [Prüfung] is grounded. And if, in this comparison, the two moments do not correspond, then it seems that consciousness will have to alter its knowledge in order to bring it into accord with the object. [85]

That is, after the discordance has been repaired and material compatibility restored, the appearance, what things are *for* consciousness, should, as far as consciousness is concerned ("*to* consciousness"), have been brought in line with the reality, what things are in-themselves.

But that is not how Hegel wants us to understand what happens in such experience:

> In the alteration of the knowledge, however, the object itself becomes to consciousness something which has in fact been altered as well. For the knowledge which existed was essentially a knowledge of the object: with change

> in the knowledge, the object also becomes an other, since it was an essential part of this knowledge. Hence it comes to pass for consciousness that what had been *to* it the *in-itself* is not in itself, or, what was *in itself* was so only *for consciousness.* When therefore consciousness finds its knowledge not corresponding with its object, the object itself will also give way. In other words, the standard [Maßstab] of the examination is changed if that whose standard it was supposed to be fails to endure the course of the examination. Thus the examination is not only an examination of knowledge, but also of the standard used in the examination itself. [85]

This is very odd. Why should we think that when a commitment a subject took to express how things really are (a presentation of how things are *in* themselves is what it was *to* the subject) is revealed as expressing merely how things are *for* consciousness, that the *reality* changes? When I realize that the stick I took to be bent is really straight, my view of the stick changes, but the stick itself does not. That I took it to be bent is *not*, in our ordinary way of thinking, an essential feature of *the stick*. Surely the contrary claim does not follow from what one might justifiably claim: that its object, the stick, was an essential feature of the appearance, the stick-as-bent. The stick serves as a standard for assessments of the correctness of my commitments as to its shape. In what sense does that standard change when I realize that my shape-commitment does not measure up to the standard, that it gets things wrong? Hegel's claim here seems extravagant and perverse. The argument he offers:

> For the knowledge which existed was essentially [wesentlich] a knowledge of the object: with change in the knowledge, the object also becomes an other, since it was an essential part of this knowledge.

appears to trade on an obviously unwarranted slide. Even if we grant that what it is a claim *about* (what it represents) is essential to the identity of the claim—so that altering the represented object would alter the content of the claim—it just does not follow that the content of the claim is correspondingly essential to the identity of the represented object—so that altering the content of the claim alters the object. "Being essential to" is not in general a symmetric relation. So for instance, we might think that the identity of my parents is essential to my identity. Anyone with different people as parents would be someone different from me; it is not possible for me to have

had different people as parents. But when we look at the converse, it does seem possible that my parents might never have had any children, or only had some of the children they did, not including me. Essentiality of origin of humans does not entail essentiality of offspring. It is easy to see Hegel here as engaging in a sleight-of-hand, attempting to smuggle in unobserved an implausible idealism that makes what is thought about it essential to the identity of what is thought about. But, as we shall see, that would be to misunderstand the claim he is making.

The second surprising claim is introduced as part of an account of the basic structure of *experience*, in the distinctive technical sense Hegel introduces here:

> This *dialectical* movement, which consciousness exercises on its self—on its knowledge as well as its object—is, *in so far as the new, true object emerges* <u>*to*</u> *consciousness* as the result of it, precisely that which is called *experience.* [86]

The challenge posed by the earlier passage is echoed here. How are we to understand the "movement" which consciousness "exercises" on the *object* of its knowledge? The key question will turn out to be this: when commitment to the stick as bent is discarded and replaced by commitment to the stick as straight, what exactly is the "new, true object"? Answering this question correctly is integral to understanding the sense in which, on Hegel's account, the representational purport of conceptually contentful commitments is itself something *to* consciousness, implicit in its own process of experience. In order to understand the justification for saying that the experience of error changes not only how the subject is committed to things being (the stick is taken to be straight, not bent), that is, "consciousness's knowledge", but also the *object* of that knowledge, the essential point to realize is that the "new, true object" which "emerges to consciousness" is *not* the straight stick. (After all, *it* didn't change; it was straight all along.)

5. Hegel describes the experience like this:

> Consciousness knows *something,* and this object is the essence or the *in-itself.* But this object is also the in-itself for consciousness; and hence the ambiguity of this

> truth comes into play. We see that consciousness now has two objects; one is the first *in-itself* and the second is the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself.* The latter seems at first to be merely the reflection of consciousness into its self, a representation, not of an object, but only of its knowledge of the first object. But, as already indicated, the first object comes to be altered for consciousness in this very process; it ceases to be the in-itself and becomes to consciousness an object which is the *in-itself only for it.* And therefore it follows that this, the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself,* is the true, which is to say that this true is the *essence* or consciousness' new *object.* This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object. [86]

The first thing to notice is that the first object is described as the "*first* in-itself". That implies that there is (at least) *another* in-itself. But there is only one real stick (and it is straight). The key to understanding this is that what is at issue here is the role something can play in experience. The role in question is **being an in-itself *to* consciousness**. To be an in-itself to consciousness is to be what consciousness practically takes or treats *as* real. At the beginning of the experience, the subject in question endorses the claim that the stick is bent. That is what the subject takes to be real. That bent-stick commitment expresses the *first* in-itself to consciousness: how it initially takes things really, objectively, to be. The *second* in-itself to consciousness is expressed by the later straight-stick endorsement.

What, then, is the "second object" being talked about in this passage? It is not the straight stick (which is the second in-itself to consciousness). Hegel says here the second object is the "being-for-consciousness" of the first in-itself. What does that mean? When he introduces the movement of experience in the previous paragraph, Hegel says

> Hence it comes to pass for consciousness that what had been to it the *in-itself* is not in itself, or, what was *in itself* was so only *for consciousness.* [85]

What the subject discovers is that what it had taken to express the way things really are (the stick is bent), actually only expresses an appearance. The role the bent-stick representation plays for consciousness, what it is to consciousness, has changed. It "becomes to consciousness an object

which is the in-itself only for it." The "new, true object" is the bent-stick representation revealed *as* erroneous, as a *mis*representation of what is now *to* the subject the way things really are: a straight stick. This representing is "true" not in the sense of representing how things really are, but in the sense that what it is now *to* consciousness is what *it* really is: a mere appearance, a misrepresenting. That is why "This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object."

This is the sense in which "In the alteration of the knowledge…the object itself becomes to consciousness something which has in fact been altered as well." What alters is the status of the bent-stick representing, what it is *to* consciousness. It had enjoyed the status of being to consciousness what the stick is in itself. But now its status has changed to being *to* consciousness only what the stick was *for* consciousness: an appearance. Understanding that the two "objects" are the bent-stick representation when it was endorsed and the bent-stick representation when it is no longer endorsed, we are now in a position to see that on our first reading we misunderstood "knowledge of the object" in the argument

> For the knowledge which existed was essentially a knowledge of the object: with change in the knowledge, the object also becomes an other, since it was an essential part of this knowledge.

What is knowledge *to* consciousness is what is endorsed, what the subject practically or implicitly takes to be how things really are. What has, to consciousness, the status of knowledge changes in the course of the experience, from being the stick as bent to being the stick as straight. That was knowledge *of* the object not in the sense in which a representing is *of* something represented, but in the sense that the status (being to consciousness knowledge) was possessed or exhibited by the object (the bent-stick representation). That the status was possessed by *that* object (that conceptual content) is indeed essential to *that* knowing ["denn das vorhandene Wissen war wesentlich ein Wissen von dem Gegenstande"]. When the status attaches to something else, a straight-stick representation, it is in a straightforward sense a *different* knowing. What object (here, crucially, in the sense of what conceptual content) it attaches to is *essential* to its being *that* knowing. Altering the knowing, by endorsing a different, incompatible content, alters the status of the original content, and so alters the "object" associated with the

original knowing: its status changes from being a conceptual content that is endorsed to being one that is rejected. [ftnt: Hegel could have avoided confusion here either by not introducing this new sense of "object of knowledge"--as referring to a candidate knowing's conceptual content, rather than what it represents--or by explaining it when he does.]

So read, the first originally surprising claim becomes so no longer. The second surprising claim is one that Hegel himself flags as such:

> In this presentation of the course of experience, there is a moment in virtue of which it does not seem to be in agreement with the ordinary use of the term "experience." This moment is the transition from the first object and the knowledge of that object to the other object. Although it is said that the experience is made in *this other object,* here the transition has been presented in such a way that the knowledge of the first object, or the being-for-consciousness of the first in-itself, is seen to become the second object itself. By contrast, it usually seems that we somehow discover another object in a manner quite accidental and extraneous, and that we experience *in it* the untruth of our first Concept. What would fall to us, on this ordinary view of experience, is therefore simply the pure *apprehension of* what exists in and for itself. From the viewpoint of the present investigation, however, the new object shows itself as having come into being through an *inversion of consciousness* itself. [87]

Here Hegel is explicitly acknowledging that there is a danger of being misled by the way he has described the experience of error. He explicitly confirms the reading we have been considering: the second ("new, true") object is the "being-for-consciousness of the first in-itself." The "inversion of consciousness" is the change in status of the "stick is bent propositional conceptual content from being endorsed (as reality) to being rejected (as mere appearance). His surprising claim is that *this* element of experience—the unmasking of what one had taken to present reality as it is in itself as in fact a mere appearance, a representation that is a misrepresentation—is the centrally important one, *not* the new perception that leads one to endorse the claim that the stick is straight. That new "object"—that is, conceptual content we are led to endorse—indeed prompts the experience of error. But if we focus on the event that contingently *occasions* the

process that is the experience, he is saying, we will miss what is necessary and essential to that process.

This new way of thinking about experience that he is recommending is really the major point of the whole *Introduction*. It is what makes possible the sort of narrative that occupies the rest of the *Phenomenology*. Focusing on the distinctive "inversion of consciousness" by which what was to the subject the way things are in themselves is unmasked as merely how things were for consciousness is what will give us, Hegel's readers, a phenomenological insight that is not part of the experience of error of the phenomenal consciousness we are considering. The passage above continues:

> This way of observing the subject matter is our contribution; it does not exist for the consciousness which we observe. But when viewed in this way the sequence of experiences constituted by consciousness is raised to the level of a scientific progression. [87]

This shift of perspective is what makes possible the "science of the experience of consciousness" [87]—the working title with which Hegel began the project of writing what would become the *Phenomenology*. The particular commitments acknowledgement of whose material incompatibility intiates a process of experience are contingent. What is necessary about that process is the acknowledgement of error, and the subsequent disillusionment it leads to. What is necessary is "the *movement* which is cognition—the transforming of that in-itself into that which is for itself…", as Hegel says at the very end of the book.[52] At this point in our story, we understand what that movement *is*, but not yet why it is the key to the *science* of the experience of consciousness. That will be the topic of the final section of this lecture.

[52] [802], in the final chapter, *Absolute Knowing*.

III. From Skepticism to Truth through Determinate Negation

6. Hegel tells us that the key to understanding the significance of the change in perspective he is urging is to think through the significance for the threat of skepticism of the role of what is made explicit in experience by the concept of determinate negation. The penultimate paragraph of the *Introduction* continues:

> As a matter of fact, the circumstance which guides this way of observing is the same as the one previously discussed with regard to the relationship between the present inquiry and skepticism: In every case the result which emerges from an untrue mode of knowledge must not be allowed to dissolve into an empty nothingness but must of necessity be grasped as the nothingness *of that whose result it is,* a result which contains what is true in the previous knowledge. Within the present context, this circumstance manifests itself as follows: When that which at first appeared as the object sinks to the level of being to consciousness a knowledge of the object, and when the *in-itself becomes a being- for-consciousness of the in-itself,* then this *is* the new object. [87]

We have put ourselves in a position to understand this final sentence, about how the change of normative status a judgeable content undergoes when the subject withdraws a previous endorsement (the "inversion of consciousness") is intelligible as the emergence of a new object. What does this have to do with the attitude we should take toward skepticism?

The issue arises because of the expository trajectory we have traversed. In my first lecture, I claimed that we should read the opening of the *Introduction* as concerned that epistemological skepticism not be forced on us already by our semantics. The more specific

diagnosis was that skepticism will be forced on us if we construe the relation between appearance and reality as one in which conceptually contentful representings confront nonconceptually structured representeds across what then looms as a gulf of intelligibility. I claimed further that Hegel's proposed therapy (gestured at in the *Introduction*, and developed in the *Consciousness* chapters) is to identify *conceptual contentfulness* with *determinateness*, and to understand determinateness in terms of *negation*. The kind of negation in question, *determinate* negation, corresponds to Aristotelian contraries, not Aristotelian contradictories, which would be understood in terms of formal or abstract negation. The determinateness of a thought or state of affairs (predicate or property) is a matter of its modally robust *exclusion* of other thoughts or states of affairs, those it is materially incompatible with.

This conception allows Hegel to endorse another central Spinozist doctrine: "the order and connection of things is the same as the order and connection of ideas." For this notion of determinateness applies equally to things and thoughts, representeds and representings. No gulf of intelligibility is excavated between appearance and reality. Determinate thoughts and determinate states of affairs are, as determinate, both conceptually contentful, and hence in principle intelligible. Epistemological skepticism is not built into this semantics at the outset.

In this context, there is no reason not to construe the semantic relation between appearance and reality in representational terms. But understanding conceptual content in terms of the concept of determinate negation does not just *allow* a such a representational construal. In Hegel's hands it makes possible a constructive *analysis* of the representational dimension it finds to be implicit in conceptual content.[53] Hegel combines this fundamental aspect of Spinoza's thought (the structural isomorphism of the order and connection of things and ideas, construed in terms of relations of determining negation) with a Kantian idea that Spinoza did *not* have. For

[53] I take one of the positive points of Hegel's Introduction to the *Phenomenology* to be a suggestion as to what it is to treat such conceptual contents as appearances *of* a reality, to take such Sinne to be modes of presentation of Bedeutungen, to understand thinkables that can be expressed *de dicto* (e.g. as the thought *that* the object in the corner is round) as always also in principle expressible *de re* (e.g. as the thought *of* the ball that *it* is round). To do that one must acknowledge them as subject to a certain kind of normative assessment: answerability for their correctness *to* the facts, objects, and properties that they thereby count as *about*.

Spinoza did not appreciate the distinctive *normative* character of the "order and connection of ideas," which distinguishes it from the order and connection of things. Hegel's synthesis of Spinoza with Kant depends on Kant's grounding of semantics in pragmatics: his account of what one must *do* in order to take responsibility for a judgeable conceptual content.

In my second lecture, I rehearsed how Hegel's account of the experience of error—what he makes of Kant's critical integrative task-responsibility in synthesizing a constellation of commitments that has the rational unity distinctive of apperception—underwrites an implicit, practical grasp of representational purport. Downstream from Kant, Hegel's conception of determinate negation accordingly incorporates an essentially *dynamic* element. It arises out of the crucial residual *a*symmetry between the order and connection of ideas and that of things. It is *impossible* for one object simultaneously to exhibit materially incompatible properties (or for two incompatible states of affairs to obtain), while it is only *inappropriate* for one subject simultaneously to endorse materially incompatible commitments. Representings are articulated by deontic normative relations, while representeds are articulated by alethic modal ones. Finding oneself with materially incompatible commitments obliges one to *do* something, to revise those commitments so as to remove the incoherence. It is only in terms of that obligation to repair that we can understand what it is to take or treat two objective properties or states of affairs as incompatible in the alethic modal sense. Understanding the representational dimension of conceptual content—the relation and connection between the deontic and alethic limbs of the cognitive-practical constellation of subjective and objective—requires understanding how the experience of error, articulated in normative terms, is intelligible as the (re)presentation of objective alethic modal relations of incompatibility. Unlike Spinoza's, Hegel's concept of <u>determinate negation</u> is Janus-faced, displaying subjective and objective aspects that are complementary in the sense of being reciprocally sense-dependent.[54] On the side of the subject, the normative significance of negation is pragmatic: it yields an obligation to movement, change, development. Determinate negation, material incompatibility mediates the relation between

[54] This is how "the form of the Notion…unites the objective form of Truth and of the knowing Self in an immediate unity" [805].

pragmatics and semantics—as well as the relation between the expressive and the representational dimensions of intentionality, on the semantic side.

But the revelation that the semantogenic core of experience is the experience of *error*, that its essence consists in the unmasking of something as not real, but as mere appearance, seems to raise once more the specter of skepticism. If error is the necessary form of experience, if what one implicitly discovers in experience is always the incorrectness and inadequacy of one's knowledge or understanding, then why is not skepticism the right conclusion to draw? Why has not Hegel's own concept of experience shown itself as the "path of despair"?

7. Hegel wants to understand the relation between the two "objects", the "first in-itself" and the "being- for-consciousness of the in-itself" as one of *negation*. "This new object contains the nothingness [Nichtigkeit] of the first, it is what experience has made of it" [86]. The idea is that skepticism consists in taking the sense in which the second object is negation of the first to be *formal* or abstract negation, rather than *determinate* negation. Doing that is "allowing the result which emerges from an untrue mode of knowledge" to "dissolve into an empty nothingness." The point is that the sense in which the second object "contains the nothingness of the first" is not that "The stick is bent," is succeeded by "The stick is *not* bent." It is that it is succeeded by the realization that "The stick is bent," is not saying how things really are. It is an appearance, a *mis*-representation *of a straight stick*. That is the materially incompatible commitment for which the bent-stick representation was discarded, changing its normative status. The original commitment is not revealed by its incorrectness as an appearance—but as the appearance *of* a *reality*. It is genuinely an appearance of that reality: a way that reality shows up for consciousness. It is wrong, but it is not simply wrong. It is a path to the truth.

When Hegel says that "the result which emerges from an untrue mode of knowledge" must "be grasped as the nothingness *of that whose result it is,* a result which contains what is true in the previous knowledge," this is so in a double sense. First, the original take on things is not simply cancelled, leaving a void, as a bare contradiction of it would do. It is replaced by a

contrary, substantive commitment—one that is materially, not merely formally incompatible with it. Something positive has been learned: the stick is straight. Second, the transition from the original object to the second, true object is a change of status from a propositional attitude ascribable to the subject *de dicto* to one ascribable (also) *de re*. Where before we, and the subject, could say "S believes *that* the stick is bent," after the experience of error and the rejection of the original endorsement in favor of a materially contrary one, the very same attitude is ascribable as "S believes *of* a straight stick that *it* is bent." That is the point of the analysis of representational purport and its uptake in terms of the experience of error, which I discussed last time. The transformation of status is a rejection of a prior endorsement, but it is not *just* a rejection of it. In an important sense, it is an enrichment of its content, as it becomes *to* the subject a claim *about* something. The representational dimension of its conceptual content becomes manifest—albeit by its being revealed as a *mis*representation.

As we saw in the first lecture, the unintelligibility of this representational dimension is characteristic of the semantically rooted epistemological skepticism Hegel diagnoses in the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction*. It is no surprise at this point, then, to learn that skepticism's characteristic defect is a failure to appreciate the role of determinate negation in extracting consequences from the experience of error.

> the presentation of untrue consciousness in its untruth is not a merely *negative* movement, as natural consciousness one-sidedly views it. And a mode of knowledge which makes this onesidedness its basic principle is… the skepticism which sees in every result only pure *nothingness* and abstracts from the fact that this nothingness is determinate, that it is the nothingness *of that from which it results.* In fact, it is only when nothingness is taken as the nothingness of what it comes from that it is the true result; for then nothingness itself is a determinate nothingness and has a *content.* The skepticism which ends up with the abstraction of nothingness, or with emptiness, cannot proceed any further but must wait and see whether anything new presents itself to it, and what this is, in order to cast it into the same abysmal void. But if, on the contrary, the result is comprehended as

> it truly is, as *determinate* negation, a new form has thereby immediately arisen… [79]

Only from the point of view he is recommending can we make sense of the fact that in each experience of error something positive is learned. One of the pieces of the puzzle—and of Hegel's solution—that I hope to have added here is the understanding of how the representational dimension of conceptual content, no less than the expressive dimension, becomes intelligible in terms of the essential constitutive role determinate negation plays in the process of experience.

Nonetheless, we can ask: Why doesn't Hegel's account of experience as the experience of error, as the unmasking of what we took to reality as appearance, as the revelation of what was to subjects the way things are *in* themselves as merely how they are *for* consciousness provide exactly the premise needed for a fallibilist metainduction? The fallibilist metainduction is the inference that starts with the observation that every belief we have had or judgment we have made has eventually turned out to be false, at least in detail, and concludes that every belief or judgment we ever will or even could have will similarly eventually be found wanting—if we but subject it to sufficient critical scrutiny. Early on in the *Introduction*, Hegel tells us that this skeptical conclusion is a natural one for those who have not learned the lessons he is teaching us:

> Natural consciousness will show itself to be merely the Concept of knowledge, or unreal knowledge. But since it immediately takes itself to be real knowledge, this pathway has a negative significance for it, and what is actually the realization of the Concept is for it rather the loss and destruction of its self: for on this road it loses its truth. The road may thus be viewed as the path of doubt, or, more properly, as the path of despair… [T]his road is the conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal knowledge…[78]

What one needs to learn to see that this is the wrong conclusion is the central *semantic* significance of the experience of error for the intelligibility of the representational dimension of conceptual content. But to understand the positive significance of the unmasking of commitments as determinately mistaken, as misrepresentations since corrected, a substantive

new conception of *truth* is required. That conception is developed in the body of the *Phenomenology*, and only hinted at in the introductory material. It is foreshadowed, however, already in the *Preface*.

> Truth…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. [47]

Instead of thinking of truth as an achievable state or status, Hegel wants us to think of it as characteristic of a *process*: the process of *experience*, in which appearances "arise and pass away." They arise as appearances taken as veridical: ways things are *for* consciousness that are endorsed as how they are *in* themselves. When they are found to be materially incompatible with other commitments in the experience of error, some are rejected—a transformation of status that is the arising of the "second, true object", the appearance as a *mis*representation, becoming *to* consciousness only how things are *for* consciousness. This process of weighing the credentials of competing commitments to determine which should be retained and which altered so as to remove local material incompatibilities *is* the process by which we find out (more about) how things really are.

> The passage continues with a famous image:
>
> The True is thus a Bacchanalian revel, with not a member sober; yet because each member collapses as soon as he drops out, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose.[55]

The revel is the restless elbowing of commitments discovered to be incompatible. Those that "drop out" are those that undergo the transformation of experience and are rejected in

[55] Das Wahre ist so der bacchantische Taumel, an dem kein Glied nicht trunken ist.

order to maintain the rational homeostasis that Hegel identifies as a state of "simple repose." The party continues its movement and development, because the place of those that fall away is immediately taken by other commitments.

IV. Recollection and the *Science* of the Experience of Consciousness

8. This axial passage from the *Preface* continues in a way that introduces three themes with which I want to end my discussion:

> 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]

First, the truth-process whose structure is that of the experience of error is the process by which conceptual contents develop and are determined. It is not just the process by which judgments are selected, but also the process by which concepts evolve. It is the process in and through which more and more of how the world really is, what is actually materially incompatible with what in the objective alethic sense, becomes incorporated in material incompatibilities deontically acknowledged by subjects. For one's response to the acknowledged

incompatibility of two commitments one finds oneself with often is to adjust one's commitments concerning what is incompatible with what (and so what follows from what). If my initial concept of an acid obliges me to apply it to any liquid that tastes sour, and applying it commits me to that liquid turning Litmus paper red, I might respond to a sour liquid that turns Litmus paper blue (and the incompatibility of those two color-commitments) not by rejecting either the perceptual judgment of sourness or the perceptual judgment of blue, but by revising the norms articulating my concept. I might, for instance, take it that only *clear* liquids that taste sour are acids, or that cloudy acids don't turn Litmus paper red. It is because and insofar as they inherit the results of many such experiences of error that the normatively articulated conceptual contents subjects acknowledge and deploy track the objective modal conceptual articulation of the world as well as they do. That is why the experience of error is a truth-process.

The second point is that Hegel's invocation of *recollection* [Erinnerung], to which he returns at the very end of the *Phenomenology*, is a gesture at the *third* phase of the experience of error. We have already considered the first two: acknowledging the material incompatibility of some of one's commitments and revising one's commitments (including those concerning what is incompatible with what) so as to repair the discordance. What Hegel calls "recollection" is a subsequent rational reconstruction of the extended process of experience that has led to one's current constellation of commitments. What is reconstructed is a sequence of episodes, each of which exhibits the three-phase structure of acknowledgment, repair, and recollection of materially incompatible commitments one has endorsed. From the actual process of past experience the recollector selects a trajectory that is exhibited as expressively progressive—that is, as having the form of a gradual, cumulative revelation of how things really are (according to the recollector). It is a Whiggish story (characteristic of old-fashioned histories of science) of how the way things are in themselves came to be the way they veridically appeared *for* consciousness. That in this way the *past* is constantly turned into a *history* (differently with each tripartite episode of experience) is how Hegel understands reason as retrospectively "giving contingency the form of necessity."

The third point is that the recollection phase of experience is a crucial element in what Hegel calls (in [87]) the *science* of the experience of consciousness. So far in these lectures I have talked a lot about the experience of consciousness, but not officially about the *science* of the experience of consciousness. This might well have led to some puzzlement. Why am I talking about the role in experience of mundane concepts such as bent stick and straight stick when the book Hegel is introducing us to focuses exclusively on concepts such as consciousness, self-consciousness, and agency (that is: cognitive authority, the social institution of authority, and practical authority)? Why have I been discussing the development of constellations of judgments and concepts when Hegel is concerned, at least in the second half of the *Introduction*, as in the *Phenomenology*, with the development of "shapes of consciousness"? Such questions, while understandable, are misplaced. Though I have not explicitly been talking *about* it, what I have been *doing* is an exercise of the "science of the experience of consciousness." For that "science" is the explicit, systematic, self-conscious *understanding* of the "experience of consciousness."

9. I take it that any understanding of Hegel (or Kant) must start with what he has to teach us about ordinary, ground-level empirical and practical experience—for him (as for Kant) a matter of applying what he calls "determinate concepts". These are concepts like stick and straight, blue and sour. What he calls "speculative," or "logical" concepts are theoretical philosophical metaconcepts whose distinctive expressive role it is to make explicit features of the conceptual contents and use (the semantics and pragmatics) of those ground-level concepts. The *Phenomenology* is a story about the development of those higher-level concepts in terms of which his readers ("phenomenological consciousness") can be brought to comprehend discursive activity in general ("phenomenal consciousness"). The measure of our understanding of what he has to say on that topic lies principally in the sense we can use those metaconcepts to make of the whole constellation of conceptually articulated normative practice and institutions Hegel calls "Spirit." That is why I have started my story with what I take it he wants us ultimately to understand about the "experience of consciousness."

Then, and I think *only* then, and on that basis, we can consider what it is to render the development of *either* kind of concept in *scientific* terms, in Hegel's sense of that term. To do that is to tell a certain kind of retrospective, rationally reconstructive story about their development—one that displays an expressively progressive *history*, made out of the *past*. This is the third phase of the process of experience, which is initiated by the acknowledgment of the material incompatibility of some commitments, proceeds through the local and temporary resolution of that incoherence by relinquishing or modifying some commitments (including those concerning what is materially incompatible with or a consequence of what), while retaining others, and culminates in comprehending the experience by situating it as the current result of a process in which previous commitments show up as ever more revelatory, (but still ultimately inadequate) appearances *for* consciousness of what (one now takes it) things are *in* themselves. The capstone of Hegel's account (at the end of the *Reason* chapter, and further at the end of the *Spirit* chapter) will be to show us how this retrospective rationally reconstructive *genealogical* phase of the process of experience means that such experience is at once *both* the (further) determining of the content of concepts (whether determinate or philosophical), in the sense of the expressive dimension of conceptual content ('that'-intentionality) that is articulated by *relations* of determinate negation, *and* the discerning of referents (Bedeutungen, what things are in themselves) that are represented by such senses (Sinne, what things are for consciousness) along the representational dimension of conceptual content ('of'-intentionality), as articulated by the *process* that is the experience of error, normatively governed by relations of determinate negation.[56] That is a story for another occasion.[57]

Hegel thinks that the *only* form a theoretical comprehension of the conceptual and representational content of a concept can take is such a genealogy of the process of experience by which it is determined. This is true whether what is being addressed is a constellation of concepts-and-commitments at the meta-level of scientific self-consciousness, or at the ground-

[56] 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. [804]

[57] I tell it at the end of "Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency".

level of empirical consciousness. That is why he assimilates them in the *Preface* passage we have been considering:

> 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.

A proper meta-level account of the *experience* of (self-)consciousness is a *science* of the experience of (ground-level) consciousness. The *Phenomenology* recounts the *experience* of the science of the experience of consciousness: the process by which meta-concepts he takes to be adequate to comprehend explicitly the process of experience are themselves developed and determined. We see Hegel asserting that the experience of error as here described is also the mechanism whereby new "shapes of consciousness" arise, in a passage we are now in a position to appreciate:

> When that which at first appeared as the object sinks to the level of being *to* consciousness a knowledge of the object, and when the *in-itself becomes a being-for-consciousness of the in-itself,* then this *is* the new object. And with this new object a new Shape of consciousness also makes its appearance, a Shape to which the essence is something different from that which was the essence to the preceding Shape. It is this circumstance which guides the entire succession of the Shapes of consciousness in its necessity. But it is this necessity alone—or the emergence of the new object, presenting itself to consciousness without the latter's knowing how this happens to it—which occurs for *us*, as it were, behind *its* back. A moment which is both *in-itself and for-us* is thereby introduced into the movement of consciousness, a moment which does not present itself for the consciousness engaged in the experience itself. But the *content* of what we see emerging exists *for it,* and we comprehend only the formal aspect of what emerges or its pure emerging. *For consciousness,* what has emerged exists only as an object; *for us,* it exists at once as movement and becoming.
>
> This, then, is the necessity in virtue of which the present road toward science is itself already a *science.* And, in accordance with its content, it may be called the science of the *experience of consciousness.* [87]

In these lectures I have focused on what Hegel will have to say about the semantics and pragmatics of the concepts deployed and determined through base-level experience, by way of preparation for understanding the course of the experience of meta-level *self*-consciousness that he recollects for us in the body of the *Phenomenology*.

Part Two

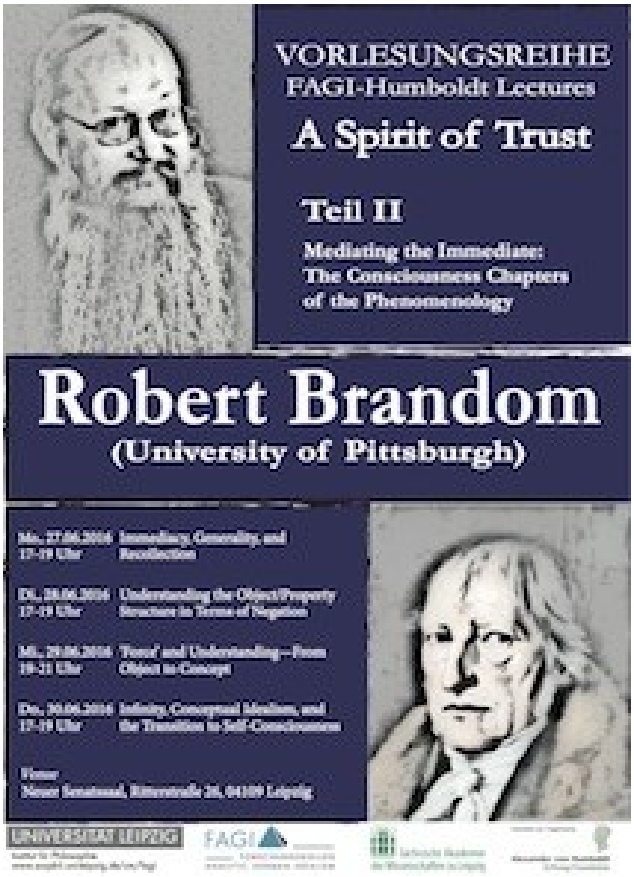
Mediating the Immediate:
The *Consciousness* Chapters of the *Phenomenology*

Lecture 4: Immediacy, Generality, and Recollection:
First Lessons on the Structure of Epistemic Authority

Lecture 5: Understanding the Object/Property Structure in Terms of Negation:
An Introduction to Hegelian Logic and Metaphysics

Lecture 6: *'Force' and Understanding*—From Object to Concept:
The Ontological Status of Theoretical Entities
and the Laws that Implicitly Define Them

Lecture 7: Infinity, Conceptual Idealism, and the Transition to *Self-Consciousness*



Mediating the Immediate

Lecture 4 Handout:

"Immediacy, Generality, and Recollection"

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.

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." [*PhG* ¶90] It is to be distinguished from "knowledge of the immediate," which is immediacy of the *content* apprehended.

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. [Wilfrid Sellars "Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities" §108.]

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.

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. [*PhG* ¶92]

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*…

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." [*PhG* ¶97, ¶102, and ¶110.]

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.

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

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.

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.
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 authority. Otherwise it is a *mere* occurrence, like an eddy in a stream.

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. [*PhG* ¶101]

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 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*.

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, datable 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.

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. [*PhG* ¶107]
I now assert as the second truth that **it** *has been*, that **it** is superseded. [*PhG* ¶101]
But what has been *is not*; I set aside the second truth, **it**s *having been*, **it**s supersession, and thereby negate the negation of the 'Now', and thus return to the first assertion, that the '*Now*' *is*. [*PhG* ¶107]

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 depnds 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. [*PhG* ¶107]

This account presents a crucial fact about the use of demonstratives and similar indexical expressions in contributing to empirical knowledge. *Deixis presupposes anaphora.*

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.

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. 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.

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

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 *nonceptual* 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 *non*conceptually 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.[58]

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."

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).[59] Stripped of its overtly cartesian

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[58] 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.

[59] [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*.]

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 (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.[60]

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 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*,

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[60] *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].

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*.[61] The second dimension of the intuition/concept distinction is that it coincides with that between *particular* representations and *general* ones. *What* one does in 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 *mis*classification, placing particulars under the *wrong* universals, ones that do not in fact characterize them. According to this line of

[61] 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]

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."[62] 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."[63] Observation reports and perceptual judgments, in the sense of reportings and judgings, 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 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.

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[62] All lightly paraphrased quotations from §90.

[63] [ref.] to EPM.

> 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.[64]

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 judgings, 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.[65] 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. 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

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[64] "Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities" [ref.] §108.

[65] "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.

Meditations Hegeliènnes" and aligning himself with Hegel under the rubric "that great foe of immediacy."[66])

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.[67] 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.[68] 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). The second is modeled on the distinction between demonstratives and indexicals ('this', 'now'),

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[66] In §20 and §1 of "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind."

[67] 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.

[68] 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'."

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.[69]

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 represent*ing*s, that the *contents* in which it can be invested, what is represent*ed*, 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'.

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[69] §92.

> 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*…
>
> 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."[70]

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

[70] §97, §102, and §110.

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 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 represent*ed*. Token-reflexive expressions such as demonstratives and indexicals are particular represent*ing*s, in the sense that what must be semantically evaluated is particular, unrepeatable tokenings of the repeatable type.[71] 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

[71] 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.

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."[72]

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

[72] 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, 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.

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 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."[73]

As to the first, it begins with this sort of observation: one tokening of 'this' picks out a tree, another a house.[74] 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

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[73] §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.

[74] 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.

tokenings of the same type can then be distinguished by subscripts. Then /this/$_i$, which picks out a tree, has a different content from /this/$_j$, which picks out a house, and a different content yet from some /this/$_k$, 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."[75] 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 referrings or "pointings-out") already implicitly brings into play a certain kind of universal or principle of classification applying to them. For /this/$_j$ and /this/$_k$ have in common their difference from /this/$_i$. A 'this' that is a 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/$_j \neq$ /this/$_i$ and /this/$_k \neq$ /this/$_i$. Both are of the kind of the kind "≠/this/$_i$".) 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

[75] §91.

'this'.[76]) 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 applicabilitly 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 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

[76] §96.

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',[77] (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: this/$_l$ # /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 /this/$_l$ # /this/$_i$—for trees can appear at night or in the day. The universal "#/this/$_m$", which Hegel calls "not day…a negative in general,"[78] is a genuine universal, under which /this/$_l$, but not /this/$_i$ or /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 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

[77] For instance in §98.
[78] §98.

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/$_n$ that is a raining can be seen to be *like* what is picked out by a barely referring /this/$_o$ 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/$_p$ that is fine, but *not* with a /this/$_m$ that is day or a /this/$_l$ 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, datable 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 *un*repeatable. 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.[79] 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 <u>has</u> <u>been</u>, or as something that has been superseded [etwas aufgehobene]; I set aside the first truth.[80]

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.[81]

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/$_q$ that is day from that constituted by a subsequent /now/$_r$ that is night.) Next

> But what has been *is not*; I set aside the second truth, **it**s *having been*, **it**s supersession, and thereby negate the negation of the 'Now', and thus return to the first assertion, that the '*Now*' *is*.[82]

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

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[79] thus for instance "festhalte", "Bleibende", "aufgezeigte" in §108.
[80] § 107.
[81] § 107.
[82] § 107.

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 [Errinnerung] 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.[83]

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 depnds 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.[84]

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

[83] 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*.

[84] [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.[85]

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

[85] I elaborate this point (without reference to Hegel) in Chapter Seven of *Making It Explicit*.

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 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.[86] 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

[86] A98-106.

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, 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 conditnof 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*.

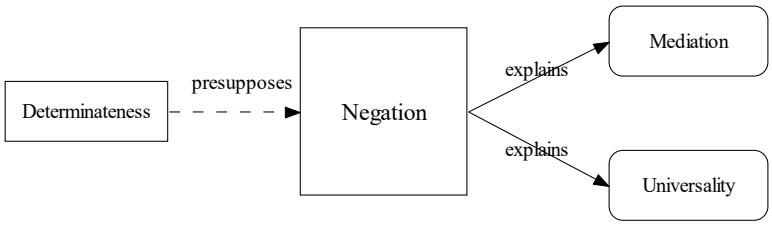
Lecture 5 Handout:

Understanding the Object/Property Structure in Terms of Negation:
An Introduction to Hegelian Logic and Metaphysics

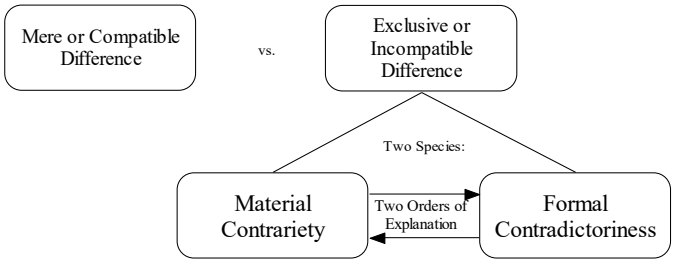
There are, then, fundamental conceptual reasons to understand the notion of determinate difference as implicitly involving the metadistinction between two kinds of difference: exclusive difference and compatible difference.

One important way in which the enriched empiricism Hegel is considering differs from traditional empiricism (including its twentieth-century variants) lies in its rejection of the latter's *atomism* about the contents of immediate sensory experience. If their exclusive differences from one another are an essential part of what is given in experience, then each has the content it does only as a member of and in virtue of the role it plays in a constellation of interrelated contents.

Hegel's principal metaphysical primitive, determinate negation, is intrinsically and essentially a *modal* notion. The material incompatibility of red with green and circular with triangular is a matter of what *can* and *cannot* be combined, what is and is not *possible*. Modality is built into the metaphysical bedrock of his system.



Determinate negation also contrasts with formal or abstract negation. This is the distinction between Aristotelian *contraries* and Aristotelian *contradictories*.



Hegel takes determinate negation to be prior in the order of explanation to formal or abstract negation. He accordingly has the second picture in mind, understanding contradictories in terms of contraries. The tradition of extensional logic and semantics, extending from Boole through Russell to Tarski and Quine, adopts the other order of explanation, understanding material incompatibility as contrariety in terms of formal incompatibility as contradictoriness or inconsistency.

I am going to call a conception of the objective world as consisting of particular objects that exhibit repeatable properties (universals) as having an "aristotelian" structure.

There are two broad explanatory strategies available to explicate the aristotelian structure of objects-and-properties. Hegel wants to explain it in terms of determinate negation, relating property-like features. I want to illuminate that metaphysical approach by contrasting it with the extensionalist Tarskian tradition, which starts with objects understood as *merely* different. The two orders of explanation exploiting the relations between contraries and contradictories (hence determinate and formal, abstract negation) are embedded in more encompassing converse explanatory strategies for articulating the aristotelian object/property categorial structure, rooted in the metadifference between incompatible and compatible differences.

There are three distinct moves in the process by which the metaphysical structure of objects-with-properties is found to be implicit already in what would be expressed by a purely feature-placing vocabulary, once the features deployed in that vocabulary are understood to stand to one another in relations both of compatible and of incompatible difference. Each one involves adding to the picture a further kind of difference, so a further articulation of the complex notion of determinate negation. The first move puts in place the intercategorial difference between properties and objects, or universals and particulars. The second move puts in place an intracategorial difference between two roles that particular objects must play with respect to properties, reflecting the intracategorial difference between merely different and exclusively different properties. The third move registers a fundamental intercategorial metaphysical difference between objects and properties with respect to mere and exclusive differences.

Understanding functional units of accounts for incompatible sense repeatables more specifically as *objects* or *particulars* involves further unfolding of what is implicit in distinguishing compatible or merely different sense repeatables from incompatible or exclusively different ones.

Hegel says of the features that "these determinatenesses…are really only properties by virtue of the addition of a determination yet to come," namely thinghood. [*PhG* 113] He elaborates that notion of thinghood along two dimensions: the thing as *exclusive* and the thing as *inclusive*. In talking about these two different roles essential to being a "*thing* of many properties", he describes it as on the one hand "a 'one', an excluding unity," and on the other hand as an " 'also', an indifferent unity."

> [I]f the many determinate properties were strictly indifferent [gleichgültig] to one another, if they were simply and solely self-related, they would not be determinate; for they are only determinate in so far as they differentiate themselves from one another [sie sich unterscheiden], and relate themselves to others as to their opposites [als entgegengesetzte].

This is the by now familiar point that determinateness requires exclusive, incompatible difference, not just mere or indifferent, compatible difference.

> Yet; as thus opposed [Entgegengesetzung] to one another they cannot be together in the simple unity of their medium, which is just as essential to them as negation; the differentiation [Unterscheidung] of the properties, insofar as it is...exclusive [ausschließende], each property negating the others, thus falls outside of this simple medium.

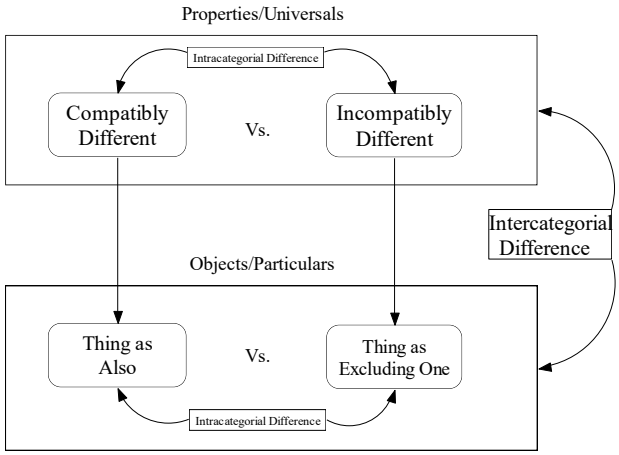
The 'medium' here is thinghood, the objects that exhibit the properties:

> The One is the *moment of negation*… it excludes another; and it is that by which 'thinghood' is determined as a Thing. [*PhG* 114]

This abstract universal medium, which can be called simply thinghood…is nothing else than what Here and Now have proved themselves to be, viz. a *simple togetherness* of a plurality; but the many are, *in their determinateness*, simple universals themselves. This salt is a simple Here, and at the same time manifold: it is white and *also* tart, *also* cubical…. All these many properties are in a single simple 'Here', in which, therefore, they interpenetrate…And at the same time, without being separated by different Heres, they do not affect each other in this interpenetration. The whiteness does not affect the cubical shape…each…leaves the others alone, and is connected with them only by the indifferent Also. This Also is thus the pure universal itself, or the medium, the 'thinghood', which holds them together in this way. [*PhG* 113]

the medium in which these determinations permeate each other in that universality as a simple unity but without making contact with each other, for it is precisely through participation in this universality that each is on its own, indifferent to the others—As it has turned out, this abstract universal medium, which can be called thinghood itself…is none other than the here and now, namely, as a simple ensemble of the many. [*PhG* 113]

This simple medium is not merely an "also," an indifferent unity; it is also a "one," an excluding unity. [*PhG* 114]



...these *diverse aspects*...are *specifically determined*. White is white only in opposition to black, and so on, and the Thing is a One precisely by being opposed to others. But it is not as a One that it excludes others from itself...it is through its *determinateness* that the thing excludes others. Things are therefore in and for themselves determinate; they have properties by which they distinguish themselves from others. [*PhG* 120]

Property *Q* is the opposite of property *P* in this sense just in case it is exhibited by all and only the objects that do not exhibit *P*. This is how not-red is related to red. An argument due to

Aristotle [Book V of the *Categories*] shows that objects do not have opposites in this sense of contradictories. The corresponding notion of an opposite in the ontological category of objects would have object *b* being the contradictory of object *a* just in case *b* exhibits all and only the properties not exhibited by *a*. But the properties *not* exhibited by any object always include properties that are incompatible with one another, and hence not all exhibitable by any one object.

The Indiscernibility of Identicals says that mere difference of properties is sufficient for mere difference of objects. The Identity of Indiscernibles says that merely different objects have at least merely different properties. I think Hegel endorses these principles. But his talk of objects as excluding one another suggests that he also endorses a further, stronger principle: different objects not only have *different* properties, they have *incompatible* properties. We might call this principle the "Exclusivity of Objects." Such a view would satisfy three criteria of adequacy, the first two of which are set by the passage most recently quoted above.

- It would underwrite talk of objects as excluding one another.
- It would do so by appealing to the more primitive notion of properties excluding one another.
- And it would respect the differences between property-exclusion and object-exclusion that

are enforced by the Aristotelian argument showing that objects cannot have contradictories definable from their exclusions (in the case of properties, their contrarieties) in the way that properties do.

In effect, the Exclusivity of Objects says that it never happens that two objects are distinguished by their role as things-as-alsos combining different compatible properties, according to the discernibility of non-identicals version of (LL2) unless they are *also* distinguished by their role as things-as-excluding-ones. There is no mere difference of properties distinguishing objects without exclusive difference of properties (having incompatible properties) distinguishing them. This is a topic on which Leibniz's Law is silent.

In a sense, then, for the identity and individuation of objects, the exclusiveness of objects, which appeals to exclusive difference of properties, is more basic in the Hegelian order of explanation than Leibniz's Law, which appeals to mere difference of properties.

Perception…takes what is present to it as universal. [*PhG* 111]
As it has turned out…it is merely the character of positive universality which is at first observed and developed. [*PhG* 114]
Only perception contains negation. [*PhG* 111]
Being…is a universal in virtue of its having mediation or the negative within it; when it *expresses* this in its immediacy, it is a *differentiated*, *determinate* property. [*PhG* 113]

Since the principle of the object, the universal, is in its simplicity a *mediated* universal, the object must express this its nature in its own self. This it does by showing itself to be *the thing with many properties*. [*PhG* 111]

Hegel summarizes what we will learn, by talking about
…sensuous universality, that is, the *immediate* unity of being and the negative…
…the thing as the truth of perception reaches its culmination to the extent that it is necessary to develop that here. It is
α) the indifferent passive universality, the also of the many properties, or, rather, matters.
ß) the negation generally as simple, that is, the one, the excluding of contrasted properties, and
γ) the many properties themselves, the relation of the two first moments: The negation, as it relates itself to the indifferent element and extends itself within it as a range of differences; the point of individuality in the medium of enduring existence radiating out into multiplicity. [*PhG* 115]

I have argued that Hegel's metaphysical analysis of the fine structure of the aristotelian object-with-many-properties, and his derivation of it from the concept of <u>determinate universality</u>, is substantially more intricate than this summary indicates. As on offer in the *Perception* chapter, it is a constellation of no fewer than ten interrelated kinds of difference.
We began by distinguishing
1. mere or "indifferent" [gleichgültig] difference of compatible universals

from
2. exclusive difference of incompatible universals.

This brought into view the
3. metadifference between mere and exclusive difference.
This is the first intracategorial metadifference, between differences relating universals to universals. It is a kind of exclusive difference, since the universals must be either compatible or incompatible. (One could use the terminology differently, so that exclusively different universals were also merely different. But this does not seem to be how Hegel uses the terms.)

Within exclusive difference, two species that can be related by two opposing orders of explanation:
4. material contrariety, corresponding to determinate negation,

and
5. formal contradictoriness, corresponding to abstract logical negation.

There is then also the
6. metadifference between determinate and abstract negation logical negation.
This is the second intracategorial metadifference, between differences relating universals to universals. These are not exclusively, but only compatibly different. Contradictories are a kind of contrary: minimal contraries.
Implicit in the concept of repeatables as universals is the
7. difference between universals and particulars.

This is the the first intercategorial difference. It, too, is a kind of exclusive difference.
Implicit in the concept of particulars in relation to universals is the
8. difference between two roles they play:

- particulars as 'also's, that is as medium hosting a community of compatible universals, and
- particulars as "exclusive ones," that is as units of account repelling incompatible properties.

This is the first intracategorial difference between roles played by particulars. These are what we might call *strongly* compatibly different roles, since *every* particular not only *can* but *must* play both.
Corresponding to this difference on the side of particulars is the
9. difference between two roles universals play with respect to particulars:

- universals as related to an inclusive 'One' in community with other compatible universals, and
- universals as excluding incompatible universals associated with different exclusive 'One's.

Finally, there is the
10. Difference between universals and particulars that consists in the fact that universals *do* and particulars do *not* have contradictories or opposites.

Unless the distinctions and intricate interrelations between these different ways in which things can be said to differ from or negate others are kept firmly in mind, nothing but confusion can result in thinking about Hegel's metaphysics of negation.

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

Lecture 5:

Understanding the Object/Property Structure in Terms of Negation: An Introduction to Hegelian Logic and Metaphysics

In this essay, I look in some detail at the fine structure of Hegelian *negation*—and at its metaphysical consequences—when Hegel first introduces it, in the second chapter of the *Phenomenology* (presenting ideas corresponding to the transition from Sache to Dinge in the *Science of Logic*). These are only the first baby steps—soon to be aufgehoben—in his intricate story. But the structure revealed is both interesting in its own right, and a cautionary tale for any readers tempted by univocal readings of such central Hegelian formulae as "the negation of the negation," and "identity through difference." I will be particularly concerned to contrast Hegel's order of explanation with the extensional semantics that defines the modern logistical tradition, which would not really begin for another 60 years, and which did not achieve equivalent expressive power until 160 years after Hegel wrote the passages I'll be discussing. The considerations that drive this narrative of explicitation (transforming what is *an sich* into what is *gesetzte*) are, I think, individually all familiar. But the argumentative narrative that they jointly articulate, when suitably recruited and deployed, is a paradigm of Hegelian conceptual emergence. It is also a paradigm of analytic metaphysical argument pursued with Hegelian conceptual raw materials, so taking place in a setting substantially different from the Lewisian possible-worlds framework within which most such metaphysical argumentation and construction is pursued today. This metaconceptual contrast can be illuminating even in the absence of antecedent interest in Hegel's ideas.

I

The thought with which *Perception* begins is that the determinateness of the content even of an immediately given sensory knowing, an act of sensory awareness, as conceived according to the metaconception Hegel calls "sense certainty", must be understood in terms of what it excludes or rules out, what is exclusively different from it, not just what is merely or indifferently different from it. A metadifference between two kinds of difference shows up already in the contents of acts of sensory awareness conceived according to the categories of sense certainty. The observable contents expressible in a feature-placing vocabulary that were introduced in *Sense Certainty* offer a couple of alternatives. The day of "It is day," and the raining of "It is raining," are different. So are the day of "It is day," and the night of "It is night." But they are different in different senses of "different." In the language Hegel uses in *Perception*, day and raining are *merely* or *compatibly,* or *indifferently* [gleichgültig] different, while day and night are *exclusively* [ausschlieβend] different. For, though different, day and raining are *compatible* features (it can be both day and raining), while day and night are *incompatible* (it cannot be both day and night).

The *determinateness* of sense contents cannot be made intelligible solely in terms of their mere difference. Exclusive difference must also be appealed to. If the contents of minimal sensory knowings stood to one another only in relations of compatible difference, none excluding or ruling out any other, then their occurrence would have no significance, would convey no information. They would be mere events, 'that's without 'such'es, gears unconnected to any mechanism, their occurrence as devoid of cognitive significance as any other unrepeatable events. Their differences would be less (determinate) than "merely numerical" differences. For numbers are exclusively different from one another. Their differences would be less (determinate) than those of featureless Euclidean points, even apart from consideration of all the lines, circles, triangles, and so on whose relations to those points might relate them to one another. For again, being one point precludes being another, whereas merely compatibly different contents can be instantiated together.

In fact contents that are merely or compatibly different are elements of different families of exclusively or incompatibly different contents. Shapes such as circular, triangular, and rectangular are exclusively different from one another. Exhibiting one rules out exhibiting any other (so long as we restrict ourselves to shapes exhibiting the same number of dimensions as the

space they inhabit, since a three-dimensional pyramid with a rectangular base might be thought to exhibit both triangular and rectangular shapes). Colors also form a family of exclusively different contents (so long as we restrict ourselves to monochromatic regions). What can be compatibly different is pairs of contents drawn from different families of incompatibles: red and square, green and triangular, and so on. These merely or compatibly different contents are *determinate* only insofar as they *also* stand in relations of *incompatibility* or *exclusion* from contents drawn from the *same* family. It is as such that their occurrence conveys information, by *excluding* the occurrence of other members of the *same* family or incompatibles. Mere difference is intelligible in the context of such a structure exhibiting also exclusive differences. But by itself it is too weak to underwrite any notion of determinate content.

There are, then, fundamental conceptual reasons to understand the notion of determinate difference as implicitly involving the metadistinction between two kinds of difference: exclusive difference and compatible difference. I think Hegel also thinks that this metadifference is *observable*, that it is part of the phenomenology (in a more contemporary, vaguely Husserlian sense) of sense experience. That is, I think he thinks the compatibility of day with raining, and its incompatibility with night is part of what we are *given* when we have a sensory experience of the sort that might be expressed in a feature-placing language by "It is day." In grasping that content, part of what we grasp is its place in a space of compatibilities and incompatibilities with other experienceable contents.

On this account, Hegel thinks that more is given in sense experience than empiricists such as Locke and Hume do. The experiences we label 'red' and 'green', and those we label 'rectangular' and 'triangular' for him are experienced *as* incompatible, as ruling each other out (as simultaneously located), while those labeled 'red' and 'triangular' and 'green' and 'rectangular' are experienced as different, but compatible. The different possibilities of combination, and so the arraying of features into compatible families of incompatibles is a ground-level structure of sensory awareness for Hegel, but not for traditional empiricists. They are obliged to treat the fact that one has never experienced a wholly red and wholly green triangle as on a par with the contingent fact that one has never experienced, say, a wholly blue pentagon. Hegel sees the modal difference between the difference between red and triangular and the difference between red and green as something one knows simply by experiencing them.

Is this difference of opinion about what is given in sensory experience an empirical disagreement? Can it in principle be settled by introspection? Has traditional empiricism suffered from restricting itself to too narrow a conception of the basic knowledge delivered by sense experience? Hegel's analysis of what is implicit in the idea that basic sensory knowledge has a content that is *determinate* provides an argument for the claim that knowledge of which experiential features are exclusively different from which, and which merely different, *must* be part of what one knows in having experiences with those features. (This is not to say that a subject need be incorrigible on such matters.)

One important way in which the enriched empiricism Hegel is considering differs from traditional empiricism (including its twentieth-century variants) lies in its rejection of the latter's *atomism* about the contents of immediate sensory experience. If their exclusive differences from one another are an essential part of what is given in experience, then each has the content it does only as a member of and in virtue of the role it plays in a constellation of interrelated contents. An experienced red triangle must locate the experiencing of it in the mere (compatible) difference of members of two different families of incompatibles: colors and shapes. (It is interesting to note in this connection that the intrinsic incompatibilities of color properties were a principal consideration leading Wittgenstein away from the logical atomism of the Tractarian idea of elementary states of affairs as independent of one another.) The result is a kind of holism about what is immediately given in sensory experience. The atomism characteristic of the conception of sensory consciousness understood according to the categories of sense certainty is seen to be incompatible with understanding such consciousness as *determinately* contentful.

Equally important, and equally radical, is the fact that Hegel's principal metaphysical primitive, determinate negation, is intrinsically and essentially a *modal* notion. The material incompatibility of red with green and circular with triangular is a matter of what *can* and *cannot* be combined, what is and is not *possible*. Modality is built into the metaphysical bedrock of his system. Possibility is conceptually more basic than actuality, in the sense that an immediately given actual experience is intelligible as having the determinate content it does only insofar as it is situated in a space of possibilities structured by relations of compatible and incompatible difference. The empiricism Hegel is considering is a specifically *modally* enriched empiricism. And we shall see that, by contrast to Kant, for Hegel the essentially modal articulation of what is

determinate is not restricted to subjective thoughts or experiencings. It also characterizes objective determinate states of affairs, whether possible objects of sensory experience or not.

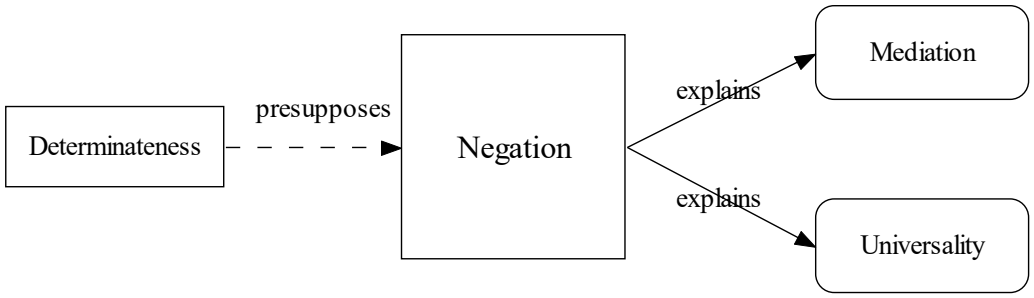
II

If the contents that *can* be given in sensory experience, some of which actually *are*, (contents that might be expressed linguistically in a feature-placing vocabulary) are determinate in that they stand to one another in relations of determinate negation in the sense of modally exclusive difference or material incompatibility, then they also stand to one another in relations of material inferential consequence. In Hegel's idiom, this is to say that although they may be given immediately, the contents of sensory experience are themselves "thoroughly mediated." For some feature A (such as "It is raining,") has another feature B (such as "It is precipitating,") as a material inferential consequence just in case everything materially incompatible with B (such as "It is fine,") is also materially incompatible with A. In this sense scarlet entails red and square entails rectangular.

In much the same way, even if the features in virtue of which sensory experiences are determinately contentful were construed as unrepeatable, their relations of exclusive difference from one another would ensure that they also fall under repeatables, i.e. that they exhibit a kind of universality. For many colors are alike in that they are exclusively different from red, and all shapes are alike in that they are not exclusively different, but merely compatibly different from red. These repeatable commonalities ramify into arbitrary Boolean complexity. For instance, two otherwise dissimilar features might share not being exclusively different from A or B, but being exclusively different from both C and D. More natural sense universals are constructable using entailments defined by exclusions. Thus all the features that entail red—for instance, shades of red such as scarlet and crimson—can be grouped together. Similarly, all the features entailed by rectangular form a kind. "As Wilfrid Sellars observes, the primitives appealed to by

classical empiricists are *determinate* sense repeatables. They were concerned with how merely *determinable* sense repeatables might be understood in terms of these, not with how unrepeatables might give rise to determinate repeatables.

It is in virtue of these facts that I take determinate negation to be for Hegel a more metaphysically fundamental concept than mediation and universality:

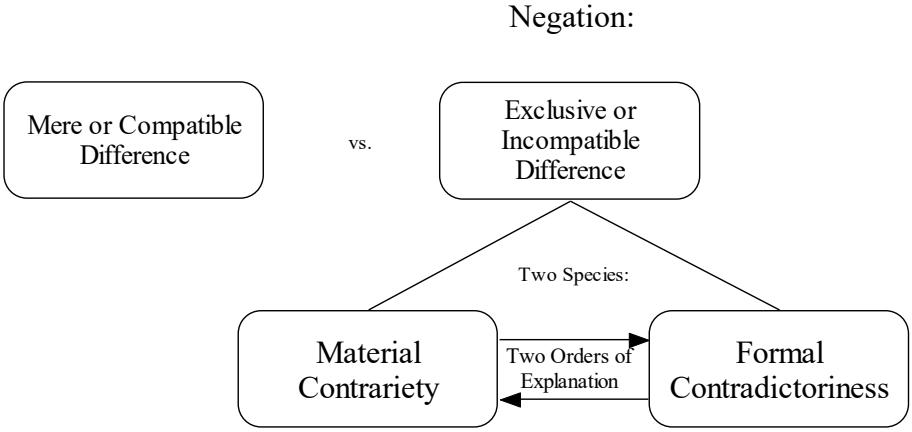


as pictured above. The concept of negation that plays the axial role in the metaphysics Hegel introduces in *Perception* is a rich and complex one. As I have indicated, it is introduced as one element of a dyad. This is the metadifference between two kinds of difference: mere or compatible difference and exclusive or incompatible difference. We have seen that these two kinds of difference articulate determinate repeatable features into compatible families of incompatible features, as in the paradigm of colors and shapes.

The next step in understanding exclusive difference is to consider it in relation to another kind of negation. Determinate negation also contrasts with formal or abstract negation. The latter is *logical* negation, in a non-Hegelian sense of "logical." Two features stand in the relation of determinate negation if they are *materially* incompatible. I am helping myself here to Sellars's terminology, itself not wholly uninfluenced by Hegel. The idea is that items determinately negate one another in virtue of their nonlogical *content*. Such items stand in the relation of formal or abstract negation if they are logically incompatible: incompatible in virtue of their abstract logical form.

This distinction is as old as logic. It is the distinction between Aristotelian *contraries* and Aristotelian *contradictories*. Red and green, circular and triangular, are contraries, while red and not-red, and circular and not-circular are contradictories. Both of these are kinds of *exclusive* difference. So this is a further metadifference, between two species of exclusive difference. The

first metadifference, between compatible and incompatible differences, is a structure of co-ordination. Neither sort of difference is definable in terms of the other; both are required for determinateness. Together they yield compatible families of incompatible feature-kinds. By contrast, contrariety and contradictoriness are interdefinable There are accordingly two orders of explanation one might pursue in relating them, depending on which one takes as primitive. One can define contraries in terms of contradictories, so determinate negation in terms of formal negation: for *Q* to be a contrary of *P* is for *Q* to imply *P*'s contradictory, *not-P*. Green is a contrary of red and triangular of circular just insofar as green implies not-red and triangular implies not-circular. Or, one can define contradictories in terms of contraries, so formal negation in terms of determinate negation: for something to be the contradictory of *P*, *not-P*, is just for it to be the *minimal* contrary of *P*, in the sense of being implied by every contrary *Q* of *P*. Not-red is implied by *all* of red's contraries: green, blue, yellow, and so on, and not-circular is implied by *all* of circular's contraries: triangular, square, pentagonal, and so on.



Hegel takes determinate negation to be prior in the order of explanation to formal or abstract negation. He accordingly has the second picture in mind, understanding contradictories in terms of contraries. The tradition of extensional logic and semantics, extending from Boole through Russell to Tarski and Quine, adopts the other order of explanation, understanding material incompatibility as contrariety in terms of formal incompatibility as contradictoriness or inconsistency.

Each approach has its characteristic advantages. It is worth noting at this point that the interdefinability of contraries and contradictories (hence of determinate and abstract formal negation) depends on the availability of a notion of implication or consequence. The Hegelian order of explanation has a native candidate. For, as already pointed out, material incompatibility underwrites a notion of entailment: *Q* is a consequence of *P* just in case everything materially incompatible with *Q* is materially incompatible with *P*. What I'll call the Tarskian extensionalist tradition also has available a notion of implication. But it is not directly definable in terms of formal logical negation. It only becomes available if one widens the focus of the Tarskian explanatory strategy. Doing so will illuminate the metaphysical project Hegel pursues in the *Perception* chapter. In particular, it makes manifest the difference between building modality in at the metaphysical ground-floor, as Hegel does, and adding it as a late-coming, perhaps optional afterthought (think of Quine), as the extensionalist tradition does.

The widening of focus I have in mind is to the structure of singular terms and predicates presenting objects and properties that Hegel argues is implicit already in the idea of determinate features presented by a feature-placing vocabulary. I am going to call a conception of the objective world as consisting of particular objects that exhibit repeatable properties (universals) as having an "aristotelian" structure (with a lowercase 'a'). I do so because I take it that it is such a commonsense conception, suggested by the way our languages work, that Aristotle aims to explain using his proprietary metaphysical apparatus of individual substances and their essences. I am after the Aristotelian *explanandum* rather than the *explanans*. I take it that it is also the common explanatory target of the *Perception* chapter and of the extensionalist semantic tradition that culminates in Tarskian model theory. (Russell pitched the shift from traditional logics of properties to modern logics of relations as transformative, and along one important dimension, it was. But that difference is not of the first significance for the contrast I am concerned to draw here.) Unlike Aristotle himself, neither Hegel in this chapter (though he does in the *Logic*), nor the extensionalist tradition in general, makes anything of the distinction between sortal predicates expressing kinds such as 'fox' (which come with criteria of identity and individuation), and mere characterizing predicates expressing properties such as 'red' (which do not individuate),—which is part of what Aristotle's essentialism is a theory of.

There are two broad explanatory strategies available to explicate the aristotelian structure of objects-and-properties. Hegel wants to explain it in terms of determinate negation, relating *property*-like features. I want to illuminate that metaphysical approach by contrasting it with the extensionalist Tarskian tradition, which starts with *objects* understood as *merely* different. The two orders of explanation exploiting the relations between contraries and contradictories (hence determinate and formal, abstract negation) are embedded in more encompassing converse explanatory strategies for articulating the aristotelian object/property categorial structure, rooted in the metadifference between incompatible and compatible differences.

The notion of compatible difference that applies to the objects with which metaphysical extensionalism begins does not appeal to modal notions of possibility or necessity. The mere difference that characterizes elements of the domain of objects of the Tarskian scheme is a primitive *material* relation, in that it—like the contrariety with which Hegel's converse explanatory strategy begins—is not defined in terms of formal logical concepts. Properties are represented in Tarskian structures as sets of objects: the extensions of the properties. The indiscernibility of identicals—that is, that if objects *a* and *b* are identical, they have the same properties—will follow set-theoretically from this definition. The other direction of Leibniz's Law, the identity of indiscernibles, will not, unless one insists that *every* different set of objects determines or constitutes a property.

On this basis, contradictoriness, and so formal negation, can be introduced. Contradictory properties are definable as properties with complementary extensions within the domain of objects. *Not-P*, the contradictory of *P*, is the property whose extension consists of all and only the objects in the domain that are not in the extension of *P*. The relation of contrariety is not really represented in such extensional structures. What are intuitively contraries, such as **square** and **circular**, will have disjoint extensions. But not every pair of disjoint extensions corresponds to proper contraries. If the domain does not happen to include a mountain made of gold, **being made of gold** and **being a mountain** will be disjoint properties, without being contraries. The failure of Tarskian structures to represent contrariety is the result of the modal character of that notion. Contradictoriness of properties *is* represented, because negation is given the same reading in all models: contradictory properties are those pairs whose extensions exhaustively and exclusively partition the domain of objects. In order to represent contrariety of properties, we

could in this object-based framework impose a non-logical, material constraint on the Tarskian interpretation function, to ensure that the extensions of contrary properties *P* and *Q* are disjoint in *every* model.

That, in effect, is what the *possible worlds* development of Tarskian model theory does. The modal element can be thought of as added by treating contrariety of properties the way logical negation is treated: as a constraint on *all* interpretations. The account moves up to *intensions* of properties by looking at *functions* from *indices* to extensions. The indices can be models, that is, relational structures. Or they can be possible worlds. We have come to see that the differences between these are great. One important one is that models have *domains* of objects. Possible worlds do not. Another is that some *logically* possible worlds (i.e. combinatorially possible constellations of objects and properties) don't count as really (metaphysically, or physically) possible. Whereas any relational structure with the right adicities can be a model. This is the point where modality gets incorporated—that is, at the end. It then trickles down, via the intensions of properties, to the properties. But it should be emphasized that this constraint is, from the point of view of the underlying raw materials, *arbitrary* and *extraneous*. One simply *stipulates* that the disjointness of domains of certain predicates square and circular, *is de jure*, while that of others, gold, and mountain, is not. Such stipulations come in at the very end of the process of semantic construction, not at the beginning. So possible worlds semantics in the end *also* takes the distinction between incompatible and compatible difference (exclusive and mere difference) for granted. It just builds it in at a different level, as something latecoming.

A particularly extreme version of the extensionalist order of explanation is that of the *Tractatus*. Not only does it not build modality into its primitives, it offers only the most attenuated version of modality, constructed at the very end as something to be understood in terms of logical contradictoriness and (so) formal negation. The Tractarian scheme starts with mere difference of objects, and mere difference of relations among them. Properties are understood as just relations to different objects. All elementary objects can stand in all relations to all other objects. At the ground level, there are no combinatory restrictions at all, except those that follow from the adicity of the relations. What is syntactically-combinatorially categorically possible ("logically possible") is possible *tout court*. Elementary objects put *no* constraints on the Sachverhalte they can enter into, so no restrictions on the properties they can simultaneously

exhibit. At this level, properties do not stand to one another in relations of exclusive difference—e.g. where being A's mother implies one cannot be B's father. (Indeed, it is a good question whether and how monadic properties can even be merely distinguished.) More complex facts can be incompatible, but this is intelligible only where one truth-functionally includes the logical negation of an elementary fact included in the other. As I mentioned above, dissatisfaction with this treatment of contrariety of colors seems to have played an important role in moving Wittgenstein away from the Tractarian way of thinking about things.

III

Grafting on at the end substantive modal constraints on admissible models in the way of possible worlds semantics does not alter the basic Tarskian extensionalist order of explanation. The order of explanation Hegel pursues in *Perception* is the converse of it. It is of the essence of extensional approaches to appeal only to mere or compatible difference of objects. Besides *compatible* differences of features, Hegel also acknowledges *in*compatible or *exclusive* differences. We have seen that these come in two Aristotelian species: formal contradictories and material contraries. Hegel focuses on the material (nonlogical) incompatibility of such contraries. On the basis of this nonlogical modal primitive, he then elaborates the full aristotelian structure of objects-with-properties (particulars characterized by universals).

There are three distinct moves in the process by which the metaphysical structure of objects-with-properties is found to be implicit already in what would be expressed by a purely feature-placing vocabulary, once the features deployed in that vocabulary are understood to stand to one another in relations both of compatible and of incompatible difference. Each one involves adding to the picture a further kind of difference, so a further articulation of the complex notion of <u>determinate negation</u>. The first move puts in place the intercategorial difference between properties and objects, or universals and particulars. The second move puts in place an intracategorial difference between two roles that particular objects must play with respect to properties, reflecting the intracategorial difference between merely different and exclusively

different properties. The third move registers a fundamental intercategorial metaphysical difference between objects and properties with respect to mere and exclusive differences.

The first move in this argument finds the aristotelian structure of objects-and-properties, or particulars-and-universals to be implicit already in the observation that the features articulating the contents of sense experience stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility or exclusive difference. This argument can be thought of as beginning with the role that what in *Sense Certainty* Hegel calls "the Now" plays in the distinction between the two basic kinds of difference, compatible and incompatible. What would be expressed by "Now_1 is night," is *not* incompatible with what would be expressed by "Now_2 is day." It *is* incompatible with "Now_1 is day." The incompatibility applies only to the *same* 'Now'. We could say that the 'Now' is playing the role of a *unit of account* for incompatibilities.

At this point we can see that the notion of incompatible difference, determinate negation, or material incompatibility (which I have been claiming are three ways of talking about the same thing) among *features* implicitly involves a contrast with a different kind of thing, something that is *not* in the same sense a feature, that is an essential part of the same structure. For incompatibilities among features require units of account. What is impossible is not that two incompatible features should be exhibited at all. After all, sometimes it is raining, and sometimes it is fine. What is impossible is that they should be exhibited by the same unit of account—what we get our first grip on as what would be expressed by a tokening of 'now', or 'here-and-now', or 'this', and the anaphoric repeatability structures they initiate.

So from the fact that what would be expressed by different 'now's can exhibit incompatible features it follows that the structure of sense contents that includes features that can differ either incompatibly or compatibly also essentially includes items that are not features, but that play a different role. These units of account are of a different ontological category from the features for which they are units of account. Besides the *intra*categorial difference (concerning relations of features) between two kinds of difference (incompatible and compatible) of features in sensory experience that would be expressed by sentences in a feature-placing language, sensory experience also implicitly involves the *inter*categorial difference between features and units of account for incompatibilities of features.

That is to say that that what I have called the 'aristotelian' structure of objects-and-properties, or particulars-and-universals, is now seen to have been all along implicit in sense experience, even as originally conceived according to the categories of sense certainty. Making this implicit structure explicit yields the form of sensory self-consciousness Hegel calls "perception."

A decisive line has been crossed. The content-repeatables exhibited by unrepeatable sense experiencings are no longer to be construed as *features*, but as *properties*. What enforces the transition is the association of those sense repeatables not with what is expressed by the indiscriminate "it" of "It is raining," or the undifferentiated merely existential "there is" of "There is red," but with different, competing units of account. Looking over the shoulder of the phenomenal self-consciousness that is developing from the categories of sense certainty to those of perception, we see that this differentiation of what exhibits the sense repeatables was implicit already in the different 'now's acknowledged by sense certainty from the beginning. No longer are the contents of basic sensory knowings construed as what would be expressed in feature-placing vocabularies. Now they are articulated as what requires expression in vocabularies exhibiting the further structure of subjects and predicates. What is experienced is now understood not just as features, but as objects with properties, particulars exhibiting universals.

IV

Understanding functional units of accounts for incompatible sense repeatables more specifically as *objects* or *particulars* involves further unfolding of what is implicit in distinguishing compatible or merely different sense repeatables from incompatible or exclusively different ones. Hegel says of the features that "these determinatenesses…are really only properties by virtue of the addition of a determination yet to come," namely thinghood.[87] He elaborates that notion of thinghood along two dimensions: the thing as *exclusive* and the thing as *inclusive*. In talking about these two different roles essential to being a "*thing* of many

[87] [113].

properties", he describes it as on the one hand "a 'one', an excluding unity," and on the other hand as an " 'also', an indifferent unity." The unity of the units of account essentially involves this distinction and the relation between being a 'one' and being an 'also'.[88] These correspond to the roles played by objects with respect to *incompatible* properties, which they *ex*clude, and their role with respect to *compatible* properties, which they *in*clude. So the intracategorial metadifference between two kinds of difference between what now show up as *properties* is reflected by the intracategorial difference between two complementary roles *objects* play with respect to those properties, as repelling incompatible properties and as a medium unifying a set of compatible properties.

As to the first, he says:

> [I]f the many determinate properties were strictly indifferent [gleichgültig] to one another, if they were simply and solely self-related, they would not be determinate; for they are only determinate in so far as they differentiate themselves from one another [sie sich unterscheiden], and relate themselves to others as to their opposites [als entgegengesetzte].

This is the by now familiar point that determinateness requires exclusive, incompatible difference, not just mere or indifferent, compatible difference.

> Yet; as thus opposed [Entgegengesetzung] to one another they cannot be together in the simple unity of their medium, which is just as essential to them as negation; the differentiation [Unterscheidung] of the properties, insofar as it is...exclusive [ausschließende], each property negating the others, thus falls outside of this simple medium.

The 'medium' here is thinghood, the objects that exhibit the properties:

> The One is the *moment of negation*… it excludes another; and it is that by which 'thinghood' is determined as a Thing.[89]

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[88] [114].

[89] All of this long passage is from [114].

If A and B are *different* things, then one *can* be circular and the other triangular, one red and one green. But one and the same thing *cannot* have those incompatible properties. A's being circular and red *excludes* its being triangular or green. Objects are individuated by such exclusions.

On the other hand,

> This abstract universal medium, which can be called simply thinghood…is nothing else than what Here and Now have proved themselves to be, viz. a *simple togetherness* of a plurality; but the many are, *in their determinateness*, simple universals themselves. This salt is a simple Here, and at the same time manifold: it is white and *also* tart, *also* cubical…. All these many properties are in a single simple 'Here', in which, therefore, they interpenetrate…And at the same time, without being separated by different Heres, they do not affect each other in this interpenetration. The whiteness does not affect the cubical shape…each…leaves the others alone, and is connected with them only by the indifferent Also. This Also is thus the pure universal itself, or the medium, the 'thinghood', which holds them together in this way.[90]

The thing as the medium in which *compatible* properties can coexist is the thing as 'also'. It is the thing of many (compatible) properties, rather than the thing as excluding incompatible ones. The tokenings of 'here' that sensory consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty already saw as expressing a feature of its experiencings already plays this role, as well as the exclusionary one. Already in that primitive case we can see

> the medium in which these determinations permeate each other in that universality as a simple unity but without making contact with each other, for it is precisely through participation in this universality that each is on its own, indifferent to the others—As it has turned out, this abstract universal medium, which can be called thinghood itself…is none other than the here and now, namely, as a simple ensemble of the many.[91]

[90] [113].
[91] [113].

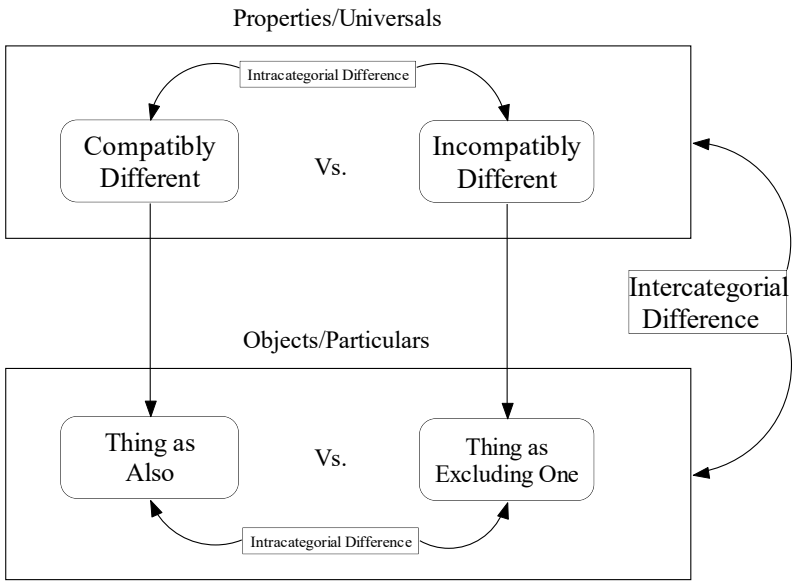
Along this dimension, too, thinghood, the idea of objects as an essential structural element of the structure that contains properties, shows up first in indexical form of here-and-now's, and is generalized first by the idea of anaphoric chains "recollecting" what is expressed by such unrepeatable indexical and demonstrative tokenings, on its way to the full-blown logical conception of particulars exhibiting universals.

The idea of sense experiencings that are determinately contentful in the sense of being not only distinguishable but standing in relations of material incompatibility turned out implicitly to involve a structural-categorial contrast between repeatable sense universals and something else. The something else is "thinghood" or particularity. The notion of particularity then turns out itself to involve a contrast:

> This simple medium is not merely an "also," an indifferent unity; it is also a "one," an excluding unity.[92]

These different but complementary roles reflect, within this ontological category, the distinction between compatible and incompatible differences, within the ontological category of properties.

[92] [114]. Also: "I now further perceive the property as determinate, as contrasted with an other, and as excluding it…I must in fact break up the continuity into pieces and posit the objective essence as an excluding "one." In the broken-up 'one,' I find many such properties, which do not affect each other but which are instead indifferent to each other." [117]



We have seen that determinateness demands that the identity and individuation of properties acknowledge not only compatible differences between them, but also incompatible differences. Does the identity and individuation of objects also depend on both the role of things as unifying compatible properties and their role as excluding incompatible ones? Hegel says:

> ...these *diverse aspects*...are *specifically determined*. White is white only in opposition to black, and so on, and the Thing is a One precisely by being opposed to others. But it is not as a One that it excludes others from itself...it is through its *determinateness* that the thing excludes others. Things are therefore in and for themselves determinate; they have properties by which they distinguish themselves from others.[93]

The first claim here is that the thing as a one is in some sense opposed to other things, or "excludes them from itself." Talk of the thing as an excluding one invokes the role of objects as units of account for incompatibilities of properties.

But the sense in which objects exclude or are opposed to other objects cannot be the same as the sense in which properties exclude or oppose one another. What would the units of account for *those* exclusions be? More deeply, we have seen that the material contrariety of properties admits of the definition of opposites in the sense of contradictories. Property Q is the opposite of

[93] [120].

property *P* in this sense just in case it is exhibited by all and only the objects that do not exhibit *P*. This is how not-red is related to red. An argument due to Aristotle shows that objects do not have opposites in this sense of contradictories.[94] The corresponding notion of an opposite in the ontological category of objects would have object *b* being the contradictory of object *a* just in case *b* exhibits all and only the properties not exhibited by *a*. But the properties *not* exhibited by any object always include properties that are incompatible with one another, and hence not all exhibitable by any one object. The red circular object does not exhibit the properties of being green, yellow, triangular, or rectangular. So its opposite would have to exhibit all of these properties (as well as all the other colors and shapes besides red and circular). That is impossible. The chart above has the properties of not being identical to my left little finger, and of not being identical to Bach's Second Brandenburg Concerto. Its opposite would have to have the property of being identical to both. Since they are not identical to each other, this cannot be.

So although objects both differ from and in some sense exclude one another, there is a huge structural difference between how they do and how properties differ from and exclude one another—the distinction between two kinds of difference that kicks off the whole process of explicitation and elaboration we have been rehearsing. The Aristotelian argument unfolds what turns out to have been implicit all along in the distinction between the two ontological categories of properties and objects. The key to the difference, the distinction between them, lies in their relation to exclusive difference: the difference between their relations to this kind of difference.

How are we to think of objects as being identified and individuated, byool contrast to the ways properties are? The answer Hegel offers in the passage above is surely right as far as it goes: they are identified and individuated by their properties. This response reinforces the order of explanation being identified here as Hegels: from (ur)properties to objects—reversing the extensionalist Tarskian order of explanation. In virtue of their role as hosting co-compatible properties, objects as 'also's merely differ from one another insofar as they host different sets of co-compatible properties. In virtue of their role as excluding properties incompatible with those they host, objects as "excluding ones" exclude one another insofar as some of the co-compatible

[94] Book V of the *Categories*. [ref.]

properties exhibited by one are incompatible with some of the co-compatible properties exhibited by another.

Here we see another aspect of the contrast in orders of explanation between the Tarskian extensionalist tradition and Hegel's metaphysics of universals and particulars. The extensionalist tradition offers an answer to the question about how the identity and individuation of objects relates to that of properties: Leibniz's Law. It comprises two parts, a weaker and a stronger claim:

LL1: The Indiscernibility of Identicals.

LL2: The Identity of Indiscernibles.

(LL1) says that identical objects must have all the same properties. (LL2) says that objects with all the same properties are identical. The identity of indiscernibles is stronger than the indiscernibility of identicals in that it seems to depend on there being "enough" properties: enough to distinguish all the objects that are really distinct. As it arises in the extensionalist framework, Leibniz's Law appeals only to the mere difference of properties and the mere difference of objects. It becomes controversial how to apply it when modally robust properties are in the picture.[95] How do these principles look in an environment where exclusive difference of properties is also in play, as well as mere difference?

The Indiscernibility of Identicals says that mere difference of properties is sufficient for mere difference of objects. The Identity of Indiscernibles says that merely different objects have at least merely different properties. I think Hegel endorses these principles. But his talk of objects as excluding one another suggests that he also endorses a further, stronger principle: different objects not only have *different* properties, they have *incompatible* properties. We might call this principle the "Exclusivity of Objects." Such a view would satisfy three criteria of adequacy, the first two of which are set by the passage most recently quoted above.

- It would underwrite talk of objects as excluding one another.
- It would do so by appealing to the more primitive notion of properties excluding one another.

[95] I discuss this issue in Chapter Six and the second half of Chapter One of *From Empiricism to Expressivism: Brandom Reads Sellars* [Harvard University Press, 2014].

- And it would respect the differences between property-exclusion and object-exclusion that are enforced by the Aristotelian argument showing that objects cannot have contradictories definable from their exclusions (in the case of properties, their contrarieties) in the way that properties do.

In effect, the Exclusivity of Objects says that it never happens that two objects are distinguished by their role as things-as-alsos combining different compatible properties, according to the discernibility of non-identicals version of (LL2) unless they are *also* distinguished by their role as things-as-excluding-ones. There is no mere difference of properties distinguishing objects without exclusive difference of properties (having incompatible properties) distinguishing them. This is a topic on which Leibniz's Law is silent.

The principle of the Exclusivity of Objects holds even within the extensionalist context, provided logical vocabulary is available. For even there it is denied that two objects could differ (merely differ) just by having different merely or compatibly different properties. Taking our cue from the appeal to identity-properties used to illustrate the Aristotelian argument that objects cannot have contradictories, we can notice that if *a* and *b* are indeed not identical, then *a* will have the property of <u>being identical to *a*</u> and *b* will have the property of <u>being identical to *b*</u>. If *a* and *b* are not identical, then nothing can have both properties; they are not merely different properties, they are exclusively different. It is impossible for any object that has the one property to have the other.

So thinking about things from the extensionalist direction, beginning with mere differences of objects and identifying merely different properties in effect with sets of them, does yield a version of the principle of Exclusivity of Objects. If object *a* is red and object *b* differs from it by not having that property, then appeal to the notion of formal or abstract negation yields the result that *b* has the property that is the contradictory of red. It has the property <u>not-red</u>. That property is exclusively different from <u>red</u>, in that it is a property of formal negation that it is *logically* impossible for any object to have both properties simultaneously. Provided that logical vocabulary such as identity or negation is available to define complex properties, merely different objects will be exclusively different. The fact that the principle of the Exclusivity of Objects, that merely different objects will have not only compatibly different properties but also

incompatibly different ones, arises early in the Hegelian order of explanation and late in the extensionalist one is a consequence and reflection of the two orders of explanation regarding the relations between material contrariety and formal contradictoriness that they adopt.

For distinguishing at the outset compatibly from incompatibly different properties, as Hegel does, commits one to a picture of properties as coming in compatible families of incompatible properties, as in the paradigmatic case of shapes and colors of monochromatic Euclidean plane figures. If objects *a* and *b* differ merely in compatible properties, they differ in properties drawn from different families of incompatibles. For example, *a* is red and *b* is square. But for them to be distinguished from each other thereby, *a* must not also be square and *b* must not also be red. But if *a* is not square, it will exhibit some other shape, incompatible with being square, and if *b* is not red it will exhibit some other color, incompatible with being red. But then *a* and *b* will have properties that are not merely different from one another, but incompatible with one another. That is just what the Exclusivity of Objects claims. According to this picture, kinds of things are characterized by which compatible families of incompatible properties they must exhibit. Sounds can be shapeless and colorless—though they must have some pitch and volume. But any monochromatic Euclidean plane figure must have both shape and color on pain of not qualifying as a determinate particular of that kind.

In a sense, then, for the identity and individuation of objects, the exclusiveness of objects, which appeals to exclusive difference of properties, is more basic in the Hegelian order of explanation than Leibniz's Law, which appeals to mere difference of properties.

V

This observation completes the rehearsal of the argument that elaborates what is implicit in the idea of the contents of sensory consciousness as what would be expressed in a feature-placing vocabulary, through the consideration of what is implicit in the requirement that the features articulating those contents must be *determinate*, through the consideration of the relation

of negation and universality, to the much more finely structured idea of those contents as presenting a world consisting of empirical objects with many observable properties. We are now in a position to understand what Hegel is after when, in the opening introductory paragraphs of the *Perception* chapter, he says such things as:

> Perception…takes what is present to it as universal.[96]
>
> As it has turned out…it is merely the character of positive universality which is at first observed and developed.[97]
>
> Only perception contains negation.[98]
>
> Being…is a universal in virtue of its having mediation or the negative within it; when it *expresses* this in its immediacy, it is a *differentiated*, *determinate* property.[99]
>
> Since the principle of the object, the universal, is in its simplicity a *mediated* universal, the object must express this its nature in its own self. This it does by showing itself to be *the thing with many properties*.[100]

In these passages Hegel describes a path from *universality*, through unpacking the requirement of the *determinateness* of universals, to *negation* (and mediation), fetching up with the universal/particular structure of the thing with many properties. I have told the story somewhat differently, but not, I think, irreconcilably so. The official result inherited from the *Sense Certainty* chapter is the realization by sensory self-consciousness that it must understand its immediate sense knowledge as having contents that are repeatable in the sense of being universal. (Not only in this sense, as we have seen.) So that is where Hegel picks up the story in *Perception*. I understand the subsequent invocation of determinateness and negation to be a reminder that what drove empirical consciousness understanding itself according to the categories of sense certainty to the realization that repeatability as

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[96] [111].
[97] [114].
[98] [111].
[99] [113].
[100] [111].

universality must be involved was precisely considerations of the determinateness of sense knowledge as involving negation. So I have told the story of sensory consciousness understanding itself as perceiving starting with the distinction between two ways in which sense contents came to be seen to differ already in the experience of sense certainty.

The passage I want to focus on at this point is one in which Hegel summarizes what we will learn, by talking about

> …sensuous universality, that is, the *immediate* unity of being and the negative…[101]

For here he is announcing that in this chapter we get our introduction to one of his master-ideas, that *determinateness* should be understood as a kind of *identity* constituted by *difference*, unity articulated by disparity. Though he has other big ideas, this is the central structural innovation of his thought about what he calls "logic", which only later in the story is differentiated into a semantics addressing the structure of the subjective realm of thought and an ontology or metaphysics addressing the structure of the objective realm of being. One of my main interpretive claims is that determinate negation or material incompatibility on the side of the thinking subjects is *deontic* incompatibility (a matter of commitment and entitlement) and on the side of the objects thought about is *alethic* incompatibility (a matter of necessity and possibility), and that Hegel's idealism is a story about the unity constituted by *these* different kinds of differences. But that is a story for another occasion.

What we have been exploring is the metaphysical fine structure of what Hegel invokes in this passage as "the negative." One of Hegel's own summaries is this:

> …the thing as the truth of perception reaches its culmination to the extent that it is necessary to develop that here. It is

[101] [115].

α) the indifferent passive universality, the also of the many properties, or, rather, matters.

ß) the negation generally as simple, that is, the one, the excluding of contrasted properties, and

γ) the many properties themselves, the relation of the two first moments: The negation, as it relates itself to the indifferent element and extends itself within it as a range of differences; the point of individuality in the medium of enduring existence radiating out into multiplicity.[102]

In fact, I have argued that Hegel's metaphysical analysis of the fine structure of the aristotelian object-with-many-properties, and his derivation of it from the concept of determinate universality, is substantially more intricate than this summary indicates. As on offer in the *Perception* chapter, it is a constellation of no fewer than ten interrelated kinds of difference. We began by distinguishing

11. mere or "indifferent" [gleichgültig] difference of compatible universals

from

12. exclusive difference of incompatible universals.

This brought into view the

13. metadifference between mere and exclusive difference.

This is the first intracategorial metadifference, between differences relating universals to universals. It is a kind of exclusive difference, since the universals must be either compatible or incompatible. (One could use the terminology differently, so that exclusively different universals were also merely different. But this does not seem to be how Hegel uses the terms.)

Within exclusive difference, there are two species that can be related by two opposing orders of explanation:

14. material contrariety, corresponding to determinate negation,

and

[102] [115].

15. formal contradictoriness, corresponding to abstract logical negation.

There is then also the

16. metadifference between determinate and abstract negation logical negation.

This is the second intracategorial metadifference, between differences relating universals to universals. These are not exclusively, but only compatibly different. Contradictories are a kind of contrary: minimal contraries.

Implicit in the concept of repeatables as universals is the

17. difference between universals and particulars.

This is the the first intercategorial difference. It, too, is a kind of exclusive difference.

Implicit in the concept of particulars in relation to universals is the

18. difference between two roles they play:
    - particulars as 'also's, that is as medium hosting a community of compatible universals, and
    - particulars as "exclusive ones," that is as units of account repelling incompatible properties.

This is the first intracategorial difference between roles played by particulars. These are what we might call *strongly* compatibly different roles, since *every* particular not only *can* but *must* play both.

Corresponding to this difference on the side of particulars is the

19. difference between two roles universals play with respect to particulars:
    - universals as related to an inclusive 'One' in community with other compatible universals, and
    - universals as excluding incompatible universals associated with different exclusive 'One's.

Finally, there is the

20. difference between universals and particulars that consists in the fact that universals *do* and particulars do *not* have contradictories or opposites.

Unless the distinctions and intricate interrelations between these different ways in which things can be said to differ from or negate others are kept firmly in mind, nothing but confusion can result in thinking about Hegel's metaphysics of negation. As an illustration, both determinate properties and objects can be understood as, to use a favorite Hegelian phrase, "negations of the negation." But in very different ways, accordingly as both what is negated and the negating of it must have senses drawn from different elements of the list above. For instance the first negating of a negation is intracategorial, among universals, and the second is intercategorial, distinguishing particulars from universals. In the first case, the identity of a determinate property consists in how it negates or differs from all of its material contraries. Each is in sense (2) the negation of the property in question. And it is by being the contrary of, negating, all of its exclusive contraries that it is the determinate property that it is. This is one sense in which universals as such "contain negation within themselves," which is why perception, which "takes what is present to it as universal," thereby itself "contains negation." In the second case, according to the order of explanation I have attributed to Hegel, particulars are understood in terms of their exclusive difference, of types (7) and (9), from universals. Since the universals are the determinate universals they are because of their negations of one another, particulars can be understood as negations of the negations that articulate those universals. They are of the category that does *not* negate others of its category in the way universals do negate others of their category. These two examples of kinds of identity that are intelligible as constituted by negating a negation are obviously quite different, due to the difference in the kinds of negation.

VI

We have seen Hegel argue that the idea that sense experience has a determinate content implicitly involves the idea that such contents can differ from one another in two different ways. And we have seen how he argues that the aristotelian structure of objects-with-properties is implicit in the relations between these two sorts of difference, these two

senses in which contents can negate one another. The result is a case-study concerning how Hegel thinks a more complex structure can be implicit in a simpler one, in terms of the process by which one goes about making it explicit.

Lecture 6 Handout:

"Force and Understanding: From Object to Concept
The Ontological Status of Theoretical Entities and the Laws that Implicitly Define Them"

My first interpretive claim is that the topic unearthed and bequeathed for investigation by perceiving consciousness is the nature and status of theoretical entities: unobservables that can only be known inferentially.

My second interpretive claim is that in Hegel's discussion, *force* stands in allegorically for theoretical entities generally. The consideration of "force" is a way of talking about the class of things that are only *inferentially* epistemically and semantically accessible. One of the main issues being addressed is the ontological status of those postulated, only inferentially accessible unobservable theoretical entities.

The true world, the world of things as they are in themselves, is now taken to consist of the theoretical entities, whose interactions produce the observable effects (in the allegory, the expressions of the forces) that constitute its appearance, what it is for consciousness. This is what I call "invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism." It is a theoretical realism in that, like Eddington in his famous essay, it identifies the real with the theoretical entities that are postulated as actual, whose activity is understood as the source of what is observable. It is invidious insofar as it understands the observable/theoretical distinction to be an ontological one, and, turning on its head the implicit instrumentalism of empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty and as perceiving, treats *only* the theoretical entities as real.

The way this move gets made in *Force and Understanding* is that the play of forces, which in invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism stood in allegorically for theoretically postulated reality known about inferentially via the mediation of observables that result from the interactions of solicited with sets of soliciting forces, itself is unmasked as an appearance, as being not reality as it is in itself but only what it was *for* the understanding consciousness at the end of its first tripartite experience (which led from force and its expression, through the doubling of forces, to the play of forces). At this turning-point

The Understanding, which is our object, finds itself in just this position, that the inner world has come into being for it, to begin with, only as the universal, still unfilled, *in-itself*. The play of Forces has merely this negative significance of being *in itself* nothing, and its only positive significance that of being the *mediating agency*, but outside of the Understanding... What is *immediate* for the Understanding is the play of Forces; but what is the *True* for it is the simple inner world. [PhG 148]

[T]his play of Forces is so constituted that the force which is *solicited* by another force is equally the *soliciting* Force for that other, which only thereby becomes itself a soliciting Force. What is present in this interplay is likewise merely the immediate alternation, or the absolute interchange, of the *determinateness* which constitutes the sole *content* of what appears: to be either a universal medium, or a negative unity. [viz.: inclusive 'also' or exclusive 'one']…Each of these two sides, the *relation* of soliciting and the *relation* of the opposed determinate content, is *on its own account* an absolute reversal and interchange [Verkehrung und Verwechslung]. But these two relations themselves are again one and the same, and the difference of *form*, of being the

solicited and the soliciting Force, is the same as the difference of *content*, of being the solicited Force as such, viz. the passive medium on the one hand, and the soliciting Force, the active, negative unity or the One, on the other. In this way there vanishes completely all distinction of *separate*, mutually contrasted *Forces*, which were supposed to be present in this movement, for they rested solely on these distinctions; and the distinction between the Forces, along with both those distinctions, likewise collapses into only one. Thus there is neither Force, nor the act of soliciting or being solicited, nor the determinateness of being a stable medium and a unity reflected into itself, nor are there diverse antitheses; on the contrary, what there is in this absolute flux is only *difference* as a *universal* difference, or as a difference into which the many antitheses have been resolved. [PhG 148]

The concept of appearance must be decoupled from that of what is observable (sensuously immediate), and reconstrued along the lines developed in the *Introduction*. That is, appearance is the status a way things could be has to consciousness when it is discovered *not* to be how things are in themselves, but only how they were *for* consciousness—that is, through the experience of error. In this sense, theoretically postulated entities can be discovered to be merely apparent, and observable ones can retain the status of the real.

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The Understanding, which is our object, finds itself in just this position, that the inner world has come into being for it, to begin with, only as the universal, still unfilled, *in-itself*. The play of Forces has merely this negative significance of being *in itself* nothing, and its only positive significance that of being the *mediating agency*, but outside of the Understanding... What is *immediate* for the Understanding is the play of Forces; but what is the *True* for it is the simple inner world. [PhG 148]

What is immediate for understanding consciousness is different from what is immediate for empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense-certainty or as perceiving. The immediacy in question is not *sensuous* immediacy, the immediacy of what is noninferentially *observable*, but the immediacy of what is *thinkable*, what is graspable by being placed in a conceptual space, articulated by relations of material consequence and incompatibility (mediation and determinate negation). It is in this sense that the play of forces is immediate for Understanding: it is a set of actualities interacting according to modal relations of necessity, possibility, and impossibility in virtue of which it is *conceptually* articulated and so *immediately* graspable by empirical consciousness conceived of as understanding, that is, as grasping thinkables precisely in virtue of their standing in just this sort of relation to other thinkables.

The assumption that the reality side of the reality/appearance distinction lines up with the unobservable side of the observable/unobservable (sensuously immediately accessible vs. inferentially mediately accessible) distinction, characteristic of the invidious theoretical realism of this first form of understanding consciousnesss is to be rejected, just as the identification of

reality with the observable side, characteristic of sense-certainty and perceiving consciousness was rejected by understanding consciousness.

A number of lessons are taught by this first (three-phased) experience of understanding consciousness: the ontological legitimacy of merely inferentially accessible entities, the essential role played by actuality in filling out the modal structure of necessity and possibility that articulates determinately contentful states of affairs, and the need for a holistic conception of what it is to be determinately contentful. The principal overarching form of the move being made, comprising these lessons, is however the transition from thinking in terms of force to thinking in terms of law. This is a shift of focus, consonant with the holistic lesson, from *relata* to the *relations* that, it has been learned, functionally define and determine those relata. Instead of asking about the nature and ontological status of theoretical *entities*, in the sense of items that are only inferentially accessible, semantically and epistemically, to empirical consciousness, consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding now asks about the *relations* in virtue of which anything at all is inferentially accessible. These are relations of necessity, possibility, and impossibility that constrain and determine the actual interactions of thinkables: the determinately conceptually contentful states of affairs we think about.

I take it that one of the large lessons Hegel wants to teach us through the subsequent discussion in this chapter is that it is a mistake to reify the laws, that is, to think of them as constituting a supersensible world. To do that is to think of statements of law as functioning like ordinary ground-level empirical statements, as describing or representing some way the world is. To use that representational model is to think of statements of law as stating superfacts. Hegel wants to move us beyond this *representational* semantic paradigm to an *expressive* one. Statements of law should be understood as making explicit something that is implicit already in ordinary empirical descriptions of how things are. What they make explicit are alethic modal features of the conceptual articulation of objective empirical states of affairs in virtue of which they are the determinate states of affairs they are. The notion of representation has a place in this larger picture, but it is not the exclusive Procrustean semantic model to which all statements should be assimilated.

Hegel considers a final way in which the representational semantic model deployed by empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding can be applied to yield a construal of the relations between law and the world of empirical appearance (the "play of forces"). This is what he calls the "inverted world" [verkehrte Welt].

> According, then, to the law of this inverted world, what is *like* in the first world is *unlike* to itself…Expressed in determinate moments, this means that what in the law of the first world is sweet, in this inverted in-itself is sour, what in the former is black is, in the other, white. [PhG 158]

The view being considered reifies the necessity-structured (lawfully related) possibilities that strongly contrast with actuality into another world, alongside the actual world. It is a supersensible world since unlike actuality, possibilities cannot be sensuously immediate, and so cannot even supply observationally delivered premises from which other merely possibles could be known inferentially.

> In the law of motion, e.g., it is necessary that motion be split up into time and space, or again, into distance and velocity. Thus, since motion is only the relation of these factors, it—the

universal—is certainly divided *in its own self*. But now these parts, time and space, or distance and velocity, do not in themselves express this origin in a One; they are indifferent [gleichgültig] to one another, space is thought of as able to be without time, time without space, and distance at least without velocity…and thus are not related to one another through *their own essential nature*. [*PhG* 153]

His response begins with the idea that understanding the sense in which force and mass are distinct but necessarily related by Newton's second law requires thinking about how statements of the law function in *explanation*, to begin with, in *inference*.

[T]he law is, on the one hand, the inner, *implicit* in-itself [Ansichseiende] being, but is, at the same time, inwardly differentiated…this inner difference still falls, to begin with, only within the Understanding, and it is not yet posited *in the thing itself*. It is, therefore, only its *own* necessity that is asserted by the Understanding; the difference, then, is posited by the Understanding in such a way that, at the same time, it is expressly stated that the difference is not a *difference belonging to the thing itself*. This necessity, which is merely verbal, is thus a recital of the moments constituting the cycle of the necessity. The moments are indeed distinguished, but, at the same time, their difference is expressly said to be *not* a difference of the thing itself, and consequently is immediately cancelled again. This process is called "explanation." [Erklären] [*PhG* 154]

The claim that the objective pole of the intentional nexus cannot properly be understood apart from an understanding of the subjective pole, and so of the whole intentional nexus marks a decisive move in the direction of Hegel's idealism.

I see the move being made here as the second in a three-stage process of articulating ever more radical commitments collectively constituting Hegel's final idealist view.

- The first commitment is to what I have called "conceptual realism."
- The second commitment is to what I call "objective idealism."
- The third is to what I call "conceptual idealism."

I offer these claims as a tripartite analysis of Hegel's idealism, claiming that his view in the *Phenomenology* is what you get if you endorse all of them. I take it they form a hierarchy, with each commitment presupposing those that come before it.

The objective idealism that comes into view in the *Force and Understanding* chapter is a thesis about understanding. More specifically, it is a view about the relation between understanding the subjective pole of the intentional nexus and understanding the objective pole. I take it to be a symmetric claim: one cannot understand the objective pole without understanding the subjective pole, and *vice versa*.

There is a semantic distinction between two sorts of dependence relation that is fundamental to understanding the thesis of objective idealism. This is the distinction between reference-dependence and sense-dependence of concepts.

The concept <u>law</u> is sense-dependent, but not reference-dependent, on the concept <u>explanation</u>.

Objective Ontological or Metaphysical Categories:	**Subjective Pragmatic Categories:**	**Syntactic Categories:**
Objects/Properties or Particulars/Universals	Referring/Classifying	Singular Terms / Predicates
Facts	Asserting, Claiming, or Judging	Declarative Sentences
Laws	Explaining as Inferring	Universally Quantified Subjunctive Conditionals

For Hegel *if* there is a reciprocal sense-dependence relation between the notion of material incompatibility that applies to properties, hence facts, and is expressed in laws in the objective realm, and the notion that applies to classification by applying predicates, making claims and judgments, and explanatory inferences in the subjective realm of thought, *then* corresponding sense-dependences will hold at all of the levels retailed in the chart above.

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

Lecture 6:

‘Force’ and Understanding—From Object to Concept

The Ontological Status of Theoretical Entities and the Laws that Implicitly Define Them

Part One: From Force to Law

The thirty-four paragraphs of “Force and Understanding,” the third and final chapter of the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*, are among the most enigmatic, but also the most important, of the book. One puzzle that arises almost immediately concerns the topic of the first third of the chapter: What is *force* [Kraft]? For instance, if the Newtonian conception is intended, how it that in the many pages devoted to the topic, its sister-concept mass does not need to be so much as mentioned? What motivates treating it as the central concept in the next stage in the developing self-understanding of empirical consciousness? More generally, how are we to understand the role of ‘force’ in the transition from consciousness understanding its empirical knowledge as having the structure Hegel calls “perceiving” to its understanding empirical knowledge as having the structure he calls “understanding”? One notorious, more localized, less structurally important hermeneutic speed-bump concerns the third (by my count) of the conceptions of a supersensible world that are canvassed in the middle third of the chapter: the Inverted World. This is a world where everything is the opposite of what it is in the actual world: what was sweet is sour, what was black is white, and so on. How is this even coherent? After all, a central point of the *Perception* chapter is the Aristotelian observation that no object can exhibit the opposite of every property had by some object. Even if it is intelligible, how does this bizarre conception arise out of consideration of the more familiar prior conception of a

supersensible world that is the "calm realm of laws"? Perhaps most importantly, how should we understand the final understanding of the supersensible, which Hegel endorses, and how does it rationalize the major expository transition from *Consciousness* to *Self-Consciousness*, which is so important for understanding his idealism?

In *Perception*, we considered phenomenal empirical consciousness understanding itself as aware of a world of observable repeatables. Consciousness understanding itself as perceiving discovered that those repeatables differ from one another in two different sorts of way. Pairs of repeatables such as **red** and **square** are *compatibly* different; pairs of repeatables such as **square** and **circular** are *in*compatibly different. It turns out that acknowledging this difference between two kinds of difference implicitly involves thinking of the sense repeatables as observable *properties*, in a sense of 'property' that picks out an ontological category that contrasts with the ontological category of 'object'. That is, the distinction between (sense) universals and particulars is implicit in the distinction between mere or compatible difference and exclusive or incompatible difference (Aristotelian contrariety, Hegel's "determinate negation"). Objects or particulars are understood as playing the dual complementary roles of being the medium in which a set of compatibly different properties or universals are displayed, and as units of account that exclude incompatible properties or universals.

The restriction to *sense* universals, that is, to *observable* properties, as the form of knowable content is essential to the conception of empirical knowing Hegel calls "perception". What is real is for it what is observable. Although error is intelligible, the observable properties that articulate how things really are can show up for or appear to the knowing consciousness just as they really are. This is how consciousness conceiving itself that way seeks to satisfy what in the discussion of Hegel's *Introduction* I have called the "Genuine Knowledge Condition": the requirement that consciousness's understanding of itself not preclude in principle the possibility of its knowing things as they are "in themselves."

Consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has come to realize that observing objectively real observable properties is not the only way to find out about them. Besides being noninferentially or immediately accessible through the senses, observable properties (those that can be immediately accessible) can on some occasions be accessible inferentially, in a way mediated by the immediate, noninferential accessibility of other observables. Even if I cannot now taste the apple, I might infer that it is sweet from the observation that it is red and therefore ripe. What is not sensuously immediately epistemically accessible can sometimes be mediately, that is inferentially, accessible.

Indeed, perceiving consciousness has learned a deeper lesson: *immediate*, sensuous, noninferential access to things is intelligible as delivering determinately contentful potential knowledge *only* in the context of the possibility of this *other* mode of access: mediated, inferential access. For the determinate contentfulness even of what is immediately accessible requires standing in relations of exclusion and inclusion to other such contentful items of possible knowledge. Those relations of exclusion and inclusion underwrite inferential connections among observable properties. In fact, consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has taken a step still further, and brought into view what shows up as a new kind of object of knowledge: what is *only* mediately accessible.

The opening sentence of *Force and Understanding* tells us that the result of the development of empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has been to bring into view for the first time *unconditioned* universals.[103] Their advent ushers in the conception of <u>thoughts</u>, which are the contentful elements characteristic of the sort of conception of knowing Hegel (adapting Kant's term to his own use) calls "understanding." The first requirement on understanding this conception of knowing as understanding is accordingly making sense of the difference between the "conditioned" universals that were all the conception of knowing as perceiving could

[103] In the dialectic of sense-certainty, hearing, seeing have become things of the past for consciousness, and as perceiving, it has arrived at thoughts, which it brings together for the first time in the unconditioned universal [unbedingt Allgemeinen]. [132]

countenance, and the "unconditioned" universals the understanding traffics in. We have seen that perceiving consciousness acknowledges only *sense* universals. Hegel's talk here of "conditioned" universals accordingly refers to *sensuously* conditioned universals. Thought encompasses in addition sensuously *un*conditioned universals, that is, universals that are *not* observable. These are purely theoretical. Where perception acknowledged entities that could in principle be known in two ways, either by observation or by inference from observation, thought acknowledges also entities that can *only* be known inferentially. The broadening is from a class of things that are occasionally inferentially accessible to a class that includes also things that are *exclusively* inferentially accessible. The *only* way to know about theoretically postulated entities is by inference—ultimately, from something that is observable.

In allowing that observable properties can also sometimes by known about inferentially—by contrast to understanding empirical knowing according to the conception of sense certainty—consciousness understanding itself as perceiving put in play a second mode of epistemic access, in addition to noninferential observation. It is clear that this at least opens up space for, makes intelligible the idea of, entities that can *only* be known about by this second, inferential means—just as understanding empirical knowledge as sense certainty envisaged items knowable only by observation.

But we can say something stronger. Empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has not only provided itself with the conceptual raw materials needed to make intelligible the idea of unobservable theoretical entities. It has committed itself to their existence. For its intellectual progress from conceiving what is knowable empirically as having contents that would be expressed in a feature-placing language, as sense-certainty did, to conceiving what is knowable empirically as having contents that would be expressed in a term-predicate language (via the distinction between compatibly and incompatibly different contents) actually *commits* empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving to the existence of entities that are not immediately observable but are knowable only mediately, by inference. That is so because for it what is observable (and hence real, according to this way of thinking) is just sense universals, observable properties. The particular objects that have those properties are not

themselves immediately observable. They are conceived as bare substrates, knowable in principle only indirectly, via their properties. They are in effect units of account for the compatibility of properties (the particular as the "also" of "indifferent matters") and for the incompatibility of properties (the particular as the excluding "one"). It has turned out that a structurally necessary feature of a world containing observable properties that differ from one another in two ways, both compatibly and incompatibly, is that the *particulars* that exhibit *sense universals* are not themselves immediately knowable. Only their observable properties are. The particulars discovered by consciousness conceiving itself according to the categories of perception, that is, as knowing through perceptually taking in sense universals, are theoretical entities.

My first interpretive claim, then, is that the topic unearthed and bequeathed for investigation by perceiving consciousness is the nature and status of theoretical entities: unobservables that can only be known inferentially.[104] It is consideration of this topic that launches the transformation to a new understanding of empirical consciousness, not as *perceiving*, but as *understanding*: grasping thoughts. My second interpretive claim is that in Hegel's discussion, *force* stands in allegorically for theoretical entities generally. What is motivated by the considerations put in play in the *Perception* chapter is that more general topic. The consideration of "force" is a way of talking about the class of things that are only *inferentially* epistemically and semantically accessible. In the end, it is this fact that motivates the consideration of explanation, which is one of the topics of the middle third of the chapter on consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding.

As I read him, appreciating Hegel's use of allegory in the *Phenomenology* is absolutely crucial to understanding what he is doing. So let me say something about this general trope, before specifically addressing this first instance of it. In a paradigmatic allegory, such as John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the characters, places, and events in a narrative represent ideas

[104] In the introductory paragraph of *Force and Understanding* Hegel refers to "this unconditioned universal, which from now on is the true object of consciousness…" [132].

or concepts (Hopeful and Goodwill, the Slough of Despond and Vanity Fair, the breaking of the straps that bind Christian's burden to him, and seeing the Celestial City through a "perspective glass"). I think that at least the third through sixth chapters of the *Phenomenology* should be read as presenting *semantic* or *metaconceptual* allegories. I use these modifying adjectives to indicate that the lessons I think we should learn from the narratives Hegel presents concern semantic and metaconceptual concepts: the concepts we use to make explicit various ways of understanding the nature of determinate content, consciousness, self-consciousness, and rational agency. Figures such as the Master and the Slave, Stoicism, Skepticism, the Unhappy Consciousness, the Law of the Heart, the Frenzy of Self-Conceit, Virtue, and the Way of the World and the vicissitudes of the experiences through which they arise and develop are to teach us lessons about the concepts that philosophically articulate our self-consciousness.

On this way of reading the *Phenomenology*, it is of the first importance at every point in Hegel's narrative to distinguish what is going on *within* the allegorical story being told from the philosophical points being made *outside* the allegory by telling that story. Nothing but confusion can result from running together these issues. The rest of this book furnishes many examples of the fruits I take it can be gleaned by carefully keeping track of this distinction: not only getting right the allegory in its own terms (what happens on the burdened pilgrim Christian's journey, where he goes, who he meets, what he does), but also reading it *as* an allegory (what Bunyan is saying for instance about the importance of the Christian community for helping each individual believer deal with doubts, fears, and tribulations). This means extracting the larger lessons that are being conveyed, and where possible working to formulate them in more straightforward, non-allegorical terms.

In the case at hand, the allegorical story itself is set in the conceptual framework of Newtonian physics as formulated by Boscovitch and Kant.[105] What their formulations have in

[105] Roger Boscovitch, in his 1758 *Theoria philosophiae naturalis redacta ad unicam legem virium in natura existentium* (*Theory of Natural philosophy derived to the single Law of forces which exist in Nature*), and Kant in his 1786 *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*. Hegel echoes Boscovitch's title within his allegory, in his discussion of the relation of the "single law" to disparate determinate laws.

common that matters for Hegel's story is eschewing appeal to the notion of mass in favor of repulsive forces associated with points resulting in impenetrability, those repulsive forces contending with the various more orthodox attractive forces. Reading the allegory properly, I am claiming, requires understanding force, the paradigmatic Newtonian theoretically postulated magnitude, as standing in allegorically for theoretical entities generally. A principal criterion of adequacy of this overarching hermeneutic commitment to reading the discussion of force as a semantic allegory addressing various ontological and epistemological issues concerning theoretically postulated entities is that it be possible to make sense of the narrative progression at the manifest level from force and its expression, to the doubling of forces, to the play of forces, and on to discovering law as the truth of the play of forces, not only as rationalized *within* the allegory, but as making sense in the more general case. This requires motivating and explaining the transitions *without* having recourse to features available only inside the allegory. In particular, for instance, it would grossly violate the constraints of this sort of reading to invoke the peculiarities of electrical forces as having two poles generating both attractive and repulsive forces, or the universality of the law of gravity, in explaining what Hegel is doing in his discussion of the doubling of forces or the consideration of the relation of universal laws to more determinate ones. The moves made under the headings of the "doubling of forces" and the "play of forces" must be understood so as to apply to genes and bosons, qua purely theoretical, that is, exclusively inferentially accessible kinds of things, as well as to literal forces. This is a tall order.

The Boskovitchian allegory as it first shows up has at its center the distinction between *force* and its *expression*.[106] The thought is that force is not itself immediately observable. Its expression is what is immediately accessible through noninferential observation. In the allegory, gravitational force is not observable, but the accelerations it causes are. The presence and magnitude of the force must be inferred from its observable manifestations. A structure of this kind came into view already in the *Perception* chapter, with the thing of many properties. The

[106] Since forces are, in fact, theoretical entities—though not the only ones—this allegory is also synecdoche: letting a part stand in for the whole ("The cattle herd numbered fifty head."). That is not true of all the rest of the semantic allegories of the *Phenomenology*, however.

ontological categorial conception of particulars as substrates of many sense-universals also envisages unobservables knowable only by inference from their observable manifestations. What the allegory of force and its expression is allegorical for is the relation between purely theoretical, postulated entities and the observables on the basis of which those theoretical entities are inferentially accessible.

One of the main issues being addressed is the ontological status of those postulated, only inferentially accessible unobservable theoretical entities. (The distinction between particulars and universals, so important to perceiving consciousness, falls away as irrelevant to this larger question of the ontological status of unobservables of both categories.[107]) Until this point in the *Consciousness* chapters, reality has been identified with what is immediately, noninferentially observable. Empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty sought to secure the possibility of genuine knowledge by restricting its knowledge claims not only to what could be taken in noninferentially, but to what did not at all depend for its content on inferential moves, which were thought of what introduces opportunities for error. Empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has appreciated the incoherence of this last aspiration, and has realized that far from requiring immunity from the possibility of error, genuine knowledge and the intelligibility of error are two sides of one coin. Determinately contentful knowledge requires the application of concepts as universals, which stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence (exclusion and inclusion). Potentially risky, because falsifiable, inferential commitments to what else must be and cannot be the case are implicit in any commitment to an object actually exhibiting a property.

The restriction to *sense* universals by consciousness understanding itself as perceiving expresses a residual commitment to identifying what is real, how things are in themselves, with

[107] I take this to be the point of what would otherwise be the somewhat suspect move of assimilating particulars to universals as themselves being higher-order universals comprising the first-order universals that characterize them: using 'universal' as a genus that has as species both properties that unify the disparate objects they characterize and objects as unifying the disparate properties that characterize them. This latter is conceiving particularity as a "universal medium".

what is *observable*. Once the possibility of *un*observables has been put in play, even in the form in which it arises for perceiving consciousness, namely as the particulars that serve as the medium for observable properties, perceiving consciousness's equation of the real with the observable shows up as of a piece with the twentieth-century scientific *instrumentalist's* unwillingness to countenance as real anything beyond the observable—anything "supersensible." As we have seen, commitment to the reality of supersensibles is also implicit in understanding what there is in itself as having the ontological structure of the "thing with many properties." Thus do we see perceiving consciousness turning into understanding consciousness when its implicit commitments are made explicit.

Allegorically reconstruing the structure that showed up for perceiving consciousness as that of unobservable objects with observable properties in terms of force and expressions of force opens a line of thought that leads, as an intermediate result, to the reversal of the instrumentalist ontological commitment that has been implicit in the ways empirical consciousness can understand itself that have been canvassed so far. The observable expressions of unobservable forces show up as appearances mediating inferential epistemic access to the underlying reality that is the forces expressed. What this is allegorical for is a kind theoretical realism that turns the prior view on its head, identifying the real as what underlies observable appearance, accessible only by making inferences from that appearance. Of this conception Hegel says "Our object is thus from now on the syllogism, which has for its extreme terms the inner of things and the understanding, and for its middle term has appearances."[108] What is observable is demoted from being the real to being mere appearance that is inferentially revelatory of supersensible reality.

This identification of reality with theoretical entities is what Arthur Eddington famously endorsed in contrasting his two tables: the solid, colored, unmoving perceptible table of the manifest image and the constellation of colorless charged particles whizzing about at great speed in largely empty space that he calls the "scientific table." His verdict on their relation is clear. "I need not tell you that modern physics has by delicate test and remorseless logic assured me that

[108] [145].

my second scientific table is the only one which is really there - wherever "there" may be."[109] The observable table is a mere appearance. Now Hegel will in due course reject this invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism. In the allegory, the expressions of force can be no less real than the forces they express. One result of the discussion of the play of forces is the total decoupling of the concept of appearance from that of observability. The whole play of forces is itself unmasked as mere appearance, its observable and unobservable aspects alike. Nonetheless, ontologically privileging the supersensible inferential deliverances of theory over what is immediately sensuously observable plays a crucial role in the developing experience of empirical consciousness conceiving itself according to the conceptual categories of understanding.

Within the allegory, this line of thought begins with consideration of unobservable forces and their observable expressions. I have suggested how I think this initial bit of the allegory should be read. But what larger lessons about inferential accessibility and the status of theoretical entities are we to learn by reading the later stages of the allegory—in particular the doubling of forces and the move to the play of forces? Within the allegory, the issue concerns how we are to understand the unity of a force in view of the diversity of its expressions. This concern with kinds of identity that essentially involve difference has of course been with us from the beginning of the *Phenomenology*, from the structure comprising both repeatability-as-universality and diachronic-anaphoric repeatability in what would be expressed in feature-placing language in *Sense Certainty* to the intricate structure of universals and particulars retailed in *Perception*. It is this latter that Hegel appeals to when he first introduces the concept of force, to launch his allegorical discussion. That he does things this way means that there are *three* distinct conceptual levels intertwined at the beginning of his story: the one inherited from *Perception*, the allegory of force and its expression, and the extra-allegorical discussion of the ontological status of items that are only epistemically and semantically available inferentially, namely theoretically postulated entities.

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[109] From Arthur Eddington's 1927 Gifford Lectures, published in 1928 as *The Nature of the Physical World* [MacMillan], pages ix–x.

The particulars that emerged from the experience of empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving themselves have a moment of diversity and a moment of unity or identity. The first is the particular as the medium of "merely indifferently different," that is, compatible universals. As properties inhering in one object Hegel says metaphorically that they "reciprocally permeate" one another, without however "touching", due to the "pure porousness" of their medium. The other moment is the particular as a unity, excluding the incompatible properties, possession of which distinguishes other particulars from it. The way in which the including unity is seen to consist in a diversity, and that diversity is seen to constitute a unity is, he says here, what is called 'force'.[110] In that idiom, the inclusive diversity of force is identified with its expression, and its exclusive unity with "force driven back on itself", or "genuine force." The challenge is to understand both these aspects as equally essential to what force is:

In the first place, the force driven back into itself *must* express itself; and, in the second place, in that expression, the force is just as much the force existing *in itself* as it is that expression in this being-within-itself.[111]

Now we can ask: "What makes the expression of force diverse?" That is, why does it have *many* expressions? If they are indifferent to one another, as in the original model, what distinguishes them? Here Hegel invokes one of his overarching logical-cum-metaphysical metaconceptual principles: diversity in what something is in itself is always a matter of its relation to other unities. Hegel says:

[T]he force is really the unconditioned-universal, which is in itself just what it is *for an other*; that is, what has the distinction — for the distinction is nothing else than *being-for-others* — in itself.[112]

Perceiving consciousness had already understood even merely compatibly different properties as nonetheless *different* in virtue of their relations to *other* properties, namely those they *exclusively* different from. The discussion of the diverse expressions of force as consisting in relations to diverse other forces is going to add a substantial new dimension to the developing semantic picture, within the scope of a further application of the principle that difference within identity is

[110] All quotes here from [136].
[111] [136].
[112] [136].

always a matter of relation to others. In particular, in the allegorical story, each one of the different expressions of a single force is the result of the relation of that force to a different other force. The first he calls the "solicited" [sollizitiert] force, the other the "soliciting" force.[113] In the allegory, an example would be an acceleration of one gravitating mass caused by its proximity to another gravitating mass, or by the positive charge of one object in the context of the positive charge of another. In the more general case that the allegory is allegorical for, the different observable manifestations of any theoretical object is to be understood as arising from its interaction with different theoretical objects: the postulated level of demand yields the observed price because of its interaction with a corresponding level of supply, the genotype yields the phenotype it does because of the (internal biochemical and external resource) environment in which it is expressed.

The thought behind the "doubling of forces," then, is that each theoretical entity can express itself in a number of (compatibly) different observable ways because it is related to a number of other different theoretical entities. Examining this application of the principle that diversity of *properties* consists in *relations* to diverse *others* (Hegel's "being for another") shows that insisting on a one-to-one correlation between expressions and "soliciting forces" is unnecessarily restrictive. The difference between two expressions of one force might consist not in the relation of that force to two different other forces, but in its relation to two different *sets* of other forces. Instead of one expression of a force being solicited by a single different force, differing from other expressions by the different soliciting forces, that expression might be elicited by a constellation of different forces, differing from other expressions by the different soliciting constellations of forces. With this realization we arrive at the allegorical conception of the "play of forces." The diverse observable expressions of *all* the unobservable forces are understood as the products of the interactions of each force with *many* others—in the limit, with *all* the other forces.

[113] [137].

At this point it might seem that we have seen a view of this shape before. After all, perceiving consciousness had already distinguished compatible, merely different properties by the different sets of properties from which they exclusively differ. Where is the conceptual progress made by empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding, along this crucial dimension of making intelligible a kind of identity that consists in relations to different things? In fact, a significant step has been taken, a substantial new element added to the semantic metaconceptual machinery the allegory is teaching us about. The notion of determinate conceptual content that empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving put in place was expressed entirely in a subjunctive hypothetical register. The content of universals is articulated by relations such as: *If* a particular *were to* exhibit this index universal then it *could not* exhibit any of this class of other universals and *must* exhibit all of this other class of universals. We have seen how the whole elaborate Aristotelean ontological framework of things-with-many-properties can be elaborated from the distinction between compatible and incompatible difference. These all concern what is and is not *possible* and what is and is not *necessary*. Each possible state of affairs (Tractarian *Sachverhalt*) is understood to be the determinate state of affairs it is in virtue of its relations of exclusion and inclusion to other *possible* states of affairs.

By contrast, the immediate, observable expressions of underlying unobservable inferentially postulated theoretical entities are something *actual*, and are brought about only by interactions among those theoretical entities that are construed as *actual*. This becomes clear already with the "doubling of forces" when the expression of force is analyzed as the effect of solicited and soliciting forces: "What arises out of this is that the concept of force becomes *actual* by virtue of its being doubled into two forces, and how it becomes actual."[114] The sensuous immediacy of observable expression anchors inference to actuality. States of affairs are treated as actual by being taken to be expressed. Their contentfulness still depends on their being surrounded by a nimbus of other possible states of affairs from which they differ, compatibly or exclusively. But to this space of heretofore merely subjunctive relations has been added a distinction between states of affairs that are actual, that is expressed, and those that are not. (We think about the

[114] [141].

'actuality' asterisk having been inscribed on some of the possibilia—and about the significance of doing so.)

Further along, when we look at this new element from the side of the subject, rather than, as here, exclusively from the side of the objects of knowledge, the new metaconceptual piece of the puzzle shows up as the addition to conditional inferential commitments (if one were committed to *p*, then one would be committed to *q*) of *un*conditional doxastic ones (commitment to *p*). *Semantics* is seen to have an essential *epistemic* dimension. One cannot treat what one *means* as independent of what one *takes to be true*. This all happens when we consider the crucial symmetric intentional relations between objective relations codified as *laws* and subjective practices of *explanation* in the middle portion of the chapter. One manifestation of the need for the supplementation being considered comes up there when we see that applying general laws in the explanation of determinate occurrences requires the invocation of boundary conditions specifying the actual case to which the law is being applied. Filling out the modal spectrum by adding actuality to possibility and necessity on the objective, ontological side corresponds to recognizing the significance of belief for meaning on the side of the empirically knowing subject.

As already indicated, when the play of forces comes on the scene allegorically, the status of the observable effects that express the interactions of theoretical entities alters. It does so in two stages. First of all, it is demoted to being considered as the mere appearance of the underlying theoretical reality: how things are for consciousness, by contrast to how things are in themselves. Second, what had at the first stage been considered an ontological distinction, between appearance and reality, is demoted to merely epistemic or methodological distinction, between the observable and what is only inferentially accessible, a distinction between things in terms of how they can be known (be something for consciousness) rather than what they are in themselves.

For the first, as already remarked, Hegel says:

Our object is thus from now on the syllogism, which has for its extreme terms the inner of things and the understanding, and for its middle term has appearances…[115]
And further:

In this, what is the *inner true*… has come to be *for the understanding*; for the first time and from now on, there opens up over and above the *sensuous* (as the *appearing*) world a *supersensible* world (as the *true* world)...[116]
The true world, the world of things as they are in themselves, is now taken to be the theoretical entities, whose interactions produce the observable effects (in the allegory, the expressions of the forces) that constitute its appearance, what it is for consciousness. This is what I called "invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism." It is a theoretical realism in that, like Eddington in his famous essay, it identifies the real with the theoretical entities that are postulated as actual, whose activity is understood as the source of what is observable. It is invidious insofar as it understands the observable/theoretical distinction to be an ontological one, and, turning on its head the implicit instrumentalism of empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty and as perceiving, treats *only* the theoretical entities as real.[117] What is sensuously immediate, the touchstone and paradigm of the real for the two previous forms of empirical (self-)consciousness, now appears only as an epistemic means, mediating the access of the understanding to an underlying theoretical reality, which is something *for* consciousness only by means of inferences whose premises are supplied by sensuous immediacy. The truth of the sensuously immediate world is the supersensible world it gives empirical consciousness inferential access to: "The supersensible is the sensous and the perceived posited as it is *in truth*."[118]

Invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism is, of course, a view that has had many philosophical adherents since Eddington. It is for instance a close relative of the view that Sellars endorses under the rubric of the *scientia mensura*: "In the dimension of describing and

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[115] [145].
[116] [144].
[117] This is the view where, since no content can be acknowledged for the inner world of things as they are in themselves, "nothing would be left but to stop at the world of appearance, i.e. to perceive something as true that we [now] know is not true." [146]
[118] [147].

explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not,"[119] Sellars treats this view as a successor version of Kant's things-in-themselves, to be contrasted, as noumenal, with the merely phenomenal ordinary language "manifest image," which is a generalization of Eddington's plain man's observable table, the table of the pre-theoretical life-world.[120]

The invidious theoretical realism Hegel is considering is not quite identical to the scientific realism Sellars champions, however, and the difference points in the direction Hegel sees as implicit in the position he is considering here. For it is one thing to say that it is the deliverances of *science* that have sovereign authority "in the dimension of describing and explaining" (a qualification that is of cardinal significance for both thinkers), and another to say that what is real is exclusively the *theoretical* entities postulated by science. The latter is what makes the theoretical realism in question *invidious*. For natural science, too, countenances at least some observable properties and things as real (even if, Sellars more or less agrees with Eddington, colors are not among them, counting as only secondary qualities). The lesson Sellars thinks we should learn by seeing what is wrong with instrumentalism is not just that theoretical entities (that is, those that are only available inferentially) can be real, but more deeply, that the distinction between the observable and the theoretical should not be construed as an ontological distinction at all. It is of merely methodological or epistemic significance, a matter of our mode of access to things, which does not mark a distinction of ontological or metaphysical kind.[121] He rejects what he calls the "Platonic principle," according to which the most important distinctions of ontological kind (Being/Becoming) are to be marked off by our mode of epistemic access to them (intellect/sense). Pluto, formerly-known-as-a-planet, was originally theoretically postulated, as a body of such-and-such a mass in such-and-such an orbit, to explain perturbations

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[119] *EPM* §41.

[120] In his Locke lectures, published as *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes* [Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968. Reprinted by Ridgeview Publishing Co. 1992]. Hegel remarks on this reading of Kant in [146], pointing out that it would be a ridiculous overreaction to think of things in themselves as an *unknowable* beyond on this conception of them. Sellars agrees and takes this fact to be a prime advantage of his critical rendering of the Kantian idea.

[121] EPM § [ref.].

in the orbit of Neptune. It did not change ontological status when telescopes were developed that enabled observational, noninferential knowledge of it.

As I understand him, Hegel is making a corresponding point in his discussion of how the conception of the supersensible world construed according to invidious theoretical realism develops. The concept of appearance must be decoupled from that of what is observable (sensuously immediate), and reconstrued along the lines developed in the *Introduction*. That is, appearance is the status a way things could be has to consciousness when it is discovered *not* to be how things are *in themselves,* but only how they were *for* consciousness—that is, through the experience of error. In this sense, theoretically postulated entities can be discovered to be merely apparent, and observable ones can retain the status of the real. When what shows up in the allegory originally as the sensuously immediate expression of sensuously unconditioned forces is reconstrued as the effects of the actual interactions of theoretical entities, the realization that those effects generally include both observable and purely theoretical ones becomes available. In the allegorical conception of the play of forces, the difference between observable and unobservable effects plays no role. It is important that some of those effects be observable, so that we have premises enabling us to find out about the rest inferentially, but that is an epistemic or methodological matter, not an ontological one.

The way this move gets made in *Force and Understanding* is that the play of forces, which in invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism stood in allegorically for theoretically postulated reality known about inferentially via the mediation of observables that result from the interactions of solicited with sets of soliciting forces, itself is unmasked as an appearance, as being not reality as it is in itself but only what it was *for* the understanding consciousness at the end of its first tripartite experience (which led from force and its expression, through the doubling of forces, to the play of forces). At this turning-point

The Understanding, which is our object, finds itself in just this position, that the inner world has come into being for it, to begin with, only as the universal, still unfilled, *in-itself*. The play of Forces has merely this negative significance of being *in itself* nothing, and its only positive significance that of being the *mediating agency*, but outside of the Understanding... What is

immediate for the Understanding is the play of Forces; but what is the *True* for it is the simple inner world.[122]

What is immediate for understanding consciousness is different from what is immediate for empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense-certainty or as perceiving. The immediacy in question is not *sensuous* immediacy, the immediacy of what is noninferentially observable, but the immediacy of what is thinkable, what is graspable by being placed in a conceptual space, articulated by relations of material consequence and incompatibility (mediation and determinate negation). It is in this sense that the play of forces is immediate for Understanding: it is a set of actualities interacting according to modal relations of necessity, possibility, and impossibility in virtue of which it is *conceptually* articulated and so *immediately* graspable by empirical consciousness conceived of as understanding, that is, as grasping thinkables precisely in virtue of their standing in just this sort of relation to other thinkables.

How is it that the play of forces, as immediate for understanding consciousness in this sense comes to have the status to understanding consciousness of being merely what things are for consciousness, not what they are in themselves, namely to have the status of appearance in the sense of the *Introduction* (to which observability is irrelevant)? What does it mean to say that the new "inner", supersensible world that to understanding consciousness is the in-itself, the real, of which the play of forces is an appearance is "simple,", "only universal," "still unfilled"? What washes out to indeterminate blankness the picture of interacting actual forces made determinate by the relations of inclusion and exclusion, necessity, possibility, and impossibility they stand in to one another and to the nimbus of merely possible theoretical states of affairs that surrounds each?

Hegel makes it harder to see the answers to these questions than it perhaps needs to be by putting the cart before the horse in his exposition. That is, as I read him, this move is not explained and motivated before its outcome is characterized, in the passage quoted above. Rather, the outcome is stated first, and only then is the process that leads to it expounded. The

[122] [148].

play of forces allegorically introduces a *holistic* ontology. The forces are actual only in that they are expressed, that is, only in what is produced by their interactions with other forces. But now what is produced by those interactions is understood in exactly the same way, as being of the same kind, as the forces that interact. How is this identity as consisting in relation to others, whose identity also consists in its relations to others, to be understood? If the others are already individuated, then diverse expressions upon interactions with diverse others are intelligible. But if that individuation is itself thought of as consisting solely in such diverse interactions with diverse others, the conception threatens to collapse. I think the undifferentiated, indeterminate, "simple," "still unfilled" picture of the inner invoked in the passage quoted above is the result of understanding consciousness trying to make explicit what is implicit in this holistic picture, before it has developed the conceptual resources necessary to do so—before understanding itself as "infinite," in Hegel's somewhat alarming terminology.

Here is what Hegel says following the summary quoted above of the situation this experience leads to:

[T]his play of Forces is so constituted that the force which is *solicited* by another force is equally the *soliciting* Force for that other, which only thereby becomes itself a soliciting Force. What is present in this interplay is likewise merely the immediate alternation, or the absolute interchange, of the *determinateness* which constitutes the sole *content* of what appears: to be either a universal medium, or a negative unity. [viz.: inclusive 'also' or exclusive 'one']…Each of these two sides, the *relation* of soliciting and the *relation* of the opposed determinate content, is *on its own account* an absolute reversal and interchange [Verkehrung und Verwechslung]. But these two relations themselves are again one and the same, and the difference of *form*, of being the solicited and the soliciting Force, is the same as the difference of *content*, of being the solicited Force as such, viz. the passive medium on the one hand, and the soliciting Force, the active, negative unity or the One, on the other. In this way there vanishes completely all distinction of *separate*, mutually contrasted *Forces*, which were supposed to be present in this movement, for they rested solely on these distinctions; and the distinction between the Forces, along with both those distinctions, likewise collapses into only one. Thus there is neither Force, nor the act of soliciting or being solicited, nor the determinateness of being a stable medium and a unity reflected into itself, nor are there diverse antitheses; on the contrary, what there is in this absolute flux is only *difference* as a *universal* difference, or as a difference into which the many antitheses have been resolved. [123]

[123] [148].

Here the claim is that trying to make sense of the play of forces raises the same problem twice, once on the side of form and again on the side of content. On the side of form (what has been added by understanding consciousness, bringing with it the crucial added modal dimension of actuality), the distinction between forces depends on each of them playing the role of being solicited by a variety of *other* forces playing the role of soliciting actual expressions by their interaction. But if all there is to identify and individuate them is standing in these relations to *different* other forces, which similarly are distinguished only by *their* standing in such solicited/soliciting relations to different other forces, how is the process of individuation to get off the ground? On the side of content (the model of the determinate content of states of affairs inherited from perceiving consciousness) involves particulars exhibiting a diversity of universals, with that diversity being understood in terms of relations to others along two dimensions: relations to other compatible univerals in an inclusive medium (the particular as 'also') and relations to other incompatible universals via an exclusive unity (the particular as 'one'). For this picture of determinately contentful unity-in-and-through-diversity to be intelligible, it seems, those other universals appealed to in articulating the two dimensions of relations-to-others must already be intelligible *as distinct and distinguished from one another*.[124]

The result of these difficulties is that both the distinction of form and the distinction of content, and, indeed, also the very distinction between form and content implicit in the concept of the play of forces collapse. A better way must be found of understanding this distinctive sort of holistic system of items that are determinate solely in virtue of their relations to one another, according to the principle that diversity always consists in relations to others. One important consequence of this unmasking of the understanding's conception of the play of forces as implicitly collapsing into indeterminateness is that that what that conception is to understanding consciousness alters in status. It can no longer be taken to be how things are in themselves, but only how they were for (understanding) consciousness. That is, that conception of actually interacting theoretical entities whose interactions produce effects both observable and

[124] I discuss in more detail this issue of the intelligibility of holism, and what I take to be Hegel's response to it, in "Holism and Idealism in Hegel's *Phenomenology*" which is Chapter Six in *Tales of the Mighty Dead* [Harvard University Press, 2002].

unobservable is revealed to be mere appearance, not just in some of its parts, but *in toto*. The assumption that the reality side of the reality/appearance distinction lines up with the unobservable side of the observable/unobservable (sensuously immediately accessible vs. inferentially mediately accessible) distinction, characteristic of the invidious theoretical realism of this first form of understanding consciousnesss is to be rejected, just as the identification of reality with the observable side, characteristic of sense-certainty and perceiving consciousness was rejected by understanding consciousness.

This experience of consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding (as grasping determinate thoughts) is not just the abstract or formal negation of the conception it unmasks as appearance, however. It is a determinate negation of that conception, and as such presents also a positive content. The final, concluding sentence of the line of thought Hegel presents in the long passage above, following immediately after what is quoted there, concerns the positive characterization of what remains after the collapse of the play of forces:

This difference, as a *universal* difference, is consequently the *simple element in the play of Forces itself*, and what is true in it. It is the *law of Force*.[125]

In fact a number of lessons are taught by this first (three-phased) experience of understanding consciousness: the ontological legitimacy of merely inferentially accessible entities, the essential role played by actuality in filling out the modal structure of necessity and possibility that articulates determinately contentful states of affairs, and the need for a holistic conception of what it is to be determinately contentful. The principal overarching form of the move being made, comprising these lessons, is however the transition from thinking in terms of force to thinking in terms of law. This is a shift of focus, consonant with the holistic lesson, from *relata* to the *relations* that, it has been learned, functionally define and determine those relata. Instead of asking about the nature and ontological status of theoretical entities, in the sense of items that are only inferentially accessible, semantically and epistemically, to empirical consciousness, consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding now asks about the *relations* in virtue of which anything at all is inferentially accessible. These are relations of necessity, possibility, and

[125] [148].

impossibility that constrain and determine the actual interactions of thinkables: the determinately conceptually contentful states of affairs we think about.

The relations that identify and individuate (differentiate) objective states of affairs are relations of material incompatibility and consequence, Hegel's "negation or mediation", about which he says:

> [N]egation is an essential moment of the universal, and negation, or mediation in the universal, is therefore a *universal difference*. This difference is expressed in the *law*, which is a stable image of an unstable appearance. Consequently, the supersensible world is a calm realm of laws which, though beyond the perceived world—for this exhibits law only through incessant change—is equally *present* in it and is its direct tranquil image.[126]

The "unstable appearance", the "perceived world" is now not just what is available through observation, but what has been allegorized as the whole play of forces, now demoted to the status of being the moving appearance of the calm realm of laws. The question accordingly becomes how we should understand the relations between laws of nature and the concrete things whose antics are governed by those laws.

I take it that one of the large lessons Hegel wants to teach us through the subsequent discussion in this chapter is that it is a mistake to reify the laws, that is, to think of them as constituting a supersensible world. To do that is to think of statements of law as functioning like ordinary ground-level empirical statements, as describing or representing some way the world is. To use that representational model is to think of statements of law as stating superfacts. Hegel wants to move us beyond this representational semantic paradigm to an expressive one. Statements of law should be understood as making explicit something that is implicit already in ordinary empirical descriptions of how things are. What they make explicit are alethic modal features of the conceptual articulation of objective empirical states of affairs in virtue of which they are the determinate states of affairs they are. The notion of <u>representation</u> has a place in this

[126] [149]. I have substituted Baillie's 'calm' for Miller's 'inert' translating 'ruhiges'.

larger picture, but it is not the exclusive Procrustean semantic model to which all statements should be assimilated.

Before getting to the main point—which will lead us to lay the concept of explanation alongside that of law—Hegel makes two preliminary observations about the calm realm of laws picture. The first is that "The law is present in appearance, but it is not the entire presence of appearance; under ever different circumstances, the law has an ever different actuality."[127] "Appearance" here is the actual behavior of entities revealed both immediately through observation and mediately through inference: in the allegory, the "play of forces." Laws of nature determine how things actually interact only when supplemented by actual boundary conditions. The necessities and possibilities laws codify are hypothetical. They determine what actually happens only in the context of actual circumstances of application, which single out some of those hypotheticals as worthy of detaching conclusions from, by fixing which antecedents are factual (actually true). This observation reflects one of the advances of understanding over perceiving consciousness pointed out above: the realization that the extreme modal registers of necessity and possibility require help from the middle register of actuality in order to determine the actual "expression of forces", solicited by the concerted play of their fellows, to yield appearance. As it shows up here, the observation concerns the relations of laws to forces. There are two kinds of necessity in play: the hypothetical necessity codified in law and lawful necessity as expressed under actual conditions. The latter is equivalent to force. The interplay between actuality, on the one hand, and necessity and possibility on the other hand—which can be construed in terms of relations between categorical and merely hypothetical necessity—in the constitution of determinate conceptual content is intricate. What is being rejected is the strategy of understanding it by construing the structure of necessity-and-possibility as a special kind of actuality: as a supersensible world.

Thinking of laws as a kind of superfact threatens to make unintelligible this relation between law and matter-of-factual forces (facts about the actual behavior of things). One way to think

[127] [150].

about the difficulty emerges explicitly a bit further on. It is that laws and the things they govern seem to present the same content in two different forms:

Force is constituted exactly the same as law; there is said to be no difference whatever between them. The differences are the pure, universal expression of law, and pure Force, but both have the *same* content, the *same* constitution [Beschaffenheit].[128]

For the laws codify the relations among things, paradigmatically theoretical entities, in virtue of which they are the things ("forces") they are. In the case that is paradigmatic for the allegory, what *force* is is expressed by the *law* F=m*a, and is not intelligible apart from it. The law expresses what force is, and force is what the law says it is. But how is this to be understood if the law is reified into a kind of (super-)actuality, a superfact? Is the relation between the facts and the superfacts itself governed by superlaws? Hegel wants us to think of the laws as making explicit the determinate conceptual content that is implicit in ground-level "forces." The law *expresses* the content of the force (rather than representing a kind of super-force). This expressive hylomorphic relation is misconstrued if it is thought of on the model of a relation between two kinds of *things* (representeds, facts, worlds).

The second preliminary observation concerns a question about laws that is in some ways analogous to the holistic issue about how to understand the relations between individual determinate forces and the whole play of forces. In the allegory, this shows up as an issue concerning the relations between a single universal law (of gravitational attraction) and more specific laws of motion derivable from it when various conditions are fixed. "insofar as it is not *the* law in general but *one* law, it has determinateness in itself; and as a result there are indeterminately *many* laws on hand."[129] In this case, though, Hegel impatiently reads the allegory for us.

In saying that, the understanding supposes that it has found a universal law, which expresses universal actuality *as such*; but it has really only found the concept of law itself, but nonetheless in such a way that it says at the same time: All actuality is *in itself* lawful.[130]

Universal attraction, that is, the pure concept of law, thereby stands over and against determinate laws.[131]

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[128] [154].
[129] [150].
[130] [150].
[131] [151].

The issue concerns the relation between *lawfulness* in general, and particular determinate laws. This is a third kind of necessity, contrasting both with that expressed by determinate laws and that expressed by determinate laws under actual boundary conditions. Still reading his own allegory, Hegel says that the lesson to be learned from consideration of the one overarching law of universal attraction (gravitation) (contrasting with more determinate laws) within the allegory is the importance of modal articulation in understanding determinate contentfulness of actual states of affairs:

> [T]he expression of *universal attraction* has to that extent great importance as it is directed against that *representation*, that is devoid of thought, for which everything presents itself in the shape of contingency and for which determinateness has the form of sensuous self-sufficiency.[132]

We saw already in considering perceiving consciousness that what is sensuously immediate as actual is intelligible as determinate only in virtue of its relations of material incompatibility and consequence to other possible states of affairs—relations that are made explicit in the form of laws specifying what is necessary and what is possible. The puzzle being registered includes a Kantian dimension: that lawfulness in general—that all actuality is lawful—is something that can be established *a priori*, in advance of considering particular determinate laws, while the bindingness of such determinate laws must in general be established empirically.

These questions about how to understand the relations between laws and the "forces" they govern remain unresolved at this point in the text. I think Hegel takes them to be unresolvable so long as understanding consciousness remains bound to a representational paradigm, according to which what is expressed by modally qualified claims about what is necessary and possible are thought of as playing the expressive role of representing states of affairs that are *like* actual states of affairs: real, but located in a distinctively different ontological postal code. Hegel will recommend an expressive successor conception to this representational one, according to which statements of law express explicitly features of the framework within which it is possible to understand determinate ground-level states of affairs. It is a criterion of adequacy of that replacement picture that it provide satisfactory responses to the questions being

[132] [150].

raised here, once those questions have been transformed by formulating them without representational presuppositions about what laws express.

[8,881 words total, to 4,051 in large type, for version of 16-6-13 a.]

Part Two: Law and Explanation

The idea of the calm realm of laws as a supersensible world is the idea that laws are superfacts which are represented by statements of laws in the same way facts in the world of empirical appearance (including what is only accessible inferentially) are represented by ordinary statements about what properties objects have. Hegel considers a final way in which the representational semantic model deployed by empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding can be applied to yield a construal of the relations between law and the world of empirical appearance (the "play of forces"). This is what he calls the "inverted world" [verkehrte Welt]. The discussion of this topic is compressed and enigmatic. It has long been recognized as one of the most challenging passages in the *Phenomenology*. What the inverted world is the inverse of is in the first instance the world of appearance. But Hegel signals that the conception of the inverted world expresses another application of this same representational strategy for understanding the relations between law and appearance that led to the calm realm of laws by describing it also as an inversion of that picture: "since one aspect is already present in the first supersensible world this is the inversion of that world."[133]

The inverted world is indeed strange:

According, then, to the law of this inverted world, what is *like* in the first world is *unlike* to itself…Expressed in determinate moments, this means that what in the law of the first world is sweet, in this inverted in-itself is sour, what in the former is black is, in the other, white.[134]

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[133] [157]. In this bit of the text, Hegel refers to the calm realm of laws as the "first supersensible world." I count it as actually the second, after reality construed as the purely theoretical entities that give rise to observable expressions according to invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism.

[134] [158].

We learned already from the experience of perceiving consciousness that a property such as sweetness is determinate only in virtue of its relations of exclusive difference, "determinate negation," Aristotelian contrariety, from other properties, such as sourness, with which it is materially incompatible. The index, uninverted world is the actual world. The picture is one according to which each actual state of affairs, each fact, is surrounded by a penumbra of merely possible, strongly contrasting states of affairs. (We can think here of Tractarian Tatsache surrounded by Sachverhalte. But unlike the Tractarian picture, even at the most elementary level the surrounding Sachverhalte are not *merely* different, but *exclusively* different.) The merely possible states of affairs stand in relations of *necessary* exclusion and inclusion (consequence) to one another. One thing that was missing from the picture of perceiving consciousness is the privileging of *one* set of compossibles, as *actual*. After all, *many* (possible) objects are actual—but not all of them. What is being addressed here is the relation between actuality and necessity-structured possibility. We already saw that taking as a topic the relations between these two different modal registers is one of the characteristic advances of understanding consciousness over perceiving consciousness.

So far, so good. We can see the inverted world as a conception that combines a semantic point familiar from *Perception* with the concern, new to understanding consciousness, with the relations between actuality (empirical appearance, including what is only epistemically available inferentially), allegorized as the play of *forces*, and necessity-structured possibility , namely the realm of *law*. The latter is reified, treated as a supraempirical world of merely possibles, which are thought of as represented by modally qualified statements in the same sort of way that actual facts are represented by ground-level empirical statements. But thinking of the merely possible states of affairs that render actual states of affairs determinate by strongly contrasting with them as constituting a *world* (albeit an "inverted" one) seems immediately to run afoul of another cardinal lesson we learned from the experience of perceiving consciousness. The facts that make up the actual world are *compossible*, materially compatible, *merely*, not exclusively different from one another. That seems like a reasonable necessary condition of thinking of them as making up a *world*. By contrast, the states of affairs that exclusively differ from actual states of affairs are not compossible or compatible with one another. **Sour** is materially incompatible

with **sweet**, but so is **bitter**. And **bitter** and **sour** are materially incompatible with each other.[135] **White** is not the only contrary (the sense of "opposite" [entgegengesetzte] I am claiming is in play here) of **black**. **Red** and **green** are as well. The semantogenic possibilia that surround each actual fact like a cloud do not make up a *world* in the sense of a set of *compossible*, *compatible* states of affairs. The actual world, like any particular object, does not have an "opposite" in the sense of a contradictory, even though properties can.

The view being considered does not reify the necessity-structured (lawfully related) possibilities that strongly contrast with actuality into *another* "world," alongside the actual world. The world as inverted is not itself a world. It is supersensible, since unlike actuality, possibilities cannot be sensuously immediate, and so cannot even supply observationally delivered premises from which other merely possibles could be known inferentially.

I think the difficulties readers have had with the inverted world section of the *Phenomenology* are rooted in this fact. Hegel is not describing the inverted world as *indeterminate*, in the way it would be if what were sweet in the actual world were simply *not*-sweet in the inverted world, and what was actually black were *not*-black. The inverted world consists of states of affairs that are determinate, like those of the actual world. But the inverted world is *over*determined. It seems that things in it must have *all* of the determinations that are contrary to (exclusively different from) what they have in the actual world. That is incoherent. Because the conception seems incoherent on its face, the related difficulty arises of explaining what motivates taking this conception seriously—indeed, as seeing it as *more advanced* conceptually than the supersensible world of theoretical entities of invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism and the supersensible calm realm of laws. After all, both of those conceptions have been and to some extent still are actually defended by serious philosophers. If it is only Hegel's own analysis of determinate contentfulness in terms of exclusive difference ("determinate negation") that motivates taking seriously *this* conception of a supersensible world, one is inclined to think "So much the worse for his semantic analysis."

[135] Tastes probably don't actually work like this, so the example is not the best Hegel could have chosen. The colors work better.

While understandable, I think such worries are mistaken. The view Hegel addresses under the heading of the "inverted world" is a coherent one, and it has been and is endorsed and defended by serious philosophers who do *not* start with Hegel's account of determinateness in terms of contrariety. For the view he is considering is formally equivalent to contemporary possible worlds approaches to modality, epitomized by that of David Lewis. To see this, it will help to compare the possible worlds framework (PW) with the inverted world picture (IW). In orthodox PW, we contrast the actual world as just *one* maximal compossible set of states of affairs, with other possible *worlds*, also conceived of as (or as determining/determined by) maximal compossible sets of states of affairs. The states of affairs of the actual world are made intelligible by situating them in a *universe* of other possible worlds. We can then understand an actual state of affairs in terms of the truth at the actual world of a proposition, construed as a set of possible worlds (those in which that proposition is true). Determinateness of an actual state of affairs is a matter of partitioning the universe of possible worlds in which it is situated. Two propositions are materially incompatible just in case there is no possible world in which both are true. Contradictories are minimum incompatibles (propositions entailed by everything materially incompatible with what they are contradictories of). Since two distinct possible worlds must have *some* difference in the propositions true at them, and they are *maximal* compossible sets of states of affairs, any two distinct possible worlds will have materially incompatible propositions true at them. That is, they do not *merely* differ, they also *exclusively* differ. Material incompatibilities of states of affairs (propositions) is encoded in what sets of states of affairs are taken to be genuinely compossible, i.e. to make up a genuinely possible world.

Exactly the same information is presented in Hegel's IW, but packaged somewhat differently. Rather than contrasting the actual world with other possible *worlds*, each actual *state of affairs* is contrasted with all of the states of affairs that are incompatible with *it*. So what contrasts with the actual world, as a maximal set of compossible states of affairs, is rather the whole set of (noncompossible) nonfactual states of affairs. The IW is simply the set of all the states of affairs that stand in this relation of exclusive difference or material incompatibility, to *some actual* state of affairs. If this set is determined, then putting it together with the underlying material incompatibilities (necessities-governing-possibilities), we can compute all the

compossible sets of those states of affairs. What we do in PW is conversely to compute what is incompatible (noncompossible) with a given proposition (represented by a set of possible worlds), from the whole set of possible worlds, taken as settled in advance of the computation. The PW framework and the IW framework are formally equivalent. We can start with the universe of possible worlds and compute material incompatibilities of states of affairs (propositions), construed as sets of possible worlds, or we can start by associating with each state of affairs the set of all states of affairs that are materially incompatible with it and compute the sets of maximal compossible sets of states of affairs, that is, the possible worlds. Exactly the same information can be packaged in either way.

Having learned the metaphysical lessons taught by the experience of perceiving consciousness, we note that the IW is not in the ordinary sense a *world*, since its elements are not compossible. But neither are the elements of the PW's "universe" of possibilia. (Whether the possible *worlds* of PW are worlds in *exactly* the same sense the actual world is the issue that divides Lewis's "mad dog modal realism" from that of more moderate theorists.) A wider sense is being given to the term "world" (or "universe") in *both* cases.

So my claim is that what Hegel is considering as the final mistaken form of understanding consciousness thought about the relation between actuality and a necessity-structured set of possibilia is a version of (is formally equivalent to) the contemporary possible worlds framework. Conceptually they have in common with each other, and with the picture of the calm realm of laws, an understanding of modal statements about whatll is necessary and possible as *describing* or representing something in the same sense in which statements about what is actual describe or represent something. The difference is that what modal statements describe or represent is not to be found in the here of empirical actuality, but "over there" [jenseits], in some other, supersensible world, a universe of possibilia that contrast strongly with actual states of affairs. It is for his purposes immaterial whether those exclusively different possibilia are construed as states of affairs (as in IW) or maximal compossible sets thereof (as in PW). What is important is the assimilation of our semantic relation to them to our semantic relation to actual states of affairs, with both falling under the rubric of description or representation.

Universalizing this semantic model, what might be called descriptivism or representationalism, is the fatal flaw in understanding consciousness that must be overcome to move beyond it (from the metaconceptual framework of *Verstand* towards the metaconceptual framework of *Vernunft*).

Of greatest interest, I think, is the alternative expressive view that Hegel wants to put in place of this picture, which he rejects as still unduly representational. What is made explicit by modal claims (including statements of laws) is *implicit* in what we are doing in making ordinary ground-level empirical claims, which *do* describe (represent) how things are. The key to understanding the relevant sense of "implicit" and "explicit expression" is realizing that one cannot understand what one is *saying* in making modal claims without understanding what one is *doing* in making them. For this reason, one cannot understand the relation between modal and matter-of-factual claims (the relations between "law" and "force" that are the topics of both IW and PW) while remaining wholly on the objective side of the intentional nexus. One must think about how statements of laws (claims about what is necessary or possible) are used, the role they play in *explanation*.

Developing that line of thought is the principle interest of the rest of this chapter. Still, given what I have argued is Hegel's prescient consideration of a version of contemporary possible worlds approaches to necessity and possibility, it is of some interest to think about what he thinks is wrong with this version of a "supensible world." One point can be disposed of straightforwardly. Hegel thinks there is no go to the thought of developing this picture so as invidiously to distinguish the supersensible world as *real* from actuality, considered as mere appearance. Doing so is of course optional, but it was so also for the previously considered supersensible worlds: that of invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism and that of the calm realm of laws.

Looked at superficially, this inverted world is the opposite of the first in the sense that it has the latter outside of it and repels that world from itself as an *actual world*: that the one is appearance, but the other is the in-itself.[136]

[136] [159].

This superficial view is to be deplored and rejected.

More deeply, Hegel objects to understanding the semantogenic possibilia by contrast to which actual states of affairs are intelligible as determinate on the model of those actual states of affairs.

[S]uch antitheses of inner and outer, appearance and the supersensible, as two different kinds of actuality we no longer find here. The repelled differences are not shared afresh between two substances such as would support them and lend them a separate subsistence…*just such an sense-world* as the first, but in *representation* [Vorstellung]; it could not be exhibited as a sense-world, could not be seen, heard, or tasted, and yet it would be thought of as such a sense-world. But, in fact, if the one *posited world* is a perceived world, and its *in-itself*, as its inversion, is equally *thought of as sensuous*, then sourness, which would be the in-itself of the sweet thing is actually a thing just as much as the latter, viz. a *sour thing*, black, which would be the in-itself of white, is an actual black…[137]

I think there are two principal objections to this view on offer. First, the reification of contrasting possibilia that is being rejected amounts to construing the modal articulation of actuality, which was originally presented in the shape of *laws*, on the model (allegorically) of further *forces*. That is, the possibilia are understood as further states of affairs, participants in what was allegorized as the play of forces, in some sense of the same kind as actual states of affairs, only not actual. Such a conception faces the same sort of difficulty that led to the postulation of laws as distinguished from the actual play of "forces" they govern. Understanding the relations between actuality and necessity-governed-possibilities threatens to require postulating a superlaw governing those relations. Material incompatibilities (what is compossible) and consequences are treated as just more ultimately contingent (super)facts. Such a view, Hegel thinks, misconstrues the radically different role played in explanation by what is made explicit by modal claims.

From the idea, then, of inversion, which constitutes the essential nature of one aspect of the supersensible world, we must eliminate the sensuous idea of fixing the differences in a different sustaining element; and this absolute Notion [Begriff] of the difference must be represented and understood purely as inner difference…[138]

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[137] [159].
[138] [160].

What specifically motivates the positive lesson we are to learn from the unsatisfactoriness of reifying semantogenic contrasting possibilia, though, is a fundamental conceptual difficulty in understanding the nature of necessary connections generally, which was raised to begin with in thinking about force, and then again more explicitly with respect to laws. The claim is that the IW picture does not resolve this difficulty. The issue is a version of Hegel's master concern with conceptions of the relations between identity and difference. How can it be that the items related by a law are at once *distinct* from one another and *necessarily* related: joined in a necessary unity? This is Hume's problem, and his response to it was the skeptical conclusion that the idea cannot be made intelligible. In Newton's second law of motion, force, mass, and acceleration are related by F=m*a. That this necessary relation holds among them is essential to what force and mass are. But if the law is a *definition* of "force" and "mass", then it does not relate independently intelligible magnitudes, since they are interdefined. The issue has an epistemological dimension: If F=m*a is a definition, then it is knowable *a priori* and does not require empirical investigation to establish. But the question is at base a conceptual question about how to *understand* necessary connections.

The law determining the distance a falling object traverses in a given time, $d=k*t^2$, governs a kind of motion by asserting a necessary (lawful) connection between space (distance) and time. Hegel says:

> In the law of motion, e.g., it is necessary that motion be split up into time and space, or again, into distance and velocity. Thus, since motion is only the relation of these factors, it—the universal—is certainly divided *in its own self*. But now these parts, time and space, or distance and velocity, do not in themselves express this origin in a One; they are indifferent [gleichgültig] to one another, space is thought of as able to be without time, time without space, and distance at least without velocity…and thus are not related to one another through *their own essential nature*. [139]

For both force and mass, the necessary relation of one to the other is an essential aspect of its identity. Each can be what it is only as standing in this necessary relation to something else. It is equally essential to the unity that is motion, according to its laws, both that it be split up into

[139] [153].

different components, and that that partition be in some sense cancelled by the assertion that the lawful relation among the components is necessary and essential to what they are.

The difference, then…is not a difference *in its own self*; either the universal, Force, is indifferent to the division which is the law, or the differences, the parts, of the law are indifferent to one another.[140]

Hegel is far from wanting to claim that this kind of unity through difference, identity as necessarily involving relation to an other, is unintelligible. On the contrary. The task of developing an adequate way of talking about and understanding this holistic sort of identity or unity is at the very center of his project. Like Kant in his response to Hume's skepticism about necessary nondefinitional relations and what is expressed by alethic modal vocabulary in general, Hegel thinks that what is expressed by statements lawlike statements of necessary connections cannot be understood in terms rigorously restricted to description of the objective world, but must involve recourse to talk about the cognitive activities of knowing subjects. The way the activities of knowing subjects come into his story is quite different from the way they come into Kant's story, however. At this point in the text we have seen him express dissatisfaction with the invocation of supersensible modal superfacts as a response to the issue. He does not see that issue as adequately addressed by the claim that laws describe the layout of the space of maximal materially compossible states of affairs. A responsive answer along these lines would have to say a *lot* more about what makes states of affairs compossible or not, in the sense that matters for determining what constellations of states of affairs constitute genuinely *possible* worlds.

So what is his response? It begins with the idea that understanding the sense in which force and mass are distinct but necessarily related by Newton's second law requires thinking about how statements of the law function in *explanation*, to begin with, in *inference*.

[T]he law is, on the one hand, the inner, *implicit* in-itself [Ansichseiende] being, but is, at the same time, inwardly differentiated…this inner difference still falls, to begin with, only within the Understanding, and it is not yet posited *in the thing itself*. It is, therefore, only its *own* necessity

[140] [154].

that is asserted by the Understanding; the difference, then, is posited by the Understanding in such a way that, at the same time, it is expressly stated that the difference is not a *difference belonging to the thing itself*. This necessity, which is merely verbal, is thus a recital of the moments constituting the cycle of the necessity. The moments are indeed distinguished, but, at the same time, their difference is expressly said to be *not* a difference of the thing itself, and consequently is immediately cancelled again. This process is called "explanation." [Erklären][141] The kind of essentially differentiated necessary unity expressed by law can is to be understood in the first instance by considering the *process of explanation*. A law such as $d=k*t^2$ can be exploited according to two different orders of explanation, depending on what one takes as premise and what as conclusion in an inference. One can explain why the stone fell the distance it did by computing *d* from *t*, or one can explain why it took as long as it did to fall the fixed difference by computing *t* from *d*. Hegel calls making these inferences "reciting the moments" that are necessarily related by the law (the "cycle of necessity"). The difference in the moments, in spite of their necessary connection by the law, is manifest in the different orders of explanation, the difference in what understanding consciousness is *doing* in making the two different kinds of move.

The exact nature of the relation between the distinction between two orders of explanation—inferring distance from time and inferring time from distance—on the one hand, and the distinction between the two necessarily related "moments" of the law, distance and time, is not yet clear to the shape of understanding consciousness being considered. It does not yet see how to understand the difference between distance and time as being a feature of the objective world. What it does appreciate, the new insight characteristic of this form of empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding, is that the differentiation into necessarily related moments that is essential to the articulation of the objective world expressed by laws is unintelligible apart from consideration of the inferential *movement* of empirical consciousness in explanations that traverse the moments in different directions. The idea is that the *objective relations* among theoretical entities that are codified in laws can only be adequately understood in a context sufficiently capacious as to include *subjective* inferential *processes* of explanation ("subjective" not in a Cartesian sense, but in the sense of being activities of knowing subjects).

[141] [154].

The claim that the objective pole of the intentional nexus cannot properly be understood apart from an understanding of the subjective pole, and so of the whole intentional nexus marks a decisive move in the direction of Hegel's idealism. It is of the first importance to understand it correctly. As already indicated, Kant already had a version of this thought, motivated for him, as Hegel motivates it here, by thinking about the distinctive expressive role played by the alethic modal concepts deployed in statements of laws and the subjunctive conditionals they support. ("If the stone *had* fallen for *t* seconds, it *would* have fallen *d* meters.") The expressive role of such conditionals is in turn a matter of the kind of subjunctively robust reasoning (inferences) they support. Statements of laws and subjunctive conditionals are (in Ryle's phrase) inference-tickets. They codify patterns of reasoning. Understanding what it means to say that the objective world is lawful, that states of affairs stand to one another in relations of incompatibility and necessary consequence, requires understanding the patterns of reasoning that those claims license. This view is a kind of *modal expressivism*.[142]

I see the move being made here as the second in a three-stage process of articulating ever more radical commitments collectively constituting Hegel's final idealist view. The first commitment is to what I have called "conceptual realism." The second commitment is to what I call "objective idealism." The third is to what I call "conceptual idealism." I offer these claims as a tripartite analysis of Hegel's idealism, claiming that his view is what you get if you endorse all of them. I take it they form a hierarchy, with each commitment presupposing those that come before it.

As I read it, conceptual realism appears on the stage already in the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* (though not, of course, in all the detail that will be filled in at subsequent stages). This is the view, roughly put, that the objective realm of facts about empirical (but not necessarily observable) things, no less than the subjective realm of thoughts about them, is

[142] I discuss some more contemporary ways of working out this idea in Chapters 1, 4, and 5 of *From Empiricism to Expressivism: Brandom Reads Sellars* [Harvard University Press, 2014].

conceptually structured. Only an account that underwrites this commitment, Hegel thinks, can satisfy what I have called the "genuine knowledge condition": that when things go right, what things are for consciousness is what they are in themselves. Hegel's way of articulating conceptual realism depends on his nonpsychological conception of the conceptual. To be conceptually contentful is to stand in conceptual relations to other such conceptually contentful items. Conceptual relations are relations of material incompatibility (exclusive difference or contrariety) and consequence: Hegel's "determinate negation" and "mediation."

The picture of the intentional nexus at this stage is hylomorphic. One and the same conceptual content, functionally defined by the incompatibility and consequence relations its stands in to others, can take two forms: objective and subjective. In its objective form, for instance as the intricate structure of facts about particulars exhibiting universals that emerges at by the end of the *Perception* chapter, conceptual content is determined by *alethic modal* relations of incompatibility and consequence. They concern what is (im)possible and what is necessary. In its subjective form, conceptual content is determined by *deontic normative* relations of incompatibility and consequence. They concern what commitments one can be jointly entitled to, and when commitment to one content entails commitment to another.

The objective idealism that comes into view in the *Force and Understanding* chapter is a thesis about understanding. More specifically, it is a view about the relation between understanding the subjective pole of the intentional nexus and understanding the objective pole. I take it to be a symmetric claim: one cannot understand the objective pole without understanding the subjective pole, and *vice versa*. Though the dependences run in both directions, the dependence of the understanding of contentful thoughts on understanding the objective world they are thoughts about has been a theme throughout the *Consciousness* chapters. What is new with this shape of understanding consciousness is the dependence of understanding objectivity on understanding subjectivity.

There is a semantic distinction between two sorts of dependence relation that is fundamental to understanding the thesis of objective idealism. This is the distinction between reference-dependence and sense-dependence of concepts. This distinction begins with the Fregean distinction between sense and referent (his "Sinn" and "Bedeutung"). (Later on, the explication of a distinctively Hegelian version of these semantic notions will take center stage.) In Frege's usage, a word such as "square" or "copper" *expresses* a sense, and that sense *refers* to some objective item, in this case, a property or substance-kind. Fregean thoughts (by which he means thinkables, not thinkings) are the senses expressed by sentential expressions. Grasping a thought is what subjects must do to understand what is expressed by a sentence. I will depart from strict Fregean usage by sometimes talking about the senses expressed by locutions as "concepts." (For Frege, concepts are the *referents* of predicates, not their senses.)

Xs are *sense-dependent* on Ys just in case one cannot in principle count as grasping the concept X unless one also grasps the concept Y. In this sense, the concept sunburn is sense-dependent on the concepts sun and burn, and the concept parent is sense-dependent on the concept child. As these examples show, sense-dependence can be either asymmetric, as in the first example, or symmetric, as in the second. Xs are *reference-dependent* on Ys just in case there cannot *be* Xs (referents of the concept X) unless there are Ys (referents of the concept Y). If Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicking over a lantern was indeed the necessary and sufficient cause of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, then the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 is reference-dependent on Mrs. O'Leary's cow. Of course one could *understand* the former concept without *understanding* the latter. But the first concept would not *refer* to anything if the second did not. So there can be reference-dependence without sense-dependence. Sometimes the two relations do go together, as with parent/child or cause/effect, which are both reciprocally sense-dependent and reciprocally reference-dependent. And of course there are cases of concepts that stand in neither sort of relation to one another. Sloop and omelette are neither sense-dependent nor reference-dependent on one another.

The case that matters for thinking about what I am calling "objective idealism" is that of concepts that stand in a relation of sense-dependence but, unlike, say, superior and subordinate,

not also in a relation of reference-dependence. One kind of example is provided by subjunctive response-dependent concepts and the properties they refer to. Suppose we define something as beautiful* just in case it would be responded with pleasure were it to be viewed by a suitable human observer. (The asterisk distinguishing "beautiful*" from "beautiful" marks my not being committed to this as being the right definition, or even the right form of definition, for "beautiful" itself.) Then one cannot understand the concept beautiful* unless one understands the concept pleasure (as well as others such as suitable human observer). Then one can ask whether the existence of beautiful* objects depends on the existence of pleasurable responses by suitable human observers. For instance, were there beautiful* sunsets before there were any humans, and would there have been beautiful* sunsets even if there never had been humans? It seems clear that there were and there would have been. For even if the absence of suitable human observers means that sunsets are in fact not observed, and so not responded to by suitable human observers at all, never mind with pleasure, that *had* there been such observers they *would* have responded with pleasure. And that is enough for them to count as beautiful*. So there can be sense-dependence without reference-dependence.

That is the sort of relation I take Hegel to be claiming obtains between the law and explanation. The concept law is sense-dependent, but not reference-dependent, on the concept explanation. In order to understand what a law *is*, one must understand how statements of laws function inferentially in explanations. Only grasping the latter, the process of "traversing the moments" in inferences explaining one fact in terms of another by means of lawful relations between them, can make intelligible the distinctive sort of necessary unity of what are nonetheless claimed be distinct "moments" in a law such as Newton's second law of motion. The claim is *not* that if there were no explanations, there would be no laws. Newton's second law held before there were humans, and would still hold even if there never had been and never would be. [More-in-sorrow-than-in-anger but still snarky footnote here about Heidegger getting exactly this wrong in SZ?] Independence claims are determinately contentful only if the kind of dependence being denied has been specified. Objective idealism does claim that the objective world is not, in a specific sense, mind-independent. But since it is sense-dependence that is asserted and not reference-dependence, denying this sort of mind-independence is *not* saying that

the existence of inferring, explaining subjects is a necessary condition of the existence of a *lawful* objective world. The relation of this objective idealism to Kant's transcendental idealism, which understands lawfulness as a feature only of the phenomenal world and not of the noumenal world depends on how the latter is understood.

I take it that at least in the discussion of perceiving consciousness and in the discussion up to this point of understanding consciousness, Hegel has implicitly been accepting that one cannot understand these shapes of subjective consciousness without considering the character of the objective world that they take themselves to be consciousness of (to refer to or represent). Hegel shows by what he does in presenting these shapes of consciousness that, in the idiom of the *Introduction*, we (the phenomenological consciousness) cannot understand what the objective world is *for* one of these phenomenal shapes of consciousness without at the same time understanding what is *to* each shape how things are *in* themselves. Thus it is essential to the experience of empirical consciousness conceiving of itself as perceiving that it takes the world it is perceptually conscious *of* to have the Aristotelian structure of particulars exhibiting universals. And it is essential to the experience of empirical consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding that the world it is thinking about is a world of unobservable theoretical objects and their observable expressions, or, at a later stage, allegorically simply a "play of forces" expressing an underlying "calm realm of laws." If that is right, then Hegel is committed to the sense-dependence of the concepts articulating what things are *for* a shape of consciousness of concepts articulating what is *to* it what things are *in* themselves. One cannot understand the concept explanation unless one also understands the concept law, and so on for the concepts that explicate more primitive forms of understanding, and perceiving consciousness. (What things are to empirical consciousness understanding itself as immediate sense-certainty is sufficiently undifferentiated to make things more difficult in this case, but I take it Hegel also thinks one cannot understand the feature-placing language that would make explicit what what things are *for* sensing consciousness is *to* it without understanding also a world of immediately sensible features that is *to* it what things are *in* themselves.)

What is new with objective idealism is the converse sense-dependence claim: this form of understanding consciousness realizes that it cannot make sense of the notion of law except in terms that appeal to processes of explanation. The objective idealism that emerges for understanding consciousness is accordingly a *reciprocal* sense-dependence of the concepts articulating the *objective* things and relations and the concepts articulating the *subjective* thoughts and practices of understanding consciousness itself. Given what has gone before, this reciprocal sense-dependence is not limited to laws governing the objective world and the inferential manipulation of thoughts by subjects in explanation. So we can infer from the discussion of perceiving consciousness's experience of an objective world with an aristotelian metaphysical structure that the concepts of property or universal, on the one hand, and the concept of what one is *doing* in *classifying* by applying *predicates*, on the other, are reciprocally sense-dependent. One cannot properly understand either one with understanding the other. Similarly, the concepts of object or particular, and the concepts of *referring* with *singular terms* are reciprocally sense-dependent. Given the notion of fact that perceiving consciousness bequeaths to understanding consciousness, we can add the reciprocal sense-dependence of that concept on the side of the objective world with that of the practice of claiming (or judging) using declarative sentences on the side of subjective practices.

So the fine structure of the commitment I am calling "objective idealism" is articulated into a triad of triads that stand to one another in relations of reciprocal sense-dependence:

Objective Ontological or Metaphysical Categories:	**Subjective Pragmatic Categories:**	**Syntactic Categories:**
Objects/Properties or Particulars/Universals	Referring/Classifying	Singular Terms / Predicates
Facts	Asserting, Claiming, or Judging	Declarative Sentences
Laws	Explaining as Inferring	Universally Quantified Subjunctive Conditionals

Asserting the sense-dependence of the concepts object and particular on concepts articulating the use of singular terms is rejecting the possibility of general reductive explanations along the lines Quine suggests when he defines singular terms as expressions that "purport to refer to just one object."[143] He takes it that the concept object is clear and independently accessible, and so can be appealed to in explaining that of singular term. Perhaps this is so for middle-sized bits of dry goods, but the idea begins to break down when pressed at the margins. Thinking about candidate objects such as musical notes, holes, *ressentiment,* theological phenomena such as irresistible grace, historiographical objects like the Enlightenment or modernity, concepts, cognitions, abstracta…overloads intuitions about objects and particulars and drives one inevitably to thinking about the use of the terms in question. That is why in the *Grundlagen*, Frege finds it necessary to address the vexed question of whether numbers are objects by investigating whether numerals are used as proper singular terms.

The concepts in question come as a package, are reciprocally sense-dependent. (This is one sense the metaphor of "two sides of one coin" can take—carefully to be distinguished from the reciprocal reference-dependence sense that that metaphor can also be used to convey.) The

[143] *Word and Object* [MIT Press, 1960], p. 96.

reciprocal sense-dependence of fact or state of affairs and the concept of what one is doing in asserting by uttering sentences explains why traditional grammars attempted definition of "declarative sentence" as "the expression of a whole thought" is of such profoundly little pedagogical use in helping students distinguish sentences from sentence-fragments and run-together sentences. (Are we to think that those who are slower to master the concept are devoid of "whole thoughts"? Or is coming to recognize them as such inseparable from learning how to use sentences?) Philosophers who think it is definitional of declarative sentences that they represent states of affairs make a corresponding mistake, as becomes clear from the metaphysical puzzlements that ensue (for instance, in the *Tractatus*) when we ask about the nature of the states of affairs represented by probabilistic or normative statements, by statements about future contingents or impossible objects like the least rapidly converging sequence. Invocation of truth-aptness or even truth-makers in this connection properly acknowledges, if only implicitly, the in-principle relevance of issues concerning the use of the sentences in question.

For Hegel, all these issues come down to the concept of determinate negation. The metaphysical analysis by perceiving consciousness of particulars and universals in the Aristotelian structure of objects with many properties stays as resolutely on the objective side of the intentional nexus as can be. As we saw, all he requires is the distinction, inherited from empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense-certainty, between two kinds of difference: compatible or "mere, indifferent" difference and incompatible or exclusive difference (contrariety). This distinction, he takes it (by contrast to the British empiricists) is a feature of immediate sense experience. Appealing only to these two kinds of difference, Hegel is able, in a *tour de force* of analysis and construction, to elaborate, on behalf of perceiving consciousness, a richly articulated structure of facts about the possession by particulars of sense-universals: objects with many observable properties. (We have seen in this chapter how the discovery that implicit in the idea of observable properties differing in the two basic ways is the idea of objects as bearers of those properties, objects that are *not* observable in the same sense the properties are leads on to a generalized notion of theoretical entities, including properties and indeed facts, which are only inferentially accessible.)

This order of explanation shows that for Hegel *if* there is a reciprocal sense-dependence relation between the notion of material incompatibility that applies to properties, hence facts, and is expressed in laws in the objective realm, and the notion that applies to classification by applying predicates, making claims and judgments, and explanatory inferences in the subjective realm of thought, *then* corresponding sense-dependences will hold at all of the levels retailed in the chart above. The idea that there is such a sense-dependence does not make its first appearance with the discussion of the relation between law and explanation. Even though the experience of perceiving consciousness is conducted to the extent possible, in accord with the self-understanding of that form of empirical self-consciousness, at the level of what is perceived, the perceiving of it plays a substantial role even there. This is registered in the title of the chapter, "Die Wahrnehmung; oder das ding, und die Täuschung." "Täuschung" here is invoking the experience of error, which does not just come in here at the phenomenological level, as we follow the development of various versions of perceiving consciousness driven from one to the next by the inadequacy of the first.[144] The experience of error is also an important element of perceiving consciousness' own understanding. For what one must *do* in order thereby to count as taking or treating two properties as incompatible in the objective sense made explicit by alethic modal locutions is precisely to acknowledge the obligation, when one finds oneself committed to attributing those properties to one and the same object, of *rejecting* at least one of those commitments. One does that by treating those commitments as incompatible in the sense made explicit by *deontic normative* locutions: one cannot be *entitled* to both *commitments*.

> [T]he one who is perceiving is aware of the possibility of deception [Täuschung]…His criterion of truth is therefore *self-identity*, and his behavior consists in apprehending the object as self-identical. Since at the same time diversity is explicitly there for him, it is a connection of the diverse moments of his apprehension to one another; but if a dissimilarity makes itself felt in the course of this comparison, then this is not an untruth of the object—for this is the self-identical—but an untruth in perceiving it.[145]

An object perceived as having objectively incompatible properties is perceived as in so far such not self-identical. The diversity in question must be a matter of *exclusive* difference, *contrary* properties, not merely or indifferently different ones. Perceiving an object as diverse in that

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[144] This is the sort of error that is invoked in [131].

[145] [116]. I take it that the lesson I am claiming is taught in the *Perception* chapter of the *Phenomenology* is also in play in the "Sein und Schein" section of the *Science of Logic*. [ref.]

weak sense is not perceiving it as not "self-identical." Only perceiving incompatible properties triggers the experience of "untruth." Already here Hegel is asserting the sense-dependence of the objective alethic modal sense of "incompatible" ("exclusive difference") with the deontic normative one. Grasping the concept of objective modal incompatibility of *properties is* treating the corresponding *commitments* as incompatible in the deontic sense that normatively governs the activities of knowing subjects. There could *be* modal incompatibilities of properties or facts without deontic incompatibilities of commitments. The concept of the former is not reference-dependent on the concept of the latter. But one cannot in principle *understand* the sort of modal incompatibility that will be codified in laws unless one understands what it is appropriate to *do* when confronted with deontically incompatible commitments. And what one must do is respond to the experience of error by making an inference that explains it, by rejecting at least one of the claims. Objective incompatibility and the experience of error are reciprocally sense-dependent concepts. Because they are, so are the concepts articulated and elaborated in terms of determinate negation, as retailed in the chart above.

Hegel has no reason to deny the reference-dependence of the subjective pragmatic and syntactic categories on the ontological or metaphysical ones. Apart from laws governing facts about the exhibition of universals by particulars there would be no activities of inferring, asserting, referring, or classifying, and no subjunctive conditionals, sentences, terms, or predicates. He is not and has no reason to assert the *reference*-dependence of the categories articulating the objective world on those articulating the practices of empirical subjects. The dependence of the objective on the subjective he is asserting is a *sense*-dependence relation. The objective world is understood as *semantically* mind-dependent, not *causally* or *existentially* mind-dependent. The latter extravagant and implausible view is a kind of subjective idealism sometimes extrapolated from Berkeley and sometimes libelously attributed to Fichte. Whatever the justice of those associations, there is nothing of the sort in Hegel.

If this reading avoids pinning on Hegel an obviously crazy sort of idealism, it might be thought to court the converse danger of washing out his idealism to a view that is, to use the term Robert Pippin has used in raising this worry, anodyne. How exciting is it to be told that in order

to understand lawfulness, what is made explicit by alethic modal vocabulary, one must understand the use of such vocabulary, the distinctive inferential role played by subjunctively robust conditionals? After all, anyone who has the concept law of nature has already mastered the use of a fairly sophisticated vocabulary and so can, in fact, use subjunctive conditionals. Anyone who talks or thinks at all about objects and properties (not even, perhaps, using terms corresponding to "object" and "property", but only to "Fido" and "furry"), facts or states of affairs, must *use* singular terms, predicates, and declarative sentences. Surely that much is not a philosophical discovery.

Now it should be remembered to begin with that I am not *identifying* the "absolute idealism" Hegel propounds in the *Phenomenology* with objective idealism. As indicated above, I am analyzing absolute idealism as comprising three component theses: conceptual realism, objective idealism, and conceptual idealism. To assess the interest of absolute idealism as so conceived one must look at it whole. As I read this final chapter of the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*, conceptual idealism is in fact introduced here, as the triumphant final move, motivating the expository transition to the consideration of *self*-consciousness. That thesis does not arise in connection with the move from force and law to law and explanation, but with the move from the latter to the conception of what Hegel calls "infinity." Nonetheless, the question of whether adding objective idealism as a reciprocal sense-dependence thesis to conceptual realism represents a substantial conceptual and doctrinal advance, and if so why, is a legitimate one. It can be addressed precisely by thinking of what it adds to conceptual realism.

Conceptual realism is the thesis that the objective world, the world as it is in itself, no less than the realm of subjective activity that shapes what the world is for consciousness, is conceptually structured. John McDowell is endorsing conceptual realism in this sense when he say in *Mind and World* that "the conceptual has no outer boundary," beyond which lies a nonconceptual reality.[146] As I have been reading him, Hegel's version of this thought has a hylomorphic shape. Conceptual contents can show up in two different forms: an objective form

[146] [ref. to *Mind and World* [Harvard University Press, 2nd edition] [poss pp. 27, or 34-46?]

and a subjective form. The first is a matter of how things are in themselves, the second how they are for consciousness. These are reality and its appearance, the phenomena and the noumena. Because both forms are conceptually articulated, and because the very same content can show up in both forms, "When we say, and mean, that such-and-such is the case, we—and our meaning—do not stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: this—is—so," as Wittgenstein puts the point.[147] This is how the genuine knowledge constraint is to be satisfied: the criterion of adequacy on semantic theories that requires they not rule out on conceptual grounds the possibility that what things are for consciousness can be what they are in themselves.

Hegel fills in this hylomorphic picture by offering a nonpsychological conception of the conceptual. According to this conception, to be conceptually contentful is to stand to other such contentful items in relations of material incompatibility and consequence ("determinate negation" and "mediation"). This definition is sufficiently abstract and generic that it need not appeal to what it is to *grasp* a conceptual content in order to say what such contents are. It invokes only very general relations among contents. For objective states of affairs, including facts, these are alethic modal relations of noncompossibility and necessity. They are expressed by statements of laws of nature: mammalian life is impossible at 1085° C, and copper necessarily melts at 1085° C. For subjective thinkings of conceptually contentful thinkables, these are deontic normative relations of entitlement and commitment. The claim that the mammal is alive is incompatible with the claim that its average temperature is 1085° C, and the claim that the temperature of the copper is above 1085° C commits one to the claim that it not solid.

Objective idealism adds to this hylomorphic version of conceptual realism a thesis about the interdependence—in the sense of *sense*-dependence—of these two forms that conceptual contents can take: alethic and deontic, objective and subjective. In order to grasp the concept conceptual *content*, which can take the two forms, it turns out one must grasp those two forms in their inter(sense-)dependence. On my analysis, the objective idealist reciprocal sense-

147 *Philosophical Investigations* [ref.] §95.

dependence thesis takes on its substantial and distinctive significance for Hegel in the context of the three other strategic commitments already mentioned: conceptual realism, an understanding of conceptual articulation as consisting in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, and the hylomorphic rendering of that latter view as a response to the requirement set by the genuine knowledge condition. It is the latter that brings the intentional nexus into play, in the form of the relation between what things are in themselves and what they are for consciousness.

Against this background, in asserting the reciprocal sense-dependence of the alethic modal metaconcepts we use to make explicit the conceptual structure of the objective pole (what things are in themselves) and the deontic normative metaconcepts we use to make explicit the conceptual structure of the subjective pole (what things are for consciousness), objective idealism marks a significant advance. For it provides additional clarification and substantial development of this hylomorphic form of conceptual realism. It tells us something important about the relations between the two different readings (alethic and deontic) of "incompatible" and "consequence," namely, that one crucial such relation is reciprocal sense-dependence. That is, the necessary relation between the different alethic modal and deontic normative senses of "relations of material incompatibility and consequence"—the kind of unity-through-difference they stand in as forms of one kind of content—is just the intentional nexus: the relation between thought and what it is about, between sense and referent.

Objective idealism tells us we can't understand the ontological structure of the objective world, its coming as law-governed facts about the properties of objects, except in terms that make essential reference to what subjects have to *do* in order to count as taking the world to have that structure—even though the world could have that structure in the absence of any subjects and their epistemic activities. The sort of unity-through-essential-difference that objective idealism attributes to conceptual contents by explaining how their objective (alethic modal) and subjective (deontic normative) forms are related is fundamentally different from that grasped by understanding consciousness in its thought about force and its expression and force and law. Those both concerned only the objective pole of the intentional nexus: what is known or represented. Objective idealism concerns both poles, the relation between what things are

objectively or in themselves and what they are subjectively or for consciousness. And both of those conceptions of understanding consciousness concerned themselves with reference-dependence relations as well as sense-dependence relations. (That is part of what is wrong with reifying laws as superfacts, represented in a sense that is assimilated to the sense in which ordinary empirical facts—whether immediately observable or not—are represented.) So it is *not* the case that the relation of law to explanation and the distinctive kind of identity between its moments it involves should be thought of as *modeled on* those earlier relations and the kind of identity they involve. Rather, a kind of self-referential metaclaim is being made. It is only by understanding the kind of identity of content requiring diversity of form characteristic of the reciprocal sense-dependence of concepts articulating the structure of the objective represented world and concepts articulating the structure of the epistemic activity of representing subjects that one can understand the kind of identity constituted by the necessary relation of diverse moments characteristic of the objective pole of that intentional relation: the relation of force to its expression, the play of forces, and of both to the laws that govern them. (Or, of course, the subjective activity of epistemic subjects, but that direction in which the reciprocal sense-dependence can be exploited is hardly surprising or controversial.) That is the lesson of this experience of understanding consciousness. There is a final further lesson on the way: the conceptual idealism Hegel propounds under the heading of "infinity." That is the topic of my next lecture.

Lecture 7 Handout:

Infinity, Conceptual Idealism, and the Transition to *Self-Consciousness*

"Infinity" [Unendlichkeit] is Hegel's term for a distinctive structure of identity constituted by necessary relations among different "moments", each of which is what it is only in virtue of its relations to the others and its being comprised by the whole it is a moment of. It the final form of understanding consciousness.

The principal lesson we are to learn from the final experience of understanding consciousness is that this holistic structure of identity and difference that results from this progressive process of making explicit what is implicit in empirical consciousness is the structure of *self*-consciousness. It is this discovery that the key to understanding empirical consciousness lies in self-consciousness that motivates for us the expository narrative transition from the *Consciousness* chapter to the *Self-Consciousness* chapter.

Empirical consciousness understanding itself under the concept of <u>infinity</u> understands consciousness as
consciousness of a difference that is no less *immediately* cancelled…it is a distinguishing of that which contains no difference, or *self-consciousness*. I distinguish myself from myself, and in doing so I am directly aware that what is distinguished from myself is not different [from me]. I, the selfsame being, repel myself from myself; but what is posited as distinct from me, or as unlike me is immediately, in being so distinguished , not a distinction for me. [*PhG* ¶164]

Two sorts of assimilation are already on the table: conceptual realism and objective idealism.
Conceptual realism says that what things are in themselves, no less than what things are for consciousness, is in conceptual shape.
Objective idealism says that the concepts articulating what is *to* understanding consciousness what things are in themselves and the concepts articulating what is *to* it what things are for consciousness are reciprocally sense-dependent.
I think that Hegel is gesturing at a third idealist thesis—what I will call "conceptual idealism."

The argument of the closing passages of *Force and Understanding* has three phases. It starts with a characterization of the lessons to be learned from consideration of the final form of the supersensible world understanding takes itself to confront: the inverted world. The second phase consists of remarks about the structure of identity in and through difference that Hegel calls "infinity." The concluding phase is the claim that we can see (though it cannot yet) that in conceiving its object on the model of such an infinite structure, understanding consciousness has put itself in a position to recognize itself in its object—that it has actually become a form of consciousness that does not merely presuppose self-consciousness, but *is* a form of self-consciousness.

From the idea, then, of inversion, which constitutes the essential nature of one aspect of the supersensible world, we must eliminate the sensuous idea [Vorstellung] of fixing the differences

in a different sustaining element; and this absolute Notion of the difference must be presented and understood [darstellen und auffassen] purely as inner difference…

> Certainly, I put the 'opposite' here, and the 'other' of which it is the opposite there; the 'opposite', then, is on one side, is in and for itself without the 'other'. But just because I have the 'opposite' here in and for itself, it is the opposite of itself, or it has, in fact, the 'other' immediately present in it. Thus the supersensible world, which is the inverted world, has at the same time overarched [übergriffen] the other world and has it within it; it is for itself the inverted world, i.e. the inversion of itself; it is itself and its opposite in one unity. Only thus is it difference as inner difference, or difference in its own self, or difference as an infinity. [160].

What is wrong with the inverted world [verkehrte Welt] is not the inversion, but the reification of it into a world—just as what was wrong with the conception of a supersensible "calm realm of laws" was the reification of laws into superfacts.

[O]nce the tautology 'The world is described by descriptive concepts' is freed from the idea that the business of all non-logical concepts is to describe, the way is clear to an *ungrudging* recognition that many expressions which empiricists have relegated to second-class citizenship in discourse are not *inferior,* just *different.* [In "Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities," in H. Feigl, M. Scriven,and G. Maxwell (eds.), *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science,* vol. II (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press, 1957), §79.]

The alternative he is recommending in place of descriptivism is a distinctive kind of *expressivism*. Modal claims, it is true, do not simply describe the actual. (Laws are not superfacts.) But that is not because they describe something else. It is because they express something implicit in the actual. They express the exclusive differences in virtue of which any actual state of affairs is the state of affairs it is.

> Infinity, or this absolute unrest of pure self-movement, in which whatever is determined in one way or another, e.g. as being, is rather the opposite of that determinateness, this no doubt has been all along the soul of all that has gone before…but it is as '*explanation*' that it first freely stands forth… [*PhG* ¶163].

The movement of the understanding that first shows up as inferentially traversing the moments in explanation is an aspect of the larger movement that in the *Introduction* Hegel calls "*experience*." The focus of the discussion of experience in the *Introduction* is the experience of *error*.

In his conception of experience as the experience of *error*, Hegel emphasizes the *critical* rational task-responsibility: the responsibility to resolve conflicts arising from the *material incompatibility* of judgments.

As we saw in discussing the *Introduction*, the rational requirement to revise one's commitments in the face of their incompatibility gives experience the shape of a continual unmasking of what was *to* consciousness the way things are in themselves, what it took to be the facts expressed by

true judgments, as appearance, as merely what things were *for* consciousness. In addition to this emphasis on and interpretation of the significance of the critical dimension of the rational responsibilities constitutive of Kantian apperception, Hegel adds a further one that is decisive for his account of experience. It is a *recollective* rational task-responsibility, given prominent place at the metalevel in *Absolute Knowing* under the heading of "Erinnerung."

To understand this recollective phase of experience it is helpful to think of it in Fregean terms of sense and reference. In the generic way in which I want to approach these terms, talk about "senses" is talk about what is sayable and thinkable. It is what is in suitable conceptual shape to be the content of (possible) knowings, in Hegel's terms what things can be *for* consciousness. Talk of "reference" is talk about what is talked or thought *about*, what is there to be (possibly) known, the objective realm of things as they actually are *in themselves*.

Conceptual realism is the claim that the conceptual realm of graspable senses has no outer boundary. This is the view that McDowell expounds in *Mind and World*:
[T]here is no ontological gap between the sort of thing one can mean, or generally the sort of thing one can think, and the sort of thing that can be the case. When one thinks truly, what one thinks *is* what is the case. So since the world is everything that is the case . . . there is no gap between thought, as such, and the world. Of course thought can be distanced from the world by being false, but there is no distance from the world implicit in the very idea of thought. [p. 27]

Hegel's account of the distinction and relation between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves, which I am recommending thinking of in terms of senses and referents, is like the Fregean and unlike the Tarskian in that the semantic order of explanation it adopts begins with senses rather than referents. A recollective reconstruction assembles appearances, ways things have been *for* consciousness, into *histories* that display them as successive appearances *of* an underlying reality, presented by the constellation of claims and concepts in which that history culiminates (so far). The recollection exhibits a process by which how things really are, in themselves (according to it), was gradually, fitfully, but ultimately successfully revealed by different appearances of it. It traces an *expressively progressive* trajectory through the senses by which the referent was presented to the consciousness that thereby comes to know about it as it is in itself. The sequence of senses is expressively progressive in that each successive step shows up as the making explicit of some feature of how things really are that can now be seen, retrospectively, to have been all along implicit in prior appearances of it. Each progressive step consists in an experience of error: the presence of an anomaly in the form of incompatible commitments, acknowledgement of the anomaly in the form of an effective practical obligation to repair it, a revision of beliefs and concepts (doxastic and commitments concerning material incompatibility and inferential consequence) that resolves the difficulty, and a story about what it was about the situation as it is thus discovered to be that accounts for the prior appearance, both insofar as it is now taken to have been veridical and insofar as it is now taken not to have been veridical.

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.

For understanding consciousness to conceive itself under categories of *infinity* is for it to understand its object, the objective world as it really is, in itself, as what is revealed, discovered, by the process of experience, understood as having this character.
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….[*PhG* ¶39].
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. [*PhG* ¶47]. Emphasis added.
Thus Verständigkeit too is a becoming, and, as this becoming, it is reasonableness Vernünftigkeit. [*PhG* ¶55].

The path to what I have been calling "conceptual idealism" is paved by the recollective construal of the sense in which the in-itself ("Ansichsein") is implicit in how things are for consciousness.
Already something thought, the content is the property of individuality; existence has no more to be changed into the form of what is in-itself and implicit [Ansichsein], but only the implicit into the form of what is explicit, of what is objective to self [Fursichseins]. [*PhG* ¶29].

"[R]ecollection, the inwardizing, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance. [*PhG* ¶808].

This sense of making or producing the reality behind its appearances (the referents those senses represent) is *sui generis.* Recollection is the *doing* that *produces* the distinction, essential to consciousness, of what is *to* consciousness what things objectively are, in themselves and what is *to* consciousness only how those things appear *for* consciousness. It is what we must understand to understand how that distinction can show up to consciousness itself, and hence why and how the concept of consciousness essentially involves the concept of self-consciousness.

Conceptual idealism asserts a dependence of *semantics* on *pragmatics*. For it explains the semantic relation between sense and reference in terms of *recollecting*: an activity, a practice, a process.
Conceptual idealism, in asserting the distinctive kind of explanatory and conceptual priority of pragmatics over semantics that is embodied in taking the recollective dimension of experience to provide the framework within which to understand the institution of semantic relations between representing senses and represented referents, thereby asserts a practical priority of, and asymmetric dependence relation between, norm-governed experiential practices made explicit by the use of deontic vocabulary and nomological tracking relations made explicit by the use of alethic vocabulary.

At this final stage, "what is, for the Understanding, an object in a sensuous governing, is *for us* in its essential form as a pure Notion." For that reason we can see that "the Understanding experiences only *itself*," not something experienced as other than itself. [*PhG* ¶165].
Since this Notion of infinity is an object for consciousness, the latter is consciousness of a difference that is no less immediately cancelled; consciousness is for its own self, it is a distinguishing of that which contains no difference, or self-consciousness. [*PhG* ¶164].

By contrast to representational thinking:
Speculative [begreifendes] thinking behaves in a different way. Since the Notion [Begriff] is the object's own self, which presents itself as the *coming-to-be* [Werden] *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…[A]nd only this movement itself becomes the object. [*PhG* ¶60].

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

Lecture 7:

Infinity, Conceptual Idealism, and the Transition to *Self-Consciousness*

I

The last five paragraphs of *Force and the Understanding* sketch the final shape of empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding, and the lessons we, the phenomenological consciousness, are to learn from the achievement of this form of phenomenal consciousness as the culmination of the process of development of the others that have been rehearsed. The discussion is maddeningly compressed and telegraphic, both in its characterization of understanding conceiving itself under the concept of infinity, and in its account of how our understanding of that form of consciousness motivates turning our attention from consciousness to *self*-consciousness, and so the crucial expository transition in the book from *Consciousness* to *Self-Consciousness*.

"Infinity" [Unendlichkeit] is Hegel's term for a distinctive structure of identity

constituted by necessary relations among different "moments", each of which is what it is only in virtue of its relations to the others and its being comprised by the whole it is a moment of. It the final form of understanding consciousness. The alarming term "infinite" has actively misleading mathematical connotations (for us Cantorians), and unhelpful (at least at this point) theological oones. It is probably best regarded here as a merely suggestive label. The structure of identity and difference that it labels, we are told "has no doubt all along been the soul of all that has gone before," that is, it is the fully adequate conception of the actual structure of consciousness, which all the shapes considered up to this point (under the rubrics of empirical consciousness conceiving of itself as sense-certainty, as perceiving, and as understanding) are less adequate conceptions of.[148]

[148] [163].

The principal lesson we are to learn from the final experience of understanding consciousness is that this holistic structure of identity and difference that results from this progressive process of making explicit what is implicit in empirical consciousness, which Hegel calls "infinity", is the structure of *self*-consciousness. It is this discovery, that the key to understanding empirical consciousness lies in self-consciousness, that motivates for us the expository narrative transition from the *Consciousness* chapter to the *Self-Consciousness* chapter.

It is true that consciousness of an 'other', of an object in general, is itself necessarily *self-consciousness*, a reflectedness-into-self, consciousness of itself in otherness. The *necessary advance* from the previous shapes of consciousness for which their truth was a Thing, an 'other' than themselves, expresses just this, that not only is consciousness of a thing only possible for a self-consciousness, but that self-consciousness alone is the truth of those shapes.[149]

There are three claims here. Each of the "shapes of consciousness" considered up to this point, including the final one, is a conception of, a way of understanding, empirical consciousness. As such, they are forms of *self*-consciousness: ways of being conscious of consciousness. Further, "consciousness of a thing is possible only for a self-consciousness." That is, any empirical consciousness must have some such "shape". For it must be aware of the distinction between what *to* it things are *in* themselves and what *to* it they are *for* consciousness.[150] It is taught that by the experience of error. That aspect of consciousness incorporates a conception of consciousness, and hence constitutes a form of self-consciousness. This much of Hegel's picture was already on offer in the *Introduction*. What is new is a third claim, about what becomes visible for us only in contemplating the final experience resulting in understanding consciousness conceiving its object as infinite. This is the realization that so-conceived, the object of consciousness is no longer *to* it something other than consciousness. What things as they are *in* themselves is *to* consciousness just what it is *to* itself. This is the final sense in which consciousness is revealed to us as being self-consciousness.

The challenge is to understand this claim. It is, to begin with, not a lesson understanding consciousness is in a position to learn. It is only we who are looking on over its shoulder who are in a position to understand it.

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[149] [164].

[150] Recall from the discussion of the *Introduction* the crucial distinction between what things are *to* consciousness and what they are *for* consciousness—unmarked in extant translations, save for Kenley Dove's.

> But it is only *for us* that this truth exists, not yet for consciousness. But self-consciousness has at first become *for itself*, not yet *as a unity* with consciousness in general.[151]

But even the phenomenological consciousness does not at this point in the book understand everything it needs to understand fully to appreciate the lesson. There are reasons why we should not expect to be able to extract a detailed characterization of this view from the brief remarks Hegel makes in these five paragraphs. I think that the principal reason for the gnomic terseness of this brief but important part of the book is that Hegel is not pretending to lay out the view he is characterizing in any detail here. He cannot, for we do not yet understand what self-consciousness is, and will not, not just until the end of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, but until the end of the *Reason* chapter. Only then will we be in a position to understand what it means that the final form of understanding consciousness not only *is*, like all the "shapes of consciousness" considered in the *Consciousness* chapters, a form of self-consciousness (because it is a conception of, a way of understanding, empirical consciousness), but also understands consciousness itself *as* a kind of *self*-consciousness. The characterizations Hegel offers here are placeholders, statements we will be able to understand as ones we were entitled to at this point, even though we are not yet in a position to understand them very well. We, like phenomenal consciousness as understanding, have only the most abstract and general conception of self-consciousness available. Empirical consciousness understanding itself under the concept of <u>infinity</u> understands consciousness as consciousness of a difference that is no less *immediately* cancelled…it is a distinguishing of that which contains no difference, or *self-consciousness*. I distinguish myself from myself, and in doing so I am directly aware that what is distinguished from myself is not different [from me]. I, the selfsame being, repel myself from myself; but what is posited as distinct from me, or as unlike me is immediately, in being so distinguished , not a distinction for me.[152]

The only feature of self-consciousness that is being invoked as that on which consciousness is now modeled is that the distinction the latter involves, between consciousness and what it is consciousness of, is a difference that essentially involves assimilating the distinguished items, as the self which is self-conscious is both nominally distinguished from and also necessarily identified with the self of which it is conscious. The functions of self as *subject* of self-consciousness and self as *object* of self-consciousness can be distinguished, as for instance when we, or Hegel, (traversing the moments) say of a less than fully self-conscious subject that there are features of the object of self-consciousness of which the self-conscious subject is not aware. That is compatible with nonetheless claiming that the two selves are identical. The task of understanding these passages is accordingly a matter of understanding what sort of identity-in-and-through-difference empirical consciousness understanding itself as infinite takes to characterize the intentional nexus: the distinction that (as we were reminded already at the

[151] [164].
[152] [164].

beginning of the *Introduction*) consciousness essentially involves, between what things are *in* themselves and what they are *for* consciousness. What sort of assimilation of the two distinguished elements, one on the side of the objective world, the other on the side of subjective activity, is it that consciousness conceiving itself as having the structure Hegel calls "infinity" performs, which *Hegel* is telling us amounts to taking the two to be two ways of regarding one thing, as the self which *is* self-conscious and the self *of which* it is conscious are one self?

Two sorts of assimilation are already on the table: conceptual realism and objective idealism. Conceptual realism says that what things are in themselves, no less than what things are for consciousness, is in conceptual shape. So when he says that in its final form "the Understanding experiences only itself," Hegel could mean just that what is *to* it what things are in themselves is already in conceptual shape, just as its thoughts are.[153] I think this is indeed part of what is meant. But only part of it. Objective idealism says that the concepts articulating what is *to* understanding consciousness what things are *in* themselves and the concepts articulating what is *to* it what things are *for* consciousness are reciprocally sense-dependent. One consequence of the objective idealist thesis is that a necessary condition of understanding the ontological structure of the objective world empirical consciousness is consciousness of is that one must also understand the epistemic activities by which consciousness becomes conscious of it. That (like the conceptual realist thesis) is certainly a sense in which in experiencing the world, "Understanding experiences itself." It was just pointed out that conceptual realism also offers a sense in which "Understanding experiences *only* itself": it experiences only *conceptual* contentful states of affairs, whose content can also be the content of thoughts. It is a little more difficult to see objective idealism as making it sensible to say that understanding consciousness experiences *only* itself. We can say that it experiences only what cannot be understood apart from understanding what consciousness does in understanding it.

I think that Hegel is here also invoking a third idealist thesis—gesturing at something not explained here, marking it as something we, his readers, will be in a position to understand only later in the book. He is doing what Sellars called "issuing a promissory note," to be redeemed later on. When we are in a position to unfold it, the thesis is what I will call "conceptual idealism." It is an account of the intentional nexus, that is, of the distinction (and relation) that consciousness consists in, the distinction between what things are in themselves, objectively, and

[153] [165].

what they are for consciousness, or subjectively. This is the distinction between reality and appearance, noumena and phenomena, between what is thought and talked *about* (what empirical consciousness is consciousness *of*) and what is thought or said about it. Another way of characterizing the distinction and relation conceptual idealism addresses, one that will prove particularly telling in the light of the use made of these terms in formulating objective idealism, is that it is the distinction and relation between *referents* and *senses*, between what is represent*ed* and represent*ings* of it. Its focus is on the process of *experience*.

It is telling that in the formulation quoted above, Hegel says that what we discover (what we will later on be able to tell, once we have eyes to see it, was already visible at this point) by looking at consciousness understanding its object as infinite is that on that conception "Understanding *experiences* only itself." As we saw in our discussion of the *Introduction*, experience, which is the process that makes intelligible the possibility of genuine knowledge (the goal of empirical consciousness), is the experience of *error*: the unmasking of what was *to* consciousness reality, the way things are *in* themselves, as *appearance*, the way things are *for* consciousness. What still lies ahead for us readers of the book in the order of exposition, the developmental narrative of the education of phenomenological consciousness, is understanding the recollective, rational-reconstructive phase of the experience of error, by which something new becomes *to* consciousness what things are in themselves. Gestured at in the *Introduction*, this dimension of experience first officially comes on stage, darkly, at the ground level in the experience of empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense-certainty. It takes the form there of the discovery of the anaphoric-recollective dimension of repeatability, contrasting with and complementing the dimension of repeatability as universality, required to make sense of the epistemic significance of the sort of immediacy expressed explicitly by the use of demonstratives and indexicals. It will not be fully on the table until we learn how to think about intentional agency in the *Reason* chapter. ("Reason is purposive agency," as Hegel says in the *Preface*.[154])

II

The argument of the closing passages of *Force and Understanding* has three phases. It starts with a characterization of the lessons to be learned from consideration of the final form of the supersensible world understanding takes itself to confront: the inverted world. The second phase consists of remarks about the structure of identity in and through difference that Hegel calls "infinity." The concluding phase is the claim that *we* can see (though *it* cannot yet) that in

[154] [22].

conceiving its object on the model of such an infinite structure, phenomenal understanding consciousness has put itself in a position to recognize itself in its object—that it has actually become a form of consciousness that does not merely presuppose self-consciousness, but *is to* itself, but not explicitly, *for* itself, a form of consciousness *as* self-consciousness. (Specifying the exact register of the state of understanding (self-)consciousness is a delicate matter. I would put it like this: Infinity has been "no doubt all along the soul of all that has gone before,"[155] *in*-itself. Consciousness, *however* it understands itself (as sensuous certainty, as perceiving, as understanding), has no doubt always been *self*-consciousness, in the sense we finally come to understand it. *None* of the forms of (self-)consciousness considered in *Consciousness*, including the final form of understanding consciousness, which takes its object to be infinite, recognizes *itself* in its object and so is *for* itself self-consciousness in the sense Hegel tells us *we* can recognize consciousness as being. But the *self-conception* of that final form of understanding consciousness is *in itself* self-consciousness, even though that is not what that conception is *for* understanding consciousness.) The task of understanding these crucial, gnomic passages is accordingly the task of understanding the three lessons being taught about the inverted world as the final form of supersensible world, infinity, and consciousness being in a position to recognize itself in its object, and the rationales that move us from one to the other of these three thoughts.

Here is the first thought, leading into the second:

From the idea, then, of inversion, which constitutes the essential nature of one aspect of the supersensible world, we must eliminate the sensuous idea [Vorstellung] of fixing the differences in a different sustaining element; and

this absolute Notion of the difference must be presented and understood [darstellen und auffassen] purely as inner difference…

Certainly, I put the 'opposite' here, and the 'other' of which it is the opposite there; the 'opposite', then, is on one side, is in and for itself without the 'other'. But just because I have the 'opposite' here in and for itself, it is the opposite of itself, or it has, in fact, the 'other' immediately present in it. Thus the supersensible world, which is the inverted world, has at the same time overarched [übergriffen] the other world and has it within it; it is for itself the inverted world, i.e. the inversion of itself; it is itself and its opposite in one unity. Only thus is it difference as inner difference, or difference in its own self, or difference as an infinity.[156]

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[155] [163].

[156] [160]. I have tweaked Miller's translation. It is important that Hegel uses "Vorstellung", representation just where he does, and that makes it misleading to translate "darstellen" as "represent" here.

What is wrong with the inverted world [verkehrte Welt] is not the inversion, but the reification of it into a *world*—just as what was wrong with the conception of a supersensible "calm realm of laws" was the reification of laws into superfacts. In that case the mistake was to assimilate statements of laws to ordinary empirical statements, taking the former to represent something in the same sense in which the latter represent facts. The representational semantic paradigm of representings and represented ('Fido' and Fido) is extended beyond ground-level empirical (but not necessarily observable) staements and states of affairs to include modal statements of necessity in the form of laws or of impossibility and necessity in the case of the inverted world.

The difference between the two cases is diagnosed as a difference in the kind of state of affairs that is represented. This is what Hegel means by the "sensuous representation fixing the differences in a different sustaining element." The supersensible worlds are thought of as worlds just like the world of empirical facts—only supersensible. Merely possible states of affairs (worlds) are thought of as just like the actual world—only merely possible. (Compare the boggling Cartesian response to Leibniz's idea of "petites perceptions," described as just like Cartesian episodes of conscious awareness—except "inconscient".[157])

The inverted world is the result of inverting a world. But the result of doing that is not a world. It is the world--the actual world, the only world, which is *partly* supersensible--*as* inverted.

Hegel is here diagnosing the mistake that Sellars calls "descriptivism."[158]

[O]nce the tautology 'The world is described by descriptive concepts' is freed from the idea that the business of all non-logical concepts is to describe, the way is clear to an *ungrudging* recognition that many expressions which empiricists have relegated to second-class citizenship in discourse are not *inferior,* just *different.*

To be a descriptivist about a vocabulary or kind of discourse is to take its characteristic expressive role to be describing (representing) how things are. One should, of course, be a descriptivist about descriptive discourse. Hegel is rejecting descriptivism or representationalism for alethic modal discourse (which, as we have seen, is the approach characteristic of contemporary possible worlds metaphysics for semantics).

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[157] *G. Leibniz, Les nouveaux essais sur l'entendement humain, Préface.*

[158] In "Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities," in H. Feigl, M. Scriven, and G. Maxwell (eds.), *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science,* vol. II (Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press, 1957), §79. I discuss Sellars's critique of descriptivism in the Introduction and Chapter 1 of *From Empiricism to Expressivism: Brandom Reads Sellars* [Harvard University Press, 2014].

The alternative he is recommending in place of descriptivism is a distinctive kind of *expressivism*. The image Hegel is working with in the passage above is that instead of picturing the exclusive contrasts in virtue of which actual states of affairs are the determinate states of affairs they are as further states of affairs, separated from the actual by being across some ontological boundary ("jenseits"), we picture them as *within* the actual, as *implicit in* it. Alethic modal statements, about what is impossible (incompatible) or necessary express explicitly something that is implicit in ordinary descriptive statements about actuality. Part of what it is to be copper, a necessary feature of copper, is to be an electrical conductor. That excludes the possibility of being an electrical insulator. Those modal features of copper are internal to it, implicit in something's being copper. Thinking of them as facts about an*other* world, a shadow world over and above the actual world is mislocating them. Modal claims, it is true, do not simply describe the actual. (Laws are not superfacts.) But that is not because they describe something else. It is because they express something implicit in the actual. They express the exclusive differences in virtue of which any actual state of affairs is the state of affairs it is.

In the final sentences of the passage quoted above, Hegel says that understanding the sense in which these determining exclusive differences are implicit in and constitutive of the determinate identity of any thing or state of affairs will be understanding the structure he is calling "infinity." That structure is the model for a nondescriptivist expressivist semantics that encompasses representational structure but is more comprehensive, extending to the use of concepts whose principle expressive role is not to describe how things are. A first step toward understanding the expressivism Hegel is recommending is noting that it is a version of Kant's fundamental claim that some concepts, paradigmatically those expressed by alethic modal vocabulary in subjunctively robust conditionals such as those underwritten by laws, have as their principal expressive role not empirical description but making explicit features of the *framework* that makes empirical description possible. Since every empirical description presupposes what those concepts express, Kant says they must be knowable *a priori*, that is, in a way that does not depend on knowing whether any particular empirical description actually applies to something. They are his *categories*. In Hegel's version, empirically describable states of affairs (possible and actual) are intelligible as determinate only insofar as they stand in relations of material incompatibility and consequence (his "determinate negation" and "mediation") to one another. Those content-conferring relations are what are expressed explicitly by statements of law and of

the relations articulating what is misunderstood as the inverted world. So they play that framework-explicating nondescriptive expressive role that Kant discovered (even though Hegel's account of the nature and significance of that discovery is different from Kant's).[159]

A further step toward understanding how Hegel's notion of infinity differs from the Kantian idea on which it is built shows up in this passage (already cited above in a different context):

Infinity, or this absolute unrest of pure self-movement, in which whatever is determined in one way or another, e.g. as being, is rather the opposite of that determinateness, this no doubt has been all along the soul of all that has gone before…but it is as '*explanation*' that it first freely stands forth…[160]

I have referred to infinity as a "structure", and in the broadest sense I think that is appropriate. But it is correct only if the term is not restricted to something static. This key claim is that infinity can only be understood in terms of the movement of understanding consciousness, which first shows up as "traversing the moments" inferentially in explanation. Statements of necessary lawful consequence and expressions of exclusive difference as noncompossibility play their distinctive role in expressing norms governing these explanatory movements of the understanding. In this game, empirical descriptions specify *positions*, while modal statements of necessity and possibility constrain *moves*. The reifying descriptivist mistake Hegel diagnoses in the last two conceptions of supersensible worlds, the realm of laws and the inverted world, is to think of specifications of the moves on the representational model of specifications of further positions—which then must be thought of as positions of a special kind. (What was wrong with the supersensible world of theoretical entities postulated by invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism was not that theoretical entities were understood as empirically describable, just as observable ones are, but the invidious contrast between them as exclusively real and their observable expressions as mere appearance.) Thought of this way, the mistake Hegel is diagnosing belongs in a box with that made by the Tortoise in Lewis Carroll's "Achilles and the Tortoise": treating rules in accordance with which to reason as though they were premises from which to reason.[161]

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[159] I discuss this Kantian categorial idea and what subsequent philosophers such as Carnap and (especially) Sellars make of it in the first half of Chapter 1 of *From Empiricism to Expressivism*, and the alethic modal case specifically in Chapters 4 and 5.

[160] [163]. "Stands forth" is translating "hervortreten."

[161] "Conclusions are drawn from premises in accordance with principles, not from premises that embody those principles," as Gilbert Ryle puts the point "'If,' 'So,' and 'Because'", in *Philosophical Analysis: A Collection of Essays*. Max Black (ed.) [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950] p. 328.

To understand the sense in which the modal articulation of the objective empirical world is not to be understood to be something alongside the actual world (even in a universe of merely possible worlds) but as something *within* it, something *implicit* in it, then, we must focus on the *process* that Hegel calls the "movement of the understanding." He tells us that that movement first shows up in the development of understanding consciousness in the guise of understanding conceiving of itself as explaining. That is the process, *inter alia*, of making what is implicit in the actual empirical world as it is in itself explicit for consciousness. ("An sich" can mean both in itself and implicit, and Miller uses both translations.) It is a general principle for Hegel that we are to understand what is implicit in terms of the process by which it is made explicit. One of the reasons it is so hard to understand these concluding paragraphs of the *Consciousness* chapters is that at this point in the book we have not been told much about this process. We can bring to bear what we learned about the experience of error in the *Introduction*, and the anaphoric recollective dimension of repeatability in *Sense Certainty*, but I take it that the principal conceptual raw materials that need to be deployed to fill in what Hegel says here about the movement that reveals the understanding as infinite only become available for us in the *Reason* chapter. We are told that understanding consciousness conceiving itself as infinite is in a position to see itself in its object even though it does not yet do so. That insight is something to understanding consciousness, implicit in what it does, but not yet explicitly for understanding consciousness. Hegel discusses consciousness that *does* explicitly see itself in the world that is the object of its knowledge and the arena of its action under the rubric of *reason*:

Reason is the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality; thus does idealism express its Notion.[162]

So it makes sense to appeal to what we learn by the end of the *Reason* chapter to fill in the account that is sketched in such spare terms at the end of *Consciousness*. In particular, this will let us understand the further strand of idealism that is added here: the sense in which understanding consciousness conceiving itself as infinite is in a position to see itself in the object of its knowledge, beyond what is afforded by the conceptual realism and objective idealism already on board. This is what I am calling "conceptual idealism," which is explicitly invoked in the passage just quoted.

III

The movement of the understanding that first shows up as inferentially traversing the moments in explanation is an aspect of the larger movement that in the *Introduction* Hegel calls

[162] [233].

"*experience*." (At the time he wrote the *Force and Understanding* chapter, the working title of the book was still *Science of the Experience of Consciousness*.)

The focus of the discussion of experience in the *Introduction* is the experience of *error*. The aspect of conceptual content on which inferential explanation turns is necessary consequential relations of the sort made explicit in statements of law. The aspect of conceptual content on which the experience of error turns is material incompatibility or exclusive difference—since the experience of error is triggered by finding oneself with incompatible commitments. The broadening of topic from what is representationally reified by descriptivist understanding consciousness as the calm realm of laws to what it representationally reifies as the inverted world accordingly corresponds to a widening of focus from one focused on explanation to one that encompasses also the experience of error.

In the discussion of Hegel's *Introduction* I offered an account of the experience of error that was also informed by looking ahead to the lessons I take to be put in place in the later *Reason* chapter. Hegel's conception of experience is built on Kant's account of the cognitive activity that, as he puts it, "synthesizes an original unity of apperception." The unity in question is a rational unity of doxastic commitments, governed by a regulative ideal that I take to comprise three dimensions of rational obligation. Knowers have an *ampliative* rational task-responsibility to acknowledge commitment to the inferential consequences of their commitments. They have a *justificatory* rational task-responsibility to have reasons providing evidence for their commitments. And they have a *critical* rational task-responsibility to acknowledge and repair incompatibilities among their commitments. A constellation of judgments that evolves (is "synthesized") in response to these rational demands exhibits the rational structural unity distinctive of apperception. Practical acknowledgement of these normative rational demands is the self-consciousness in virtue of which the elements of that constellation count as *judgments*, which are the unit of Kantian consciousness. They are the minimal units for which one can take rational responsibility, which is the responsibility to integrate them into a constellation exhibiting the distinctive kind of unity normatively governed by rational ampliative, justificatory, and critical obligations.

In his conception of experience as the experience of *error*, Hegel emphasizes the *critical* rational task-responsibility: the responsibility to resolve conflicts arising from the *material incompatibility* of judgments. Already with Kant, judgments are intelligible as such, as semantically contentful, just in virtue of standing in the relations of material incompatibility and

necessary consequence appealed to by the rational task-responsibilities governing their synthetic integration into an apperceptive unity. Hegel is impressed by the *pragmatist* order of explanation implicit in Kant's story: the way in which the notion of *semantic* content is to be understood in terms of *pragmatics*, that is, functionally, in terms of the role of (what then become intelligible as) judgments in the practical discursive process (Hegel's "experience") that synthesizes a constellation of doxastic commitments exhibiting a rational apperceptive unity. As we saw in discussing the *Introduction*, the rational requirement to revise one's commitments in the face of their incompatibility gives experience the shape of a continual unmasking of what was *to* consciousness the way things are in themselves, what it took to be the facts expressed by true judgments, as appearance, as merely what things were *for* consciousness. In addition to this emphasis on and interpretation of the significance of the critical dimension of the rational responsibilities constitutive of Kantian apperception, Hegel adds a further one that is decisive for his account of experience. It first comes to the fore explicitly in the discussion of agency in the *Reason* chapter, but its centrality is emphasized in the final account of self-consciousness as reciprocal recognition taking the shape of confession and forgiveness at the end of the *Spirit* chapter. It is a *recollective* rational task-responsibility, given prominent place at the metalevel in *Absolute Knowing* under the heading of "Erinnerung."

The basic idea, I think, is that one cannot claim to know how things are in some respect unless one can offer a suitable explanation of how one came to know it or could have come to know it. If I claim to know what my sister in Seattle, 2500 miles away from me, is right now thinking, I owe a story about how I came by that information. (Perhaps she is texting me or talking to me on the phone.) In the absence of such a story, I am not entitled to my claim. This responsibility can, as in this case, overlap with the justificatory responsibility to have reasons for my beliefs, but is not identical to it, as Kant emphasizes in accusing "the celebrated Mr. Locke" of offering a mere "physiology of the understanding," a causal account of the antecedents of belief, in place of a proper epistemology, which would inquire not into modes of causal transmission of information but reasons justifying a belief. I might now be able to give sufficient reasons for a belief I acquired some time ago, even though those reasons were not available to me at the time. The requirement might be part of a KK principle: one cannot know unless one knows that one knows. But it incorporates what was right about Locke's emphasis on the processes that led to knowing. One might designate it an HK principle: one does not know unless one knows *how* one knows. Taking a candidate knower to have no idea, or a defective idea, about this would infirm the attribution of knowledge to that candidate. This much *epistemological self-consciousness* is required for the epistemic status of knowledge (the defining paradigm of consciousness). Having a belief that is *justified* by reasons, but not *vindicated* by a recollective story that rationally reconstructs a path by which one could find out that things are thus and so is, in Davidson's terms, believing *with* reasons but not yet believing *for* those reasons. By contrast to Davidson, for Hegel what is asked for

is not a mere causal story, for that would not rationalize the conclusion. (Davidson defines the difference in brute causal terms: believing *for* reasons requires only that the justifying reasons *somehow* cause the belief.) But it is not purely an nferential matter either.

Hegelian vindicating recollective stories at the ground level of empirical knowledge have the same structure as the ones Hegel tells in the *Phenomenology* at the metalevel of "shapes of consciousness." They exhibit a sequence constellations of commitments, each stage of which is leads to the next by a recounted experience of error. That is, each stage is found to contain an anomaly, a set of materially incompatible commitments, which might have been acquired either inferentially through the exercise of the knower's ampliative task-responsibility to extract necessary consequences of prior commitments, or immediately, through the exercise of noninferential perceptual capacities. The next stage is reached as a result of a determinate attempt to repair the anomaly that is thereby acknowledged as such, as the exercise of the knower's critical task-responsibility. The response to critical registration of the joint material incompatibility of a set of commitments that is *acknowledging* them *as* incompatible is practically accepting a normative obligation to *do* something to repair the epistemic situation, resolving the incompatibility. The repair phase can re-establish material coherence by revising on the one hand the doxastic commitments and on the other hand the consequential-and-incompatibility commitments relating them to other possible doxastic commitments. Revision might involve rejection of some commitments of either kind, or it might consist in less drastic adjustments and refinements. So finding oneself with commitments to the liquid tasting sour and turning Litmus paper blue, one is obliged to revise one's acid-concept that says that whatever would taste sour is an acid and whatever is an acid would turn Litmus paper red. One might do so by further qualifying the circumstances of appropriate application one takes to articulate the concept's content, so that only clear liquids that would taste sour count as acids, while preserving the consequences of application. Vindication differs from justification in part by its wider scope. For recollective rehearsal retrospectively rationally reconstructs not just the development of the *beliefs* currently held, but also of the *concepts* that articulate them. On the side of the objects of knowledge, it addresses the full modal spectrum, explaining not only how one came to believe how things *actually* are, but also how one came to take the necessities and (noncom)possibilities implicit in those actualities to be as they are.

Hegel thinks that there is no safe resting-place for this process of experience. For there is no constellation of doxastic and inferential-incompatibility commitments—commitments as to what is actual and what is necessary-

(noncom)possible—that is stable. *Every* such repertoire of empirical commitments is such that by applying the norms it incorporates *correctly* to the deliverances of sensuous immediacy, anomalies in the form of commitments that are incompatible according to those very norms will result. This is his version of the conceptual inexhaustibility of sensuous immediacy, the recalcitrance of empirical reality to being completely captured by determinate concepts. Every set of judgements and the concepts articulating them carries within it the seeds of its own destruction, in the form of liability to an eventual experience of error normatively requiring its repair and revision. This is part of what he means when he says that the final form of understanding consciousness takes the empirical world that is the object of knowledge to have the structure of "infinity." This conception of the conceptual inexhaustibility of sensuous immediacy contrasts strongly with that of Kant (and his empiricist forebears).[163] For Kant capturing sensuous actuality conceptually in judgments is an infinite task, in the sense that whatever set of empirical judgments one has does not exhaust the empirical judgments that could correctly be made, given the intuitions one is or will be presented with. My judgments can correctly capture conceptually what I see when I look at my hand, it is just that the task of capturing it *all* will require me to make a series of judgments that is infinite in the sense of never-ending. This is what Hegel calls "bad infinity." Construing the conceptual inexhaustibility of immediacy instead as the in-principle instability of any constellation of empirical concepts and doxastic commitments (commitments as to what material incompatibilities and consequences govern the actuality captured in judgments) means taking the experience of error to be a necessary structural feature of discursive practice. Because that experience is the unmasking of what was to consciousness reality as actually appearance, what things were taken to be in themselves as merely what they were for consciousness, it is a commitment to "appearance as the passing away that does not itself pass away," a structured sequence of what turn out to be phenomena.[164] The study of that structure of experience is phenomenology.

Focusing exclusively on the in-principle instability of determinate empirical concepts manifested in the ineluctability of the experience of error threatens to portray experience as a skeptical "path of despair." In the *Introduction*, Hegel sets out avoiding building that conclusion into our picture of knowledge as a principal epistemological criterion of adequacy on semantics. It is the recollective dimension of experience that redeems it as revelatory of the real. In doing so, it shows how acknowledging the evanescence of any and every particular constellation of discursive commitments properly leads not to *skepticism*, but to a particularly radical kind of *fallibilism*. It is radical in that Hegel's fallibilism not only permeates the web of belief at every stage of its development but penetrates through it, reaching all the way to the concepts that are implicit in and articulate that web as relations of material incompatibility and consequence relating candidate believables to what is actually believed.

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[163] I discuss these two contrasting approaches to the conceptual inexhaustibility of sensuous immediacy further in "Sketch of a Program for a Critical Reading of Hegel." [ref.]

[164] [ref.] to *Introduction*.

IV

To understand this role of the recollective phase of experience it is helpful to think of it in Fregean terms of sense and reference. This terminology was already invoked at two prior points in my story: in explaining first conceptual realism and then objective idealism. Thinking in these terms about how recollective rational reconstruction vindicates constellations of discursive commitments comprising both explicit doxastic and implicit incompatibility-and-inferential species provides a framework into which to set both conceptual realism and objective idealism, so as to deepen our understanding and appreciation of their significance. In the generic way in which I want to approach these terms, talk about "senses" is talk about what is sayable and thinkable. It is what is in suitable conceptual shape to be the content of (possible) knowings, in Hegel's terms what things can be *for* consciousness. Talk of "reference" is talk about what is talked or thought *about*, what is there to be (possibly) known, the objective realm of things as they actually are *in themselves*.

Expressed in this idiom, conceptual realism is the claim that reality, how things objectively are, in themselves, the totality of facts, no less than its appearances to consciousness in thought (how things are for consciousness), is conceptually structured and so sense-like. The realm of referents is a subregion of the realm of senses. The conceptual realm of graspable senses has no outer boundary. This is the view that McDowell expounds in *Mind and World*:

> [T]here is no ontological gap between the sort of thing one can mean, or generally the sort of thing one can think, and the sort of thing that can be the case. When one thinks truly, what one thinks *is* what is the case. So since the world is everything that is the case . . . there is no gap between thought, as such, and the world. Of course thought can be distanced from the world by being false, but there is no distance from the world implicit in the very idea of thought.[165]

Quoting this passage, Timothy Williamson objects to this way of thinking about things on the basis that it does not respect the distinction between sense and reference, as he understands it:

> [O]n a coherent and natural reading of "the sort of thing that can be the case," such things are individuated coarsely, by the objects, properties, and relations that they involve. Thus, since Hesperus *is* Phosphorus, what is the case if Hesperus is bright *is* what is the case if Phosphorus is bright: the objects are the same, as are the properties. On this

[165] John McDowell, *Mind and World* [Harvard University Press, 1994] p. 27.

reading, McDowell's claim "When one thinks truly, what one thinks *is* what is the case" is false, because what one thinks is individuated at the level of sense while what is the case is individuated at the level of reference.[166] Considering recollective processes will make visible a distinctively Hegelian rendering of the distinction and relation between sense and reference that vindicates conceptual realism in the face of this objection. It will also explain and justify the appeal made to the sense/reference distinction in formulating the thesis of objective idealism, asserting the reciprocal sense-dependence, but not reference-dependence, of concepts articulating the ontological structure of the objective world, such as object, property, fact, and law, on the one hand, and concepts articulating the processes and practices of talking and thinking about that world, such as referring, describing, judging or asserting, and inferring, (and so singular term, predicate, declarative sentence, and subjunctive conditional), on the other. The interpretive claim that objective idealism is an important component of Hegel's absolute idealism is substantially strengthened by showing that he made available (meta)conceptual raw materials underwriting versions of the concepts of sense and reference I have used to formulate that thesis specifically as a claim of sense-dependence without reference-dependence.

A recollective clarification of what I am talking about as Hegel's understanding of the distinction between senses and their referents (thinkables and what is thought about, representings and representeds) might begin with the Tarskian order of semantic explanation, whose greatest poet and prophet is Quine. It starts with a domain of objects and sets of those objects, as extensions, that is, referents, of singular terms and predicates. The strict Tarski-Quine semantics remains rigorously extensional, that is, it appeals only to reference--indeed, only to objects as merely different. Extensions can, it is true, be tracked from domain to domain, model to model (relational structure to relational structure), but nothing corresponding to *senses* emerges from doing so, except for purely logical vocabulary. Taking its cue from the constant intensions logical vocabulary exhibits in the framework of extensional model theory, however, the possible-worlds framework elaborated by Montague, Lewis, and Stalnaker shows how to erect a full-blown intensional semantics as a theory of senses, as a superstructure resting on the extensional Tarskian base. Senses show up as intensions, represented semantically by functions from indices (paradigmatically, possible worlds) to extensions. Seen from the vantage-point of the Lewisian possible worlds framework, extensional properties show up as *modally insulated*. That is, the question of what objects have what extensional properties is settled entirely by the facts at that world, depending not at all on what is true at any other point of evaluation. This

[166] Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy* [Blackwell Publishing, 2007], p. 16.

intensional semantics remains true to its Tarskian roots, in that the order of explanation is from reference to sense, extension to intension.

By contrast, the originator of the terminology of Sinn and Bedeutung we are considering, Frege as I read him introduces it in the context of an order of explanation that begins with senses and explains reference in terms of them. Senses are something like inferential roles. They are the successors of the "conceptual contents" (begriffliche Inhalten) he devises his Begriffsschrift to express perspicuously. Of them he says:

[T]here are two ways in which the content of two judgments may differ; it may, or it may not, be the case that all inferences that can be drawn from the first judgment when combined with certain other ones can always also be drawn from the second when combined with the same other judgments. The two propositions 'the Greeks defeated the Persians at Plataea' and 'the Persians were defeated by the Greeks at Plataea' differ in the former way; even if a slight difference of sense is discernible, the agreement in sense is preponderant. Now I call that part of the content that is the same in both the conceptual content. Only this has significance for our concept script [Begriffsschrift] ... In my concept script...only that part of judgments which affects the possible inferences is taken into consideration. Whatever is needed for a correct inference is fully expressed; what is not needed is...not.[167]

In his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik*, Frege considers how to talk about the objects referred to by singular terms in terms of the inferential roles of the singular terms. (He is particularly interested in the numbers referred to by numerals, but his discussion is fully general.) He identifies "recognition judgments" as the key to understanding what I am saying is in effect the path from senses to referents. Recognition judgments express the "recognition of an object as the same again" when specified in two different ways. This is what in the idiom of "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" becomes two senses picking out one and the same referent. Recognition judgments are identity claims, whose distinctive inferential role is to serve as intersubstitution licenses for the terms flanking what counts as an identity sign in just virtue of playing this substitution-inferential role. In effect, Frege explains referents by appealing to this dyadic relation among senses. That relation, intersubstitutability *salva veritate* (commitment to any claim essentially involving the primary occurrence of one term entails commitment to the corresponding claim formed from it by substituting an occurrence of the other term) is reflexive, symmetric, and transitive. Having these structural properties qualifies it as an equivalence relation. So it determines equivalence classes of singular term senses. Bedeutungen are introduced as corresponding to (in one sense determining, in another sense determined by) these equivalence classes of senses. It is this difference in fineness of grain that Williamson appeals to in his objection to McDowell's conceptual realism. If the world is indeed everything that is the case, that is, if it is a world of *facts*, the question is how finely individuated facts are. Frege himself, like McDowell, takes them to be as finely individuated as thoughts, that is, thinkables, senses. But he sharply distinguishes the realm of reference from the realm of sense, to which facts, as true thoughts=thinkables, belong.

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[167] Frege, *Begriffsschrift* [ref.] section 3.

Michael Dummett takes it that there is more to Frege's concept of Bedeutung than can be derived from this line of thought.[168] He distinguishes it, as articulating the "semantic role" conception of referents, which he credits Tugendhat with having identified, from what he calls the "name-bearer model." Frege does not seem to distinguish these two ways of approaching the concept of Bedeutung—possibly because of the universal truth for him of identity statements expressing recognition judgments of the form

⌜t⌝ = the Bedeutung of ⌜t⌝.

Dummett attributes his failure to distinguish what he takes to be two different senses of "Bedeutung" to confusion on Frege's part. Another hypothesis is that Frege offers the "semantic role" conception associating referents with equivalence classes of senses as an *analysis* of the name-bearer ("Fido"-Fido) model. More plausible than either of these readings, in my eyes, is that Frege thinks the name-bearer model gives us a merely intuitive grip on his technical concept, which cannot be made perspicuous and in any case applies only to the middle-sized bits of dry goods from which our concept object generalizes. In hard cases, it misleads.

In particular, when the issue is the nature of the numbers thought about in arithmetic, or more generally when the referents in question, like numbers, fall under sortals defined by recognition judgments formed from other kinds by appealing to abstraction—as the "semantic role" conception shows is the case with Bedeutung itself—invocation of the name-bearer model is a font of confusion. For that model invites ultimately bootless metaphysical speculation about the nature of the bearers associated with, say, numerals, and about the spooky (because, unlike the case with "Fido" and Fido, noncausal) nature of the relation between names and bearers. This is the sort of situation Wittgenstein warned us against (diagnosing the origin of distinctively philosophical puzzlements in misunderstanding the grammar when we extend one discursive practice to another) with his observation that thinking about the fact that if I have gold in my tooth it makes sense to ask where it was before it was in my tooth can lead one mistakenly to think that if I have a pain in my tooth it must make sense to ask where it was before it was in my tooth, and that if we had only used proper names for people and then started naming rivers, we might be tempted to think it must make sense to ask after the mother and father of the river. In any case, it seems clear that Frege adopts an order of explanation according to which the source of our first semantic grip on the concept of the referents determined by senses is the concept sense.

Hegel's account of the distinction and relation between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves, which I am recommending thinking of in terms of senses and referents, is like the Fregean and unlike the Tarskian in that the semantic order of explanation it adopts begins with senses rather than referents. It is distinguished from the Fregean account in that where Frege looked to a *dyadic symmetric* relation between senses, namely intersubstitutability *salva veritate*, to forge the link between sense and referent, the Hegelian account looks to *a*symmetric *sequences* of senses to do so. A recollective reconstruction

[168] Michael Dummett, *Frege's Philosophy of Language* [ref.] Ch. xxxx .

assembles appearances, ways things have been *for* consciousness, into *histories* that display them as successive, appearances *of* an underlying reality, presented by the constellation of claims and concepts in which that history culiminates (so far). The recollection exhibits a *process* by which how things really are, in themselves (according to it), was gradually, fitfully, but ultimately successfully revealed by different appearances of it. It traces an *expressively progressive* trajectory through the senses by which the referent was presented to the consciousness that thereby comes to know about it as it is in itself.

The sequence of senses is expressively progressive in that each successive step shows up as the making explicit of some feature of how things really are that can now be seen, retrospectively, to have been all along implicit in prior appearances of it. Each progressive step consists in an experience of error: the presence of an anomaly in the form of incompatible commitments, acknowledgement of the anomaly in the form of an effective practical obligation to repair it, a revision of beliefs and concepts (doxastic and commitments concerning material incompatibility and inferential consequence) that resolves the difficulty, and a story about what it was about the situation as it is thus discovered to be that accounts for the prior appearance, both insofar as it is now taken to have been veridical and insofar as it is now taken not to have been veridical. The rationally reconstructed history vindicates both the beliefs (doxastic commitments) the currently endorsed view comprises and the concepts (material inferential-and-incompatibility commitments) that articulate them.

A paradigm here is the acknowledgement by each successive scientific theory of an obligation to explain, given that things are as they are taken to be by that theory, why the theories it supplants were as right as they were, and why they erred and failed in just the ways they did. So Newtonians had to explain how the massless Cartesian system was correct about the things it was correct about, and why it could not explain what it could not explain, and Einsteinians correspondingly had to show how Newtonian mechanics approximated theirs for sufficiently slow, relatively small masses. Recollections offer the sort of Whiggish retrospective rational reconstruction traditional textbooks in science and math do. It is explained how we found out how things are, ignoring wrong turns, blind alleys, bad ideas, and degenerating research programs in favor of a step-by-step account of how inquiry revealed reality. The story is progressive in the sense Kant and his empiricist predecessors recognized: false beliefs are discarded and true ones accrued. But in addition to *doxastic* progress, it is also a story of *conceptual* progress, of how inferential norms that do not express alethically necessary consequences are discarded, and those that do endorsed, how commitments that were taken to be incompatible are discovered not to be, and *vice versa*. (When Frege thought about sortal predicates, he did not investigate their origins or credentials, or worry about the fact that people cheerfully count witches, humors, sins, and races.)

On this Hegelian account, what is *to* consciousness the way things are in themselves (the reality that has been being thought *about* all along, a referent) is a way they can be *for* consciousness (an appearance of that reality, a sense) that is *rationally endorsed*, i.e. to which it is committed *as* how things really are. The endorsement is rational in acknowledging rational task responsibilities of all four kinds governing the experience of error: ampliative, critical, justificatory, and recollective. That is, the endorsement is shown by recollection to arise in response to acknowledging material inferential consequences and incompatibilities, giving reasons, and historically vindicating the concepts articulating the commitments and their applications in judgment. The retrospective recollective rational reconstruction of how the truth was discovered at every point culminates in an appearance then endorsed as *veridical*, as one in which how things are in themselves shows up as being just how they are for consciousness. The other appearances are displayed as a sequence of progressively more and more adequate appearances *of* that eventually revealed reality. In this way the noumenon/phenomenon distinction is drawn within the realm of phenomena. Referents are a privileged kind of sense. Intentional aboutness, representation, is reconstructed as a relation within the conceptually articulated realm of graspable senses. Descriptions and what is described are the same kind of thing: Hegelian individuals, which are particulars *as* characterized by universals (this-suches, in effect, that state of affairs *that* S is P). What is described is presented by the true description of it.

V

This is an account of how the distinction that consciousness essentially involves, between how things are in themselves and how they are for consciousness (between truth and certainty) arises *within* consciousness and is something *to* it. It is, accordingly, a story about consciousness of consciousness, that is it is a story about *self*-consciousness. It is an understanding of what *experience* consists in. It is at every stage an experience of *error*, and at the same time the revelation of the *truth*. Error, in the form of the acknowledgment of anomalous commitments, commitments materially incompatible with one another according to the conceptual norms implicit in those commitments,

unmasks the commitments hitherto endorsed as not veridical, as not simply revealing how things have all along really been. They are seen now for what *they* really are: in some ways misleading, unveridical *appearances* of how things really are. (This is what Hegel talked about in the *Introduction* under the rubric of the "emergence of the second, new, true object.") The response to the realization that the knower has materially incompatible commitments (commitments that determinately negate one another) is not to negate those commitments *abstractly*, but *determinately*. That is, it is to replace them with another constellation of commitments (both the doxastic and those concerning inferential and incompatibility relations, which determine the conceptual contents available for endorsement) recollectively vindicated as expressing the reality that appearance is an appearance of. That is, the result of the experience of error is the revelation of the truth.

In the *Preface* Hegel describes how we are to think about this once we fully understand it (as phenomenal consciousness conceiving itself as understanding even at this stage in the book does not):
...in speculative [begreifenden] thinking…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.[169]
This is the process we have been talking about:
...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 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.[170]

It is essential to this conception that there is in principle no stable resting-place for the process of experience. No set of determinate concepts is such that by applying them correctly according to the norms governing them and exercising one's ampliative, rational task responsibility (tracing material inferential relations) one will not eventually find oneself with commitments that are materially incompatible with one another according to the norms governing them, so requiring the exercise of one's critical task responsibility. Error and truth are made intelligible as inextricably interwoven aspects of the process of experience. They are two sides of one coin.
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.[171]

[169] [59].
[170] [36].
[171] [39].

For understanding consciousness to conceive itself under categories of *infinity* is for it to understand its object, the objective world as it really is, in itself, as what is revealed, discovered, by the process of experience, understood as having this character.

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….

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.[172]

Saying that the arising and passing away that is the unmasking of commitments as appearances of an at least somewhat different reality does not itself arise and pass away is saying that experience will always include the experience of error, the motor of change and development of views and concepts. That is what is, according to each rationally reconstructed retrospective recollection, the process that also reveals the truth about how things really are, in themselves. It is the "movement of the life of truth." In Hegel's striking metaphor of truth as a "vast Bacchanalian revel" [Taumel], the tipsiness of the revelers marks their being in constant motion, lurching uncertainly, now in one direction, now in another. The wine (Hegel's favorite tipple already from his school days) that in the metaphor fuels the commotion is *reason*, in particular the ampliative and critical rational task-responsibilities that are practical norms corresponding to semantogenic relations of material consequence and incompatibility. Hegel says "Thus Verständigkeit too is a becoming, and, as this becoming, it is reasonableness Vernünftigkeit."[173] The same wine that fuels the revel guarantees that each member of the drinking party, each constellation of commitments, will eventually wear itself out and collapse beneath the table, only to have its place taken by a still somewhat soberer successor. Truth is not a property of any particular stage in the party, but of how it develops. "The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development...."[174]

The process of recollectively retrospectively rationally reconstructing an expressively progressive trajectory through the welter of actual experiences of error to yield senses (a constellation of commitments, both doxastic and the material consequential and incompatibility commitments that articulate them) that are endorsed as presenting how things actually are in themselves, what all the other senses have been all along and more and more faithfully

[172] [47]. Emphasis added.
[173] [55].
[174] [21].

representing, defines a distinctive sense in which what is discerned as having been implicit is expressed explicitly. The reality that the successive appearances are presented as appearances *of*, the represented referents that they have all along been *about*, is seen as having been *implicit* in them. The recollected sequence of experience vindicates the constellation of commitments in which it culminates by showing how what was implicit comes gradually to be expressed, how it emerges step by step into the light of explicit day. This sense in which experience is the path of truth as the making explicit of the reality that was semantically implicit in the sequence of never-wholly-veridical appearances, in the sense of being what those representings represent must be carefully distinguished from the sense in which relations of material incompatibility and consequence of the sort expressed explicitly by statements of law are implicit in the determinate facts and possible states of affairs they govern.

This latter is the sense put in place as the lesson Hegel draws for us from consideration of the reifiying "two worlds" views, which treat the consequences and incompatibilities as more determinate things like those described by empirical statements of fact, just things located "jenseits", in a kind of supersensible world, whether the calm realm of laws or the inverted world. The mistaken thought behind these conceptions is that the facts about which objects exhibit which properties are *modally insulated*—in that sense, extensional. That is, it is the thought that they are intelligible as the determinate facts they are independently of what else *might*, or *must*, or *cannot* be true. Statements expressing those additional modal relations are construed as descriptive, fact-stating statements, just like the ordinary ground-level empirical descriptive claims that state how things merely are. They just describe a different *kind* of world, state a different *kind* of fact. The proper conception, Hegel tells us, is one in which the *conceptual articulation* of objective facts, made explicit in statements of necessary consequence and noncompossibility, are *implicit* in the objective determinate facts described by ground-level empirical statements of how things are. The crucial insight Hegel is offering, as I read him, is that *all* objective empirical properties (a class we have learned is not to be taken to be restricted to *observable* properties) are *modally involved*. Asserting that they obtain always essentially involves committing oneself to subjunctive consequences, to what would, could, and could not happen *if* other states of affairs *were* to obtain. The culprit here is the idea that there is a distinction between modally insulated and modally involved properties, and further that the former are antecedently intelligible independently of the latter. This is the fundamental idea on which the Tarski-Quine extensional order of semantic explanation is based, and through it, the Lewis-Stalnaker possible worlds picture of modality built on it—what Hegel is prophetically, if proleptically criticizing under the rubric of the "inverted world." It is this conception I used as the starting-point of the recollective sketch of an expressively progressive development from a Tairskian order of semantic explanation through a Fregean one to the Hegelian—counter-chronological though this rational reconstruction is.

Understanding consciousness conceiving itself and its object as having the structure Hegel calls "infinity" has won through by its metalevel experience (as Hegel recollects it for us) to the realization that objective facts are conceptually structured, they and the properties they involve are determinate only insofar as they stand in modal relations of necessary consequence and incompatibility to each other and to other possible states of affairs and properties. All properties are modally involved because being determinate is incompatible with being modally insulated. It is in this sense that the alethic modal relations made explicit by statements of laws are implicit in the objective facts, whatever they are. On Hegel's hylomorphic conception of conceptual content, this same structure visible in the objective pole of the objects of knowledge is mirrored on the deontic side of the subjects of knowledge. Doxastic commitments as to how things really, objectively, are have the determinate conceptual contents they do only in virtue of being articulated by commitments to the goodness of subjunctively robust material inferential relations and relations of material incompatibility. On the side of the cognitive activity of subjects, these are deontic normative relations: norms according to which a commitment with one content necessarily commits one to endorsing other contents that follow from it, and precludes one from entitlement to still others. In each case the modal relations of consequence and incompatibility, whether alethic or deontic, are to be understood as implicit in, as conceptually articulating, the contents of thinkables, both facts and judgments. We have seen that this hylomorphic *conceptual realism* is explicated further by the claims of *objective idealism*. It asserts the reciprocal sense-dependence of concepts expressing the ontological structure of objective reality, concepts such as object, property, fact, and law, and concepts expressing framework-constituting features of norm-governed discursive activities, practices, or processes, such as referring, classifying, asserting, and inferring. The *Perception* chapter explains the sense in which relations of material incompatibility and consequence must be thought of as implicit in taking the objective world to consist of facts about properties characterizing objects, and the *Force and Understanding* chapter does the same for a broadened conception of facts and the subjunctively robust consequential and incompatibility relations implicit in them.

This is *not* the sense of "implicit" in which recollection displays how things are in themselves as the explicit expression of what was all along implicit in the earlier stages of a reconstructed sequence of appearances of that reality for consciousness. To understand the recollective sense, we must already understand the sense that emerges already from the hylomorphic picture of

conceptual content as showing up both in objective form as facts implicitly articulated by alethic modal relations of necessary consequence and noncompossibility and in subjective form as judgings articulated by deontic normative relations of material inference and incompatibility.[175] And the recollective sense of implicitness and its expression, understood as a theory of the semantic relation between senses and their referents, progressively transforms our understanding of the distinction between reference-dependence and sense-dependence, which is critical to the specification of the claims constitutive of objective idealism, by making possible the transposition of the sense/reference distinction from the Fregean key in which it was introduced into a Hegelian one. The path to what I have been calling "conceptual idealism" is paved by the recollective construal of the sense in which the in-itself ("Ansichsein") is implicit in how things are for consciousness.

> Already something thought, the content is the property of individuality; existence has no more to be changed into the form of what is in-itself and implicit [Ansichsein], but only the <u>implicit</u> into the form of what is <u>explicit</u>, of what is objective to self [Fursichseins].[176]

Miller translates the middle part of this passage as: "but only the <u>implicit</u>—no longer merely something primitive, nor lying hidden within existence, but already present as a *recollection*—into the form of what is <u>explicit</u>…" I think the parenthetical remark is just right. The best way to understand what Hegel is saying here is to pair it with one of the claims with which the meta-recollection that is the *Phenomenology* concludes: "[R]ecollection, the inwardizing, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance."[177]

Conceptual idealism is ultimately to be understood in terms of this *process* of *making* what is implicit explicit. This is a dimension of *making* that turns out to be an essential aspect of *finding*. Engaging in the full, ongoing experience of error, including the recollective reconstructive phases that show it also to be the revelation of truth, is what subjects must *do* in order thereby to *discover* how things anyway already objectively were. One important strand in German

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[175] Hylomorphic conceptual realism is what Hegel makes of Spinoza's thought that "the order and connection of things is the same as the order and connection of ideas," [ref.], which in turn is what Spinoza made of Descartes's modeling of the relation between mind and world on the global isomorphism between discursive equations and extended figures in his analytic geometry.

[176] [29].

[177] [808].

Idealism, starting with Kant, is a recoil from the idea of knowing as having as its ideal the passive reflection of how things are, with no omissions and no alterations. In its place they put an orienting concern with knowing as a distinctive kind of practical doing. Hegel's conceptual idealism, as I understand it, develops from consideration of the sense in which recollection *produces* the in-itself that it reveals as what is represented by the sequence of more-or-less adequate representings of it.

This sense of making or producing the reality behind its appearances (the referents those senses represent) is *sui generis*. To begin with, it is emphatically not to be confused with reference-dependence. The claim is not that recollectively reconstructing a course of experience, so revealing it as at once driven by error and the process by which truth is discovered, *causally* brings into existence the objective reality it comes to know. On the contrary, things would still largely be as they objectively are even if there were no knowers. Nor is it a relation of mere sense-dependence. Recollection is the *doing* that *produces* the distinction, essential to consciousness, of what is *to* consciousness what things objectively are, in themselves and what is *to* consciousness only how those things appear *for* consciousness. It is what we must understand to understand how that distinction can show up to consciousness itself, and hence why and how the concept of consciousness essentially involves the concept of self-consciousness. But sense-dependence is an essentially *semantic* relation: a relation between *senses* or contents.

Conceptual idealism asserts rather a dependence of *semantics* on *pragmatics*. For it explains the semantic relation between sense and reference in terms of *recollecting*: an activity, a practice, a process. In its broadest usage, pragmatics is the study of discursive activities, practices, or processes—such things as referring, describing, fact-stating, and inferring. This dependence of semantic relations on pragmatic activities does underwrite the more controversial direction of sense-dependence asserted by objective idealism: the dependence of concepts of an ontological metavocabulary, such as object, property, fact, and law on concepts of a pragmatic metavocabulary, such as referring, describing, asserting, and inferring. For that sense dependence reflects the dependence of the first set of concepts on the *practices expressed by* the second set of concepts.

So the *sui generis* asymmetric dependence relation asserted by conceptual idealism is not to be assimilated either to reference-dependence or to sense-dependence, for two reasons. First, the semantic relations it addresses are not between referents and referents or senses and senses, but

between senses and referents. Second, the dependence it asserts is not in the first instance a *semantic* dependence at all. It is rather the mode of dependence of the semantic relation between senses and referents on the pragmatic activity of subjects, who manipulate senses through all the phases and aspects of experience in order to determine the relation between representing senses and the referents they represent. If we view how it stands between thought in the sense of episodes of thinking and the thinkable facts that are thought about from the retrospective vantage point afforded by a recollective vindication of some endorsed constellation of doxastic commitments concerning what is actual and subjunctively robust commitments concerning relations of consequence and incompatibility (which is Hegel's dynamic analog of sensuous immediacy and conceptual articulation each make their distinctive contributions to judgment), we can regard that intentional nexus either from the objective side of what is known or from the subjective side of the knowing of it. The currently endorsed commitments are presented as constituting genuine knowledge, which is to say that things are in themselves what they are for consciousness. One constellation of conceptual contents takes two forms: on the objective side, as facts and their implicit alethic modal involvements, and on the subjective side as judgments and their implicit deontic normative involvements.

The recollective vindication of this culminating (so far) stage of the development of what Hegel calls "the Concept" explains how representing senses came to *track* the represented referents *nomologically*, and also by the same process how represented referents came to *govern* the representing senses *normatively*. The first is matter of alethic modal relations, of the kind characteristic of the represented objective world. The second is a matter of deontic normative practices, of the kind characteristic of the representing subjects's activity. They are both systematic dependences, but neither of the reference-dependence nor of the sense-dependence semantic variety, even when reference and sense are understood on the Hegelian rather than the Fregean model. They concern rather the semantogenic alethic relations and deontic processes that *institute* the semantic relations between senses and their referents. The recollective reconstruction of experience exhibits the progressive achievement of, on the one hand, an alethic modal tracking relation supporting subjunctively robust inferences from how things are for consciousness to how they are in themselves, and on the other hand, deontic normative practices whereby how things are in themselves serves as a normative standard for assessments of the correctness of the deontic commitments that constitute how they are for consciousness.

Conceptual idealism, in asserting the distinctive kind of explanatory and conceptual priority of pragmatics over semantics that is embodied in taking the recollective dimension of experience to provide the framework within which to understand the institution of semantic relations between representing senses and represented referents, thereby asserts a practical priority of, and asymmetric dependence relation between, norm-governed experiential practices made explicit by the use of deontic vocabulary and nomological tracking relations made explicit by the use of alethic vocabulary. The fact that the ampliative, critical, and recollective rational task-responsibilities normatively govern the manipulation of conceptual contents (senses) in the process of experience constitutes the experiencing subject's practically treating how things are in themselves as providing a normative standard for assessing the correctness of how things are for consciousness. (The reciprocal sense-dependence asserted by the thesis of objective idealism is a reflection of this fact.) And it is that norm-governed process that selectively institutes, shapes, and refines the nomological tracking of how things are in themselves by how things are for consciousness, of referents by senses. Hylomorphic *conceptual realism*, which makes intelligible the possibility of genuine knowledge by understanding conceptual content as actualizable in two forms, an objective form articulated by alethic modal relations of necessary consequence and noncompossibility and a subjective form articulated by deontic normative relations of necessary consequence and noncompossibility, and *objective idealism*, which asserts the reciprocal sense-dependence of concepts articulating the ontological structure of the objective world and concepts articulating the pragmatic structure of subjective discursive practices, both exhibit the intentional nexus in terms that are *symmetric* as between its objective and its subjective poles. The *conceptual idealism* that digs deeper to explain these less radical Hegelian theses breaks this symmetry. It asserts a both a practical and a conceptual priority of norm-governed discursive practices over alethic modal relations in understanding what it is for there to be an objective world that is at once the cause of sense and the goal of intellect (the first a nomological matter, the second a normative one).

In vindicating one constellation of senses as veridical, conferring on them the normative status of expressing explicitly how things have all along implicitly really been as what was represented by the representing senses that were its more-or-less adequate appearances, which is the status of serving as a normative standard for assessing the correctness of all such appearances, a recollective reconstruction of experience *selects* the alethic relations of senses tracking referents

that matter semantically. This sense in which recollection *produces* what things are in themselves, the represented referents semantically implicit in the representing senses, is *noncausal* production, because talk of causation is couched in an alethic modal vocabulary. I have described it as "*sui generis*" because of the way in which it is distinguished from the semantic relations of reference-dependence (of which causal dependence is a principal species) and sense-dependence.

There is however, as we will discover, in reading the *Reason* chapter, an analogous sort of production that arises in considering exercises of intentional agency. The analogy there is not, as one might be led to expect by popular misunderstandings that assimilate Hegel's idealism to Berkeleyan subjective idealism, the sense in which a practical agent produces a *deed*. Rather, it is the sense in which the agent recollectively produces an *intention* as what the deed makes explicit. The deed is indeed causally reference-dependent on the intention, as the knowing is causally reference-dependent on what is known. But the cause that is in each case *found* by the agent-knower is in the *sui generis* sense *made* "produced as the product" of the vindicatory retrospective recollective process. They are both, the cognitive and the practical species of recollective producings, instances of the distinctive kind of constrained *making* that is *finding* out how things always already anyway were. We readers of the *Phenomenology*, the phenomenological consciousness looking over the shoulder of different shapes of phenomenal consciousness at the meta-experiences by which its self-conception is transformed, will not be in a position fully to appreciate this genus until we consider self-consciousness and (so) agency: the distinction that action essentially involves as well as the distinction that consciousness essentially involves. So we won't fully understand this expressive model of making the implicit explicit on the cognitive side until we understand it on the practical side. What we are looking for is the cognitive analog of understanding the sense in which an intentional doing can be intelligible as the expression of an implicit intention, so that the acting consciousness can see itself in the actual deed it performs.

It is this analogy between knowing and doing in virtue of which understanding consciousness taking its object to have the structure of infinity finds itself in its object, and thereby *to* it consciousness shows up (*we* can see) as a form of *self*-consciousness. Although "it is only *for us* that this truth exists, not yet for consciousness," in fact the final form of understanding consciousness is distinguished from the previous shapes of consciousness for which their truth was a Thing, an 'other' than themselves, expresses just this, that not only is consciousness of a thing only possible for a self-consciousness, but that self-consciousness alone is the truth of

those shapes.[178] At this final stage, "what is, for the Understanding, an object in a sensuous covering, is *for us* in its essential form as a pure Notion."[179] For that reason we can see that "the Understanding experiences only *itself*," not something experienced as other than itself.[180] Since this Notion of infinity is an object for consciousness, the latter is consciousness of a difference that is no less immediately cancelled; consciousness is for its own self, it is a distinguishing of that which contains no difference, or self-consciousness.[181]

What does this mean? In what sense is the distinction between the subject of knowledge and the object of knowledge now considered to be not a distinction? What sort of difference is being denied? The three theses into which I have divided the idealism being recommended here, conceptual realism, objective idealism, and conceptual idealism, offer a succession of ever-deeper answers to this question. Each offers a sense in which the intentional nexus is understood as a distinctive kind of unity that in different senses cancels the distinction between its necessarily related poles, in virtue of their necessarily being bound into the sort of unity they are.

The first thesis tells us that among the differences being denied is a *strong difference of intelligibility* between what is known and the knowing of it, of exactly the sort that in the *Introduction* was diagnosed as leading to the impossibility of satisfying the Genuine Knowledge constraint, and hence to semantically enforced epistemological skepticism. Conceptual realism says that when the understanding consciousness looks out at what to it is the in-itself, it sees something already in conceptual shape, a world that is conceptually contentful just as its own thinking is. Consciousness's own thinkings confront a thinkable world. When all goes well epistemically, its representings and what they represent share the same conceptual content: how things are *for* consciousness just *is* how they are *in themselves*. There is no gulf of intelligibility separating intrinsically intelligible thinkings from intrinsically *un*intelligible (or at least *not* intrinsically intelligible) things thought *about*. Consciousness is conceptually structured, and the world it knows about is conceptually structured. This is one sense in which it no longer sees anything alien when it pushes aside the curtain of appearance and contemplates things as they are in themselves. According to the hylomorphic conception, mind and world alike consist of thinkables. Those thinkable contents just show up in two

[178] [164].
[179] [165].
[180] Ibid.
[181] [164].

different forms: an *objective* one in which the relations of noncompossibility or exclusive difference and necessary consequence articulating the conceptual contents are *alethic modal* ones, and a *subjective* one in which the relations of noncompossibility or exclusive difference and necessary consequence articulating the conceptual contents are *deontic normative* ones.

Objective idealism goes further, showcasing the particularly intimate connection between these two forms conceptual content can take. That connection manifests itself in the fact that at the metalevel, the concepts used to express explicitly key features of the modal ontological structure of the objective world and the concepts used to express explicitly key features of the deontic normative structure of discursive practices and processes are reciprocally sense-dependent. What it means to say or think that the world consists of facts about the possession of properties by objects and lawful connections among them has to be understood in terms of concepts making explicit what one is *doing* in asserting declarative sentences (judging) by referring to objects with singular terms and classifying them by applying predicates, and in endorsing subjunctively robust inferences between what those sentences express. In this sense, neither form conceptual content can take, objective and subjective, is intelligible considered all on its own, apart from its relation to the other. In this sense, too, there is no gulf separating them. They mutually presuppose one another—not in a causal reference-dependence sense, but in the rational sense-dependence sense. The task of understanding the most basic ontological structure of the world turns consciousness back to the terms it uses to make explicit its own discursive activity.

In a final further step, conceptual idealism asserts that when, as self-conscious in the sense of being conscious of itself *as* conscious, consciousness distinguishes between its certainty and truth, between what things are for it and what they are in themselves, between appearance and reality, representings and representeds, it is neither alienating itself from itself, nor acknowledging a confrontation with something alien to it. Its finding out how things really is a distinctive kind of active recollective *making* of that distinction, which is essential to consciousness as such, through its experience. The world as it is in itself *as* distinct from how it is for consciousness is not a brute other but in that distinctive sense the product of its own recollective activity in experience. In this sense it finds only what it has made—and not only made findable. In this sense, it sees itself in the objects of its knowledge, even insofar as they transcend that knowledge.

Understanding the object of knowledge conceptually, as Begriff, means reconstruing representational relations within a model of practices of explicitly expressing the implicit. The focus is not on the object as something simply there, but on what Hegel calls the "coming-to-be of the object," its emergence into explicitness. By contrast to representational thinking Speculative [begreifendes] thinking behaves in a different way. Since the Notion [Begriff] is the object's own self, which presents itself as the *coming-to-be* [Werden] *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…[A]nd only this movement itself becomes the object.[182]

In a move foreshadowed by understanding the modal relations of necessity and noncompossibility articulating the conceptual contentfulness in virtue of which objective states of affairs are not understood representationally, as denizens of some other ontological realm, but expressively, as *implicit in* how things actually are, conceptual idealism presents how things are in themselves as *implicit in* how they are for consciousness—in a sense of "implicit" operationalized by recollective recovery of the reality exhibited as implicit in a rationally reconstructed sequence of partial expressions of it in appearance.

This realization is the rationale for turning our narrative attention in the *Phenomenology* from consciousness to *self*-consciousness, which has turned out to be, in Hegel's terms, its truth.

[182] [60].

Part Three

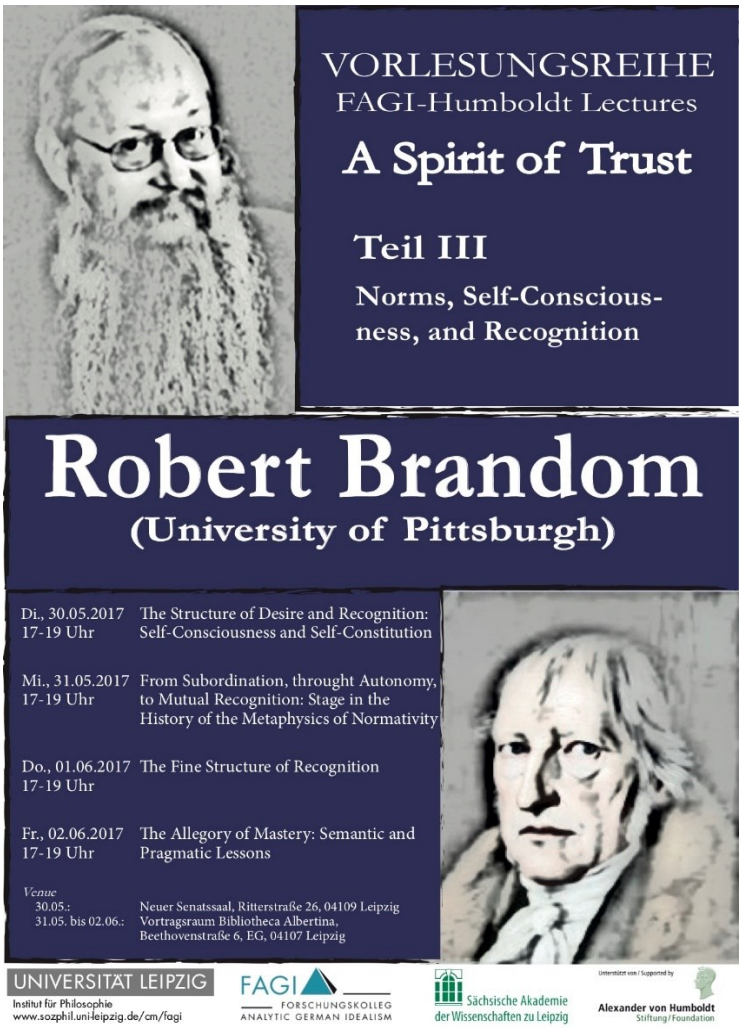
Norms, Self-Consciousness, and Recognition

Lecture 8: The Structure of Desire and Recognition:
Self-Consciousness and Self-Constitution

Lecture 9: From Subordination, through Autonomy, to Mutual Recognition:
Stages in the History of the Metaphysics of Normativity

Lecture 10: The Fine Structure of Autonomy and Recognition:
The Institution of Normative Statuses by Normative Attitudes

Lecture 11: The Allegory of Mastery: Pragmatic and Semantic Lessons



Handout for Lecture 8:

The Structure of Desire and Recognition:
Self-Consciousness and Self-Constitution

I. The Historicity of Essentially Self-Conscious Creatures

1. Definition: A creature is "essentially self-conscious" iff what it is *for* itself is an essential element of what it is *in* itself.

2. Essentially self-conscious creatures are capable of a distinctive kind of self-*transformation*: *making* themselves be different by *taking* themselves to be different.

3. Essentially self-conscious beings don't have *natures*, they have *histories*.

II. Identification, Risk, and Sacrifice

4. For some features of one's self-conception to *be* essential is for one to *take* or *treat* them *as* essential. Doing that is *identifying* with those aspects of what one is *for* oneself.

5. One identifies with those elements of what one is *for* oneself for which one is willing to *risk* and *sacrifice* elements of what one is *in* oneself.

6. "It is only through staking one's life that freedom is won; only thus is it proved that for self-consciousness, its essential being is not [just] being, not the immediate form in which it appears, not its submergence in the expanse of life, but rather that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as vanishing moments, that it is only pure being-for-self." [*PG* §187]

7. Hegelian *Erfahrung*, the process of experience, ought to be understood as having this same general shape of identification and sacrifice. Each acknowledged *error* or *failure* calls for an act of self-identification: the endorsement of some of the mutually incompatible commitments one has found oneself with, and the sacrifice of others.

III. Creatures Things Can Be Something *For*: Desire and the Tripartite Structure of orectic Awareness

8. orectic awareness has a tripartite structure, epitomized by the relations between *hunger*, *eating*, and *food*.

9. The three elements are:
   a) an *attitude* or desire, e.g. **hunger**,
   b) a responsive *activity*, e.g. **eating**, and
   c) a *significance,* e.g. **food**.

   The three principal relations are:

   d) The attitude must *motivate* the activity, in the sense of *activating* a (more or less reliable, in a sense determined by the assessments in (f) below) disposition to respond differentially to objects.
   e) Responding to an object by engaging in the activity is taking or treating it in practice *as* having a significance defined by the attitude that motivates the activity. This is the *subjective* significance of the object.

f) The desiring attitude *assesses* the object, implicitly attributing to it an *objective* significance, accordingly as responding to it by engaging in the activity the attitude motivates does or does not satisfy the desire. If it does not, if what the object was subjectively or *for* the animal does not coincide with what it was objectively, or *in* itself, that is, if the activity was not *successful* in satisfying the motivating desire, then an *error* has been committed. In that case the desire motivates *changing* the reliable differential responsive disposition to engage in the associated activity when activated by the desire and stimulated by a range of objects.

IV. From Desire to Recognition: Two Interpretive Challenges

10. We should apply the answer we have in hand to the question "What is it for things to be something *for* a creature?" to the more specific case: "What is it for *selves* to be something things can be for a creature?" That is:
    - What would be required for the orectic significance something had for a desiring animal to be not *food* or *predator*, but *self* or *subject*, in the sense of something things can be something *for*?
    - Once we understand what it is to take or treat things as selves or subjects, what must one do to take *oneself* to be a thing of that kind, to take oneself to be a *self*?

11. Two challenges:
    - The *philosophical* challenge is to see what sort of an account of self-consciousness one can produce by applying the tripartite account of orectic awareness to itself.
    - The *interpretive* challenge is see to what extent one can by doing that explain the index features characteristic of Hegel's distinctive claims about the nature of self-consciousness.

12. Two features of Hegel's master-concept of recognition [Anerkennung]:
    - Both self-conscious *individual* selves and the communities they inhabit (a kind of *universal* characterizing them) are synthesized by reciprocal recognition among *particular* participants in the practices of such a recognitive community. Self-consciousness is essentially, and not just accidentally, a *social* achievement.
    - Recognition is a *normative* attitude. To recognize someone is to take her to be the subject of normative statuses, that is, of commitments and entitlements, as capable of undertaking responsibilities and exercising authority. This is what it means to say that as reciprocally recognized and recognizing, the creatures in question are *geistig*, spiritual, beings, and no longer merely natural ones.

13. Passages:
    - "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged….The detailed exposition of the Notion of this spiritual unity in its duplication will present us with the process of Recognition." [*PG* §178].
    - "A self-consciousness exists for a self-consciousness. Only so is it in fact self-consciousness; for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness become explicit for it. The 'I' which is the object of its Notion is in fact not 'object'; the object of Desire, however, is only independent, for it is the universal indestructible substance, the fluid self-identical essence. A self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much 'I' as 'object'. With this, we already have before us the Notion of Spirit. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'." [*PG* §177].
    - "But according to the Notion of recognition this [that a self-consciousness' certainty of itself have truth] is possible only when each is for the other what the other is for it, only when each in its

own self through its own action, and again through the action of the other, achieves this pure abstraction of being-for-self." [*PG* §186].

14. Two issues that arise in understanding the discussion of recognition and self-consciousness:
    - How are we to understand the transition from the discussion of the concept of desire to the discussion of the concept of recognition?
    - Why should it be the case that *reciprocal* (that is, *symmetric*) recognition is a necessary condition of *reflexive* recognition (that is, self-consciousness, awareness of oneself *as* a self).

15. Fact:
    - *If* a relation is both symmetric and transitive, then it is also reflexive, and hence is an equivalence relation.
    - That is, if $\forall x,y$ [xRy→yRx] and $\forall x,y,z$[xRy&yRz→xRz], then $\forall x$[xRx].
    - For we can just apply the transitivity condition to the symmetry pairs xRy and yRx to yield xRx.
    - So *if* recognition were (for some reason) *de jure* transitive—if it were part of the nature of recognition that one is committed to recognizing anyone recognized by someone one recognizes—*then* achieving *de facto* symmetry of recognition would suffice for achieving *de facto* reflexivity of recognition.

16. In what follows, we'll see how the tripartite account of orectic awareness can be used in a natural way to build a notion of recognition that satisfies these twin philosophical constraints on the interpretation of Hegel's notion of self-consciousness in terms of recognition. Doing so will both clarify the nature of the transition from *desire* to *recognition* and explain why *reciprocal* recognition is the key to *self-consciousness*.

V. Simple Recognition: Being something things can be something *for* being something things can be *for* one

17. To understand *recognition*, the tripartite structure of orectic awareness must be applied *twice*:
    - It is the structure of the whole thing: "Self-consciousness is desire." [§174]; recognition is a form of orectic awareness.
    - The *significance* attributed to an object, what it is *for* the organism exhibiting the orectic awareness in question, is to be orectically aware: to be something things can be something *for*. That is, the *significance* attributed by engaging in a responsive *activity* and assessed by the motivating *attitude* must itself exhibit the tripartite structure of orectic awareness.

18. The tripartite structure of orectic awareness (TSOA) tells us that the two big questions that must be answered are these:
    - What *activity* is it that institutes this significance (namely, having the TSOA)? That is, what is it that one must *do*, how must one *respond* to something, to count thereby as *taking* or *treating* it *as* exhibiting the TSOA? What is to the TSOA as *eating* is to *food*?
    - What *desire* or other *attitude* is it that motivates that *activity* and *assesses* the *success* of taking something *as* having the orectic significance of being a TSOA, i.e. being something things can be something *for*? What is to the TSOA as *hunger* is to *food*?

19. Two suggestions:
    - We may call what I must *do*, the *activity* that I must engage in, in order thereby to be *taking* or *treating* something in practice *as* something things can be something *for*, "recognizing" that other creature. Recognizing others is attributing to them the practical significance of exhibiting the

tripartite structure of orectic awareness: taking them to be takers, subjects for whom things can have a practical significance relative to a desire and mediated by an activity.

- The desire or *attitude* that is the third element completing the TSOA whose attitude is recognizing and whose *significance* is exhibiting the TSOA is a *desire for recognition*: the desire that others take or treat one in practice as a taker, as something things can be something *for*, as one whose *attitudes* (orectic or normative) institute of *significances*.

20. If engaging in the instrumental activity of responding to others by recognizing them yields the result that the desire to be recognized is *satisfied*:
    - Then according to the TSOA the subjective significance the recognized ones have *for* the recognition-desirer shows up as being *correct*, as what they objectively are *in* themselves: subjects of significance-instituting attitudes and activities.
    - And what is required for that is just that one be recognized (for that is what it takes to satisfy the desire) by those one recognizes (for that, on the line of thought being considered, is what one must *do* in order, if all goes well, to satisfy the desire).
    - So it follows from the claim that the desire that completes the higher-order TSOA whose activity is recognition and whose instituted significance is exhibiting the TSOA is a desire for recognition that the recognition-desire can be satisfied only by achieving *reciprocal recognition*.

21. In order to give a reading of these claims in terms of the tripartite structure of orectic awareness, the black-box notion of recognition must be filled in so as to answer the following three questions:
    - Recognizing: What, exactly, is it that one must *do* in order to be recognizing someone? That is, what *is* the activity we have labeled 'recognizing'? How is it that doing that *is* taking or treating someone *as* exhibiting the tripartite structure of orectic awareness? What is the differential responsive disposition that is to be licensed by the instituting attitude?
    - Being recognized: Why should the desire to be taken or treated that way oneself, that is, to be recognized, be the one making appropriate that activity, namely, recognizing?
    - Self-Consciousness: Why does the reciprocal recognition that results when that desire for recognition is satisfied by recognizing someone else amount to *self-consciousness*, in the sense of applying a (proto-)conception of *selves* to oneself?

    The challenge is to give an answer to the first question that will entail plausible answers to the other two questions.

22. General vs. specific recognition:
    a) Specifically recognizing another is attributing the capacity to accord things a specific significance, e.g. as a K. Generally recognizing another is specifically recognizing that one for some value of K or other.
    b) Specifically recognizing another is acknowledging their K-responses as having a certain kind of *authority*:
    c) My taking *your* K-response to have been authorized by a K-desire that serves as a standard for the success of your K-taking, and taking that K-response to have been *correct* or *successful* by that standard is my acknowledging the *authority* of your K-taking in the practical sense of being disposed *myself* to take the thing you took to be a K *as* a K. Taking it that the kind of fruit you ate really was food, in that it satisfied *your* hunger is being disposed to eat that kind of fruit myself when and if *I* am hungry, i.e. have a *desire* of the same kind. My acknowledging *your* K-desire as *authoritative* consists in my treating it as *authorizing* for my *own* K-takings, should *I* have a K-desire. So specific recognition involves acknowledging another as having some authority concerning how things are (what things are Ks).

d) Doing that is treating you as one of *us*, in a primitive normative sense of 'us' instituted by just such specific recognitive attitudes.

VI: Robust Recognition: Specific Recognition of Another as a Recognizer

23. In treating the attitudes of the recognized other as having authority for those who do not feel them, the simple recognizer implicitly accords them a significance beyond that of mere desires: as *normatively* and not merely *immediately* significant attitudes.

24. What is it to take another not just to be orectically aware, but to be aware of others *as* orectically aware? What is it to recognize another as a simple recognizer, hence as itself the kind of thing for which things can have a specifically *normative* significance? Call that practical attitude *robust* recognition. Robust recognition is a kind of simple recognition: simple recognition of someone things can have a specific kind of orectic significance for, namely the significance of being something things can have orectic significances for.

25. What the robust recognizer must *do* to be taking someone as a simple recognizer is to acknowledge as authoritative whatever ground-level takings the one robustly recognized acknowledges as authoritative. And that is to say that the robust recognizer treats as *transitive* the inheritance of authority of ground-level takings that is what simple recognizing consists in.

26. Since robust recognition is the transitive closure of simple recognition, there is no difference between simple recognition of someone as a robust recognizer, and robust recognition (simple recognition of someone as a simple recognizer) of someone as a robust recognizer.

27. Transitivity: Recognizing as a recognizer is treating that one's recognitions as authoritative for one's own, so recognizing whoever he recognizes. So robust recognition is transitive: for what one is doing to be robust recognizing, it must include commitment to robustly recognize (simply recognize as a simple recognizer) whoever is robustly recognized by those one robustly recognizes.

28. We have now reached our explanatory-interpretive goal. For we wanted to know:
    1. how *recognition* should be understood to arise out of *desire*,
    2. how *normativity* should be understood as an aspect of *recognition*,
    3. how *self*-recognition, that is *reflexive* recognition relations, should be understood to require *reciprocal* recognition, that is to say *symmetric* recognition relations, and
    4. how *self-consciousness* should be understood to consist in the self-recognition achieved by reciprocal recognition.

    - The answer to the first question was supplied by seeing how the tripartite structure of orectic awareness could be applied to itself, so that what something was taken or treated in practice *as* was a desiring, significance-instituting creature.
    - The answer to the second was supplied by seeing how simple recognizing consists in the recognizer's achieving a mediated, distanced, relation to the immediate felt impulse of the recognized one's desire, in the form of its significance, conditional upon the recognizer's own desires, for the recognizer's own practical awareness. In this way the other's desire is practically acknowledged as *authoritative*, and the other's desire shows up for the recognizer in the shape of the recognizer's *commitment* or *responsibility*.
    - The answer to the third question was supplied by showing how (because of the idempotence of transitive closure operations) the social authority structure constitutive of robust recognition is essentially and in principle, hence unavoidably, *transitive*. For it is a basic algebraic fact that wherever a transitive relation happens to hold *symmetrically*, it is also *reflexive*.
    - It remains only to put these answers together to supply a response to the fourth and final question.

VII: Self-Consciousness

29. The connection between robust recognition and *self*-consciousness is as immediate as that between the tripartite structure of orectic awareness and consciousness.

30. To be a self, a subject, a consciousness—for Hegel as for Kant—is to be the subject of *normative* statuses: not just of desires, but of *commitments*. It is to be able to take a normative stand on things, to commit oneself, undertake responsibilities, exercise authority, assess correctness.

31. Recognition of any kind is taking or treating something *as* such a self or subject of normative statuses and attitudes.

32. *Self-consciousness* then consists in applying this practical proto-conception of a self to oneself: recognizing not just others, but oneself. This is *self*-consciousness, or having a self-conception, in a double sense. First, it is a matter of consciousness of something *as* a self: treating it as having that practical significance. Second, it is an application of that conception *to oneself*.

33. The lowest grade of self-conception that exhibits these two dimensions would be simple recognition of oneself: being orectically aware of oneself *as* orectically aware of things. We might call this '*simple* self-consciousness'. But the two dimensions are much more tightly bound up with one another if one is aware of oneself *as* able simply to recognize recognizers. In that case, the conception of selves that one applies to oneself is *as* something that has a conception of selves. We might call this '*robust* self-consciousness'.

34. Argument:
    a) Suppose *a* robustly recognizes *b*:
    b) Robust recognition is a kind of simple recognition: simple recognition as able to take others to be simple recognizers.
    c) If *b robustly* recognizes someone, then that recognition is *successful* just in case it satisfies *b*'s desire for robust recognition.
    d) If *b*'s robust recognition of someone is successful in this sense, then in virtue of robustly recognizing *b*, *a* must acknowledge *b*'s robust recognitions as authoritative.
    e) But since by hypothesis *a does* robustly recognize *b*, *b*'s desire for robust recognition *is* satisfied, so all *b*'s robust recognitions are successful (in *a*'s eyes).
    f) Thus if it should happen that *b* does *robustly* recognize *a*, then since *a* robustly recognizes *b*, we have a symmetry of robust recognition.
    g) Since, as we have seen, robust recognition is transitive, this means that *a* will acknowledge the authority of *b*'s robust recognition of *a*.
    h) So *a* counts as robustly recognizing himself.
    i) Thus reciprocal robust recognition is what robust self-consciousness consists in.

35. Because it persists as part of the necessary background against which any other commitments are adopted and relinquished, being for oneself a recognizer is an *essential* element of one's self-conception. One's identification with it consists practically in the structural impossibility of relinquishing that commitment in favor of others. To be self-conscious *is* to be *essentially* self-conscious: to be *for* oneself, and identify oneself with oneself *as* something that is for oneself, a recognized and recognizing being.

Part Three: ***Norms, Self-Consciousness, and Recognition***

Lecture 8

The Structure of Desire and Recognition:

Self-Consciousness and Self-Constitution

I. The Historicity of Essentially Self-Conscious Creatures

One of Hegel's big ideas is that creatures with a self-conception are the subjects of developmental processes that exhibit a distinctive structure. Call a creature "essentially self-conscious" if what it is *for* itself, its self-conception, is an essential element of what it is *in* itself. How something that is essentially self-conscious *appears* to itself is part of what it *really* is. Essentially self-conscious creatures are (partially) self-*constituting* creatures. Their self-regarding attitudes are efficacious in a distinctive way.

For such a being can change what it is *in* itself by changing what it is *for* itself. To say of an essentially self-conscious being that what it is for itself is an *essential* element of what it is in itself entails that an alteration in self-*conception* carries with it an alteration in the self of which it is a conception. Essentially self-conscious creatures accordingly enjoy the possibility of a distinctive kind of self-*transformation*: *making* themselves be different by *taking* themselves to be different.

Because what they are in themselves is at any point the outcome of such a developmental process depending on their attitudes, essentially self-conscious beings don't have *natures*, they have *histories*. Or, put differently, it is their nature to have not just a *past*, but a *history*: a sequence of

partially self-constituting self-transformations, mediated at every stage by their self-conceptions, and culminating in them being what they currently are.

Rehearsing such a historical narrative (Hegel's 'Erinnerung') is a distinctive way of understanding oneself *as* an essentially historical, because essentially self-conscious, sort of being. To be *for* oneself a historical being is to constitute oneself as *in* oneself a special kind of being: a *self-consciously* historical being. Making explicit to oneself this crucial structural aspect of the metaphysical kind of being one always implicitly has been as essentially self-conscious is itself a structural self-transformation: the achievement of a new kind of self-consciousness. It is a self-transformation generically of this sort that Hegel aims to produce in us his readers by his *Phenomenology*.

I suppose that when it is sketched with these broad strokes, this is a reasonably familiar picture. Entitling oneself to talk this way requires doing a good bit of further work, however. Why should we think there are things that answer to the definition of "essentially self-conscious beings"? What is a self? What is it to have a self-conception—to take oneself to be a self, to be a self to or *for* oneself? For that matter, what is it for *anything* to be something *for* one? And how might the notion of a self-conception, or anything else, being *essential* to what one really is, what one is *in* oneself, be cashed out or explained?

II. Identification, Risk, and Sacrifice

Let me address the last question first. Suppose for the moment that we had at least an initial grasp both on the concept of a self, and on what it is to have a self-*conception*, something one is *for* oneself. The story I've just told about essentially self-conscious beings indicates that in order to understand the relationship between selves and self-conceptions, we would need also to understand what it is for some features of a self-conception to be *essential* elements of one's

self, that is, what one is *in* oneself, what one *really* is. A self-conception may include many accidental or contingent features—things that just happen to be (taken to be) true of the self in question. The notion of an essentially self-conscious being applies only if there are also some things that one takes to be true of oneself such that one's self-conception having those features is essential to one's being the self one is. How are they to be thought of as distinguished from the rest?

Hegel's answer to this question, as I understand it, can be thought of as coming in stages. The first thought is that what it is for some features of one's self-conception to *be* essential is for one to *take* or *treat* them *as* essential. They are constituted as essential by the practical attitude one adopts toward them. The elements of one's self-conception that are essential to one's self, we may say, are those that one *identifies* with. Talking this way, essentially self-conscious beings are ones whose *identity*, their status as being what they are *in* themselves, depends in part upon their attitudes of *identification*, their attitudes of identifying with some privileged elements of what they are *for* themselves.

So we should ask: what is it that one must *do* in order properly to be understood as thereby *identifying oneself* with some but perhaps not all elements of one's self-conception? The answer we are given in *Self-Consciousness* is that one identifies with what one is willing to *risk* and *sacrifice* for. Hegel's metonymic image for this point concerns the important case of making the initial transition from being merely a living organism, belonging to the realm of Nature, to being a denizen of the realm of Spirit. The key element in this index case is willingness to risk one's biological life in the service of a commitment—something that goes beyond a mere desire.[183]

> It is only through staking one's life that freedom is won; only thus is it proved that for self-consciousness, its essential being is not [just] being, not the immediate form in which it appears, not its submergence in the expanse of life, but rather that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as vanishing

[183] This way of putting things, in terms of commitments rather than desires, will be discussed and justified below.

moments, that it is only pure being-

for-self. [§187]

By being willing to risk one's life for something, one makes it the case that the life one risks is *not* an essential element of the self one is thereby constituting, while that for which one risks it is. An extreme example is the classical Japanese samurai code of Bushido, which required ritual suicide under a daunting variety of circumstances. To be samurai was to identify oneself with the ideal code of conduct. In a situation requiring seppuku, either the biological organism or the samurai must be destroyed, for the existence of the one has become incompatible with the existence of the other. Failure to commit biological suicide in such a case would be the suicide of the samurai, who would be survived only by an animal. The animal had been a merely necessary condition of the existence of the samurai (like the presence of oxygen in the atmosphere, which is important to us, but with which we do not just for that reason count as identifying ourselves). No doubt even sincere and committed samurai must have hoped that such situations would not arise. But when and if they did, failure to act appropriately according to samurai practices would make it the case that one never had been a samurai, but only an animal who sometimes aspired to be one. One would thereby demonstrate that one was not, in oneself, what one had taken oneself to be, what one was for oneself.

I called the sort of example Hegel uses to introduce this thought 'metonymic' because I think that a part is being made to stand for the whole in this image. The point he is after is far broader. For identification in the general sense is a matter of being willing to risk and if need be sacrifice something one actually is (in oneself) for something one is merely for oneself, even if what is risked is not life, but only other commitments or entitlements. Hegel's arresting story of the struggle-unto-death offers a vivid image of one important dimension of the transition from Nature to Spirit. But once the realm of Spirit—all of our normatively and conceptually articulated doings—is an up-and-running enterprise, most of what we have to lose, to risk, and to sacrifice is not a matter of biology, but of culture. What we at these subsequent stages in our development are in ourselves is in large part a matter of status, commitment, authority, and responsibility. Rejecting something one already is because it collides with some commitment is identifying with the commitment one endorsed, by sacrificing something else.

III. Creatures Things Can Be Something *For*: Desire and the Tripartite Structure of orectic Awareness:

The story about essentially self-conscious beings, elaborated in terms of identification through risk-and-sacrifice, is what forged the link between the constitution through development of *selves* and the constitution through development of *conceptual contents* in the process of experience. And that story presupposes a conception of selves, and so of self-conceptions. In order to entitle ourselves to an account of the shape I have just sketched, we must answer the questions: What is a self? What is it to have a self-conception—to take oneself to be a self, to be a self to or *for* oneself? For that matter, what is it for *anything* to be something *for* one?

The first and most basic notion, I think, is *practical classification*. A creature can *take* or *treat* some particular *as* being of a general kind by responding to it in one way rather than another. In this sense, a chunk of iron classifies its environments as being of one of two kinds by rusting in some of them and not in others. The repeatable response-kind, rusting, induces a classification of stimuli, accordingly as they do or do not reliably elicit a response of that kind. Since reliable differential responsive dispositions are ubiquitous in the causal realm, every actual physical object exhibits this sort of behavior. For that reason, this sort of behavioral classification is not by itself a promising candidate as a definition of concepts of semantic content or awareness; pansemanticism and panpsychism would be immediate, unappealing consequences.

Hegel's alternative way in is to look to the phenomenon of *desire*, as structuring the lives of biological animals. A hungry animal treats something as food by "falling to without further ado and eating it up," as Hegel says (*Phenomenology* §109). This is clearly a species of the genus of practical classification. The state of desiring, in this case, hunger, induces a two-sorted classification of objects, into those consumption of which would result in satisfying the desire,

and the rest. The constellation of *hunger*, *eating*, and *food* has structure beyond that in play in the inorganic case of *rusting* (response) and *wet* (stimulus). What ultimately drives the classification is the difference between hunger being satisfied and its not being satisfied. But the classification of objects by that difference is conditioned on a mediating performance, process, or response. What is classified is objects which *if* responded to by eating *would* satisfy the hunger, and those that do not have that property. Both the role played by the practical activity of the desirer, that is, what it *does* in response to the object, and the hypothetical-dispositional character of the classification in terms of the effect of that doing on the satisfaction of the desire are important to Hegel's picture.

orectic awareness has a tripartite structure, epitomized by the relations between *hunger*, *eating*, and *food*. Hunger is a desire, a kind of *attitude*. It immediately impels hungry animals to respond to some objects by treating them *as* food, that is, by *eating* them. *Food* is accordingly a *significance* that objects can have to animals capable of hunger. It is something things can be *for* desiring animals. *Eating* is the activity of taking or treating something *as* food. It is what one must *do* in order in practice to be attributing to it the desire-relative orectic significance of *food*. *Eating* is the activity that is *instrumentally appropriate* to the desire of *hunger*. It is *subjectively* appropriate, in that it is the activity hungry animals are in fact impelled to by being in the desiring state of hunger. It is *objectively* appropriate in that it is an activity, a way of responding to environing objects, that often (enough) results in the satisfaction of the desire.

This distinction between two sorts of instrumental propriety of activity to desire funds a distinction between *appearance* and *reality* for the objects responded to, between what things are *for* the organism (the orectic significance they are *taken* to have) and what things are *in* themselves (the orectic significance they *actually* have). Anything the animal responds to by eating it is being taken or treated *as* food. But only things that actually relieve its hunger really *are* food. The possibility of these two coming apart is the organic basis for conceptual *experience*, which in its fully developed form is the collision of incompatible *commitments*.

IV: From Desire to Recognition: Two Interpretive Challenges

This account of the tripartite structure of orectic awareness offers a reasonably detailed answer to the question: What is it for things to be something *for* a creature? It is a story about a kind of proto-consciousness that is intelligible still in wholly naturalistic terms and yet provides the basic practical elements out of which something recognizable as the sort of theoretical conceptual consciousness discussed in the first three chapters of the *Phenomenology* could perhaps be understood to develop. We know that Hegel subscribes to the Kantian claim that there can in principle be no consciousness (properly so described) without *self*-consciousness. So making the step from the orectic awareness of animal denizens of the realm of Nature to the conceptual consciousness of knowers and agents who live and move and have their being in the normative realm of Spirit—creatures who have achieved the status of *selves* or *subjects*—requires the advent of self-consciousness. We need to understand what this achievement consists in, and why genuine consciousness requires it. As we'll see, what is required to be able to take something to be a *self* is be able to attribute attitudes that have distinctively *normative* significances: to move from a world of *desires* to a world of *commitments, authority,* and *responsibility*.

The account of the tripartite structure of orectic awareness gives us a place to start in addressing this issue. We should apply the answer we have in hand to the question "What is it for things to be something *for* a creature?" to the more specific case: "What is it for *selves* to be something things can be for a creature?" That is, what would be required for the orectic significance something had for a desiring animal to be not *food* or *predator*, but *self* or *subject*, in the sense of something things can be something *for*? And second, once we understand what it is to take or treat things as selves or subjects, what must one do to take *oneself* to be a thing of that kind, to take oneself to be a *self*?

The philosophical challenge, then, is to see what sort of an account of self-consciousness one can produce by assembling these raw materials: applying the tripartite account of orectic awareness to itself. The interpretive challenge is see to what extent one can by doing that explain the index features characteristic of Hegel's distinctive claims about the nature of self-consciousness. Two features of his approach are particularly worthy of attention in this regard, both of them features of his master-concept of recognition. First is his view that both self-conscious individual selves and the communities they inhabit (a kind of universal characterizing them) are synthesized by reciprocal recognition among particular participants in the practices of such a recognitive community. Self-consciousness is essentially, and not just accidentally, a *social* achievement. Second, recognition is a *normative* attitude. To recognize someone is to take her to be the subject of normative statuses, that is, of commitments and entitlements, as capable of undertaking responsibilities and exercising authority. This is what it means to say that as reciprocally recognized and recognizing, the creatures in question are *geistig*, spiritual, beings, and no longer merely natural ones. Here are some of the familiar representative passages:

Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged….The detailed exposition of the Notion of this spiritual unity in its duplication will present us with the process of Recognition [§178].

A self-consciousness exists for a self-consciousness. Only so is it in fact self-consciousness; for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness become explicit for it. … A self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much 'I' as 'object'. With this, we already have before us the Notion of Spirit. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I' [§177].

But according to the Notion of recognition this [that a self-consciousness' certainty of itself have truth] is possible only when each is for the other what the other is for it, only when each in its own self through its own action, and again through the action of the other, achieves this pure abstraction of being-for-self [§186].

I see two principal philosophical challenges that arise in understanding the discussion of recognition and self-consciousness in these passages. First, how are we to understand the

transition from the discussion of the concept of desire to the discussion of the concept of recognition? This corresponds to the shift from consideration of particular merely *biological* creatures impelled wholly by *natural impulses*, in relation to their species, on the one hand, to consideration of genuinely *social* self-conscious individuals motivated by normative relations of *authority* and *responsibility* within their communities, on the other. How one understands the relation between these, both conceptually and historically, is evidently of the first importance in understanding what Hegel has to teach us about the normative realm he calls 'Geist'.

The second issue concerns the formal structure of his account of the synthesis of social substance by relations of reciprocal recognition. To recognize someone is to take or treat that individual in practice as a self: a knowing and acting subject, hence as subject to normative assessment as potentially committed, responsible, authoritative, and so on. The picture that is presented of the sort of community within which fully adequate self-consciousness is achieved is one in which recognition is an equivalence relation: everyone in the community recognizes and is recognized by everyone else ("each is for the other what the other is for it"), and so recognizes everyone recognized by anyone else. Individuals are, roughly, particulars whose exhibition of, characterization by, or participation in universals is essential to them. In the case of self-conscious individuals, this means that the norms of the community they are members of are essential equally to the individual members and to the community as a whole.[184]

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[184] Hegel makes claims along these lines in his telegraphic discussion of the relation between self-consciousness and desire. One example is the summary claim that "the unity of self-consciousness with itself must become essential to self-consciousness, i.e. self-consciousness is *Desire* in general" [§167]. He stresses that "*Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness*" [§175], that is, in another recognized recognizer. "The satisfaction of Desire is…the reflection of self-consciousness into itself, or the certainty that has become truth. [BB: that is, what things are *for* it and what things are *in* themselves coincide.] But the truth of this certainty is really a double reflection, the duplication of self-consciousness. Consciousness has for its object one which, of its own self posits its otherness or difference as a nothingness…"[§176]. The object is the other one recognizes, who cancels the difference between it and the index consciousness in the sense that it, too, recognizes the other, thereby applying to both the other and itself one universal expressing a respect of similarity or identity: being something things can be something for. "A self-consciousness exists only *for a self-consciousness*. Only so is it in fact a self-consciousness; for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness become explicit for it" [§177]. "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged

In such an ideal community, each member is to be able to recognize himself *as* a member. To say that is to say that recognition is *reflexive*. Recognition is also to be *symmetric*, that is to say, reciprocal or mutual (Hegel's 'gegenseitig'). It is this aspect that is lacking in the defective forms of recognition that structure the defective forms of self-consciousness rehearsed in the *Phenomenology*, beginning with the discussion of Mastery. The view appears to be that insofar as recognition is *de facto* not *symmetric*, it cannot be *reflexive*. I cannot be properly self-conscious (recognize myself) except in the context of a recognition structure that is *reciprocal*: insofar as I am recognized by those I recognize. (This is the essence of Hegel's wittgensteinean view of self-consciousness, which by contrast to a cartesian view sees it as a *social* achievement, which accordingly takes place in important respects *outside* the self-conscious individual. It is not a kind of inner glow.)

A big question is then: why? Why should it be the case that *reciprocal* (that is, *symmetric*) recognition is a necessary condition of *reflexive* recognition (that is, self-consciousness, awareness of oneself *as* a self)?

Here is a thought about the shape of a possible answer. It is a formal fact that *if* a relation is both symmetric and transitive, then it is also reflexive, and hence is an equivalence relation. That is, if $\forall x,y\ [xRy \rightarrow yRx]$ and $\forall x,y,z[xRy \& yRz \rightarrow xRz]$, then $\forall x[xRx]$. For we can just apply the transitivity condition to the symmetry pairs xRy and yRx to yield xRx.[185] So *if* recognition were (for some reason) *de jure* transitive—if it were part of the nature of recognition that one is committed to recognizing anyone recognized by someone one recognizes—*then* achieving *de facto* symmetry of recognition would suffice for achieving *de facto* reflexivity of recognition. That is, each community member would recognize himself—and in that sense count as self-conscious—so long as everyone was recognized by everyone they recognize, that is, so long as recognition were *reciprocal*. So *one* way to forge the desired connection between social

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[nur als ein Annerkanntes]…The detailed exposition of the Notion of this spiritual unity in its duplication will present us with the process of Recognition [Annerkennen]" [§178].

[185] Reflexivity is not redundant in the mathematical definition of equivalence relation because the argument depends on the relation being everywhere-defined, in the sense that that for every x there is *some* y such that xRy, i.e. that everyone recognizes *someone*. Given the philosophical surround, this condition can, I think, be suppressed.

reciprocity of recognition and self-consciousness would be to establish that recognition must by its very nature be *transitive*.

In what follows, we'll see how the tripartite account of orectic awareness can be used in a natural way to build a notion of recognition that satisfies these twin philosophical constraints on the interpretation of Hegel's notion of self-consciousness in terms of desire and recognition.

V: Simple Recognition: being something things can be something *for* being something things can be *for* one

We can think of the tripartite structure of orectic awareness as consisting of three elements and three relations among them. The three elements are:

g) an *attitude* (desire), e.g. *hunger*;
h) a responsive *activity*, e.g. *eating*; and
i) a *significance*, e.g. *food*.

The three relations are:

j) The attitude must *motivate* the activity, in the sense of *activating* a (more or less reliable, in a sense determined by the assessments in (f) below) disposition to respond differentially to objects.
k) Responding to an object by engaging in the activity is taking or treating it in practice *as* having a significance defined by the attitude that motivates the activity. This is the *subjective* significance of the object.
l) The desiring attitude *assesses* the object, implicitly attributing to it an *objective* significance, accordingly as responding to it by engaging in the activity the attitude motivates does or does not satisfy the desire. If it does not, if what the object was subjectively or *for* the animal does not coincide with what it was objectively, or *in* itself, that is, if the activity was not *successful* in satisfying the motivating desire, then an *error* has been committed.

What we are now interested in is a more complicated constellation of elements and relations, in which the tripartite structure of orectic awareness enters *twice*. It is, of course, the structure of the whole thing: "Self-consciousness is desire." [§174], at least in the sense that the most primitive form of self-awareness is to be understood as a development of the basic structure of orectic awareness. And we want to understand why it is also *recognition*, specifically *reciprocal* recognition. Within the tripartite structure of desire as it applies to self-consciousness, the significance attributed to an object, what it is *for* the organism exhibiting the orectic awareness in question, is to be orectically aware: to be something things can be something *for*. That is, the significance attributed by engaging in a responsive activity and assessed by the motivating attitude (item I above) must itself exhibit the tripartite structure of orectic awareness. For one to have that significance *for* oneself—not just being *in* oneself something things can be something *for*, but being that *for* oneself as well—that significance must be something things can be or have *for* one.

The tripartite structure of orectic awareness (TSOE) tells us that the two big questions that must be answered are these:

- What *activity* is it that institutes this significance (namely, having the TSOE)? That is, what is it that one must *do*, how must one *respond* to something, to count thereby as *taking* or *treating* it *as* exhibiting the TSOE? What is to the TSOE as *eating* is to *food*?
- What *desire* or other *attitude* is it that motivates that *activity* and *assesses* the *success* of taking something *as* having the orectic significance of being a TSOE, i.e. being something things can be something *for*? What is to the TSOE as *hunger* is to *food*?

To begin to address these questions, and to indicate an important point of contact with Hegel's own vocabulary, we may call what I must *do*, the activity, whatever it is, that I must engage in, in order thereby to be *taking* or *treating* something in practice *as* something things can be something *for*, "recognizing" that other creature. So far, this is just a label for an answer to the first question. Recognizing others is attributing to them the practical significance of exhibiting the tripartite structure of orectic awareness: taking them to be takers, subjects for whom things can have a practical significance relative to a desire and mediated by an activity. What can we

then say at this level of abstraction about the desire or *attitude* that is the third element completing the TSOE whose attitude is recognizing and whose significance is exhibiting the TSOE? Hegel's answer is, I think, clear, if surprising: it is *desire for recognition*, the desire that others take or treat one in practice as a taker, as something things can be something *for*, as an instituter of significances.

If we bracket for the moment the crucial question of *why* a desire to be recognized is the attitude for which recognizing others is the appropriate activity, and so why it institutes the significance of being something things can be something *for*—making that something things can be *for* one, a proto-conception of *selves*—we may ask what would happen if a being with that desire got what it wanted. If the desire for recognition is satisfied by responding to others by recognizing them, then according to the TSOE the subjective significance the recognized ones have *for* the recognition-desirer shows up as being *correct*, as what they objectively are *in* themselves: subjects of significance-instituting attitudes and activities. And what is required for that is just that one be recognized (for that is what it takes to satisfy the desire) by those one recognizes (for that, on the line of thought being considered, is what one must *do* in order, if all goes well, to satisfy the desire). So it follows from the claim that the desire that completes the higher-order TSOE whose activity is recognition and whose instituted significance is exhibiting the TSOE is a desire for recognition that the recognition-desire can be satisfied only by achieving *reciprocal recognition*. On this construal, then, having a practical proto-conception of *selves*—being able to take or treat things as subjects things can be something *for*, recognizing them—and being self-conscious in the sense of *reciprocal* recognition are two aspects of one achievement, two sides of one coin.

In order to give a reading of these claims in terms of the tripartite structure of orectic awareness, the black-box notion of <u>recognition</u> must be filled in so as to answer the following three questions:

1. <u>Recognizing</u>: What, exactly, is it that one must *do* in order to be recognizing someone? That is, what *is* the activity we have labeled 'recognizing'?

2. Being recognized: Why should the desire to be taken or treated that way oneself, that is, to be recognized, be the one making appropriate that activity, namely, recognizing?
3. Self-Consciousness: Why does the reciprocal recognition that results when that desire for recognition is satisfied by recognizing someone else amount to *self-consciousness*, in the sense of applying a (proto-)conception of *selves* to oneself?

The challenge is to give an answer to the first question that will entail plausible answers to the other two questions.

The first point to make is that *general* recognition, taking someone to be something things can be something *for*, must be understood in terms of *specific* recognition: taking someone to be something things can have a *specific* significance for, say being of kind K (e.g. food, a predator, a potential sexual partner). One takes someone to be a taker in general just in case there are some specific significances, values of K, for which one takes it that that individual is a K-taker, i.e. can take things to be Ks. So it will suffice to answer the questions above for specific recognition, relativized to some instituted significance K things can have for a creature, in order to answer those questions for the more general case.

Specifically recognizing someone as a K-taker requires:

- One must attribute an activity that one takes to be what it is for the other to be responding to something *as* a K.
- One must attribute a desire or other attitude that one takes to *license* or *authorize* responding to things *as* Ks, i.e. by engaging in that activity.
- One must acknowledge in practice a distinction between *correct* and *incorrect* responses of that sort, assessed according to the attributed attitude that authorizes responses of that kind.

My suggestion as to where we start is with the thought that in the most basic case, one can only take another to be a K-taker if one is oneself a K-taker. Taking the other to be a K-taker will

then be attributing to him activity of the same sort in which one oneself engages in response to things one (thereby) takes to be Ks. That is, my taking you to be able to treat things as *food* is my taking it that you respond to some things with the same behavior, *eating*, with which I respond to food.

We are now in a position to put in place the keystone piece of this explanatory structure.

What the recognizing attributor responds differentially *to* as the success of a desire-authorized responsive activity is the cessation of that activity. Thus no longer being disposed to respond to things by eating things indicates that hunger was satisfied, so the thing previously responded to as food was *in* itself what it was *for* the one recognized as a desirer of food.

What, then, is the differential response that is keyed to this difference in the one being recognized as a K-taker? This is the decisive point. My taking *your* K-response to have been authorized by a K-desire that serves as a standard for the success of your K-taking, and taking that K-response to have been *correct* or *successful* by that standard is my acknowledging the *authority* of your K-taking, in the practical sense of being disposed *myself* to take *as* a K the thing *you* took to be a K. Taking it that the kind of fruit you ate really was food, in that it satisfied *your* hunger is being disposed to eat that kind of fruit myself when and if *I* am hungry, i.e. have a *desire* of the same kind. This is a second-order disposition, involving a change in my first-order dispositions. My specific K-recognitive response to you is to acquire the disposition: *if* I have the K-desire, *then* I will K-respond to the things to which I (thereby) take you to have *successfully* K-responded. My acknowledging *your* K-desire as *authoritative* in the dual sense of licensing *your* responsive K-activity and serving as a standard of *normative* assessment of its *success* or *correctness* consists in my treating it as *authorizing* my *own* K-takings, should *I* have a K-desire.

So in the first instance, my treating your K-desire as having the normative significance of being authoritative for K-takings is treating it as authoritative for them full stop—not just for *your* K-

takings, but for K-takings generally, and so for *mine* in particular. The link by which the specifically recognized one's activity is assimilated to that of the recognizer is forged by the *interpersonal* character of the specific authority of the recognized one's successful takings, whose acknowledgment is what specific recognition consists in. The *only* way the recognizer's orectic classifications can be practically mapped onto those of the other so as to be intelligible as implicitly attributing specific desires, significances, and mediating responsive activities exhibiting the tripartite structure of orectic awareness is if the *authority* of the assessments of responsive significance-attribution on the part of the one recognized is acknowledged in practice by the recognizer. So specific recognition involves acknowledging another as having some authority concerning how things are (what things are Ks). When I do that, I treat you as one of *us*, in a primitive normative sense of 'us'—those of us subject to the same norms, the same authority—that is instituted by just such attitudes.

VI: Robust Recognition: Specific Recognition of Another as a Recognizer

Looking back at the most primitive sort of pre-conceptual recognition of others, from the vantage-point of the fully-developed conceptually articulated kind, brings into relief the crucial boundary that is being crossed: between the merely *natural* and the incipiently *normative*. In the merely orectically aware animal, *desire* is a state that *motivates* and *regulates* responsive activity *immediately*. It causally activates differential responsive dispositions to engage in activities, and its matter-of-factual satisfaction causes the creature to desist from or persist in them. But the recognizer, who is aware of the creature *as* aware of things, does not *feel* that creature's desires, but only *attributes* them, implicitly and practically, by treating the creature *as* having them. The recognizer accordingly takes up a more distanced, mediated, abstract attitude toward these significance-generating attitudes. The recognized creature's attitudes are seen (treated in practice) as *assessing* the *correctness* of practical responsive classifications, as *licensing* or *authorizing* the responsive activity—in the first instance in the case of the one recognized, but then also on the part of the recognizer who merely attributes the attitude to the other. The relation between the attitude the recognizer attributes and the activity he himself engages in is a *normative* one. Even in the most primitive cases it is intelligible as the acknowledgment of

authority rather than mere acquiescence in an impulse. In treating the attitudes of the recognized other as having authority for those who do not feel them, the recognizer implicitly accords them a significance beyond that of mere desires: as *normatively* and not merely *immediately* significant attitudes.

The story I have rehearsed about what happens when the tripartite structure of orectic awareness is applied to itself as significance shows how recognition develops out of and can be made intelligible in terms of desire. But it also shows why just being orectically aware is not enough to give one a conception of a self. That is something one can get only by recognizing others. For the possibility of treating attitudes as having a distinctively *normative* significance opens up in the first instance for the attitudes of *others*, for desires one attributes but does not immediately feel. The claim we have been shaping up to understand is Hegel's central doctrine that self-consciousness consists in reciprocal recognition. It is clear at this point that recognizing others is necessary and sufficient to have a conception of selves or subjects of consciousness. But the relation between that fact and *reciprocity* of recognition as what makes it possible for the participants to count as applying that concept to themselves in the way required for self-consciousness has not yet been made out. To make it out, we can apply the observation made in the previous section that *if* recognition could be shown to be *de jure* transitive, then any case in which it was also *de facto* symmetric (reciprocal) would be one in which it was also *de facto* reflexive. For reflexivity follows from transitivity and symmetry.

Simple recognition is not in the relevant sense transitive. For what I am doing in taking another to be a subject of orectic awareness—namely, simply recognizing that desirer *as* a desirer—is *not* what I take that desirer to be doing. The one simply recognized need not be capable of being in its turn a simple recognizer, and so something with even a basic conception of selves. For that we need to go up a level, and consider what it is to take another not just to be orectically aware, but to be aware of others *as* orectically aware. That is, we must consider what it is to recognize another as a simple recognizer, hence as itself the kind of thing for which things can have a specifically *normative* significance. I'll call that practical attitude *robust* recognition. Robust recognition is a kind of simple recognition: simple recognition of someone things can have a

specific kind of orectic significance for, namely the significance of being something things can have orectic significances for.

What is important for my story is that robust recognition *is* transitive. This is clear from the account already offered of recognition in terms of acknowledging the authority of what things are *for* the recognized one. Recognizing someone as a recognizer is acknowledging the authority of their recognitions for one's own: recognizing whoever they recognize. If one presses the details, there are some subtleties that arise, but when they have been carefully considered, the basic conclusion about the transitivity of robust recognition remains. So I suppress them here.

Since it is a kind of simple recognition, the activity element of the orectic structural triad characteristic of robust recognition—what one must *do* to be taking or treating someone *as* (having the significance of) a simple recognizer—is practically acknowledge *as* authoritative for one's own takings takings of the one being recognized (if they are successful, and within the range of significance of one's simple recognition). In this case, doing that is acknowledging the authority of the recognized one's simple recognitions. Those simple recognitions are themselves a matter of acknowledging the authority of the ground-level orectic takings of the one simply recognized. So what the robust recognizer must *do* to be taking someone as a simple recognizer is to acknowledge as authoritative whatever ground-level takings the one robustly recognized acknowledges as authoritative. And that is to say that the robust recognizer treats as *transitive* the inheritance of authority of ground-level takings that is what simple recognizing consists in.

It might seem that the hierarchy generated by acknowledging different levels of recognition is open-ended: robust recognition is taking to be (simply recognizing as) a simple recognizer, super-robust (say) recognition would be simply recognizing as a robust recognizer, super-duper-robust recognition would be simply recognizing as a super-robust recognizer, and so on. Perhaps surprisingly, the crucial structural features of recognition don't change after we have reached robust recognition. The key point is that robust recognition is a specific instance of simple recognition, i.e. recognition of something as having a special kind of orectic awareness, namely,

awareness of something *as* being orectically aware. As we have seen, that is a particular kind of orectic significance things can have. As a result of this fact, the nascent recognitional hierarchy could be formulated as: orectic awareness, simple recognition of something as orectically aware, simple recognition of something as simply recognizing, simple recognition of something as a simple recognizer of simple recognizers, and so on. But what one must *do* in order thereby to be simply recognizing someone—the activity (corresponding to *eating* in the paradigmatic orectic desire-activity-significance triad of *hunger, eating, food*) one must engage in to count as taking or treating an organism as (having the significance of being) orectically aware—is to acknowledge the *normative authority* for one's own responses of their takings of things as something. Taking someone to be a simple recognizer is accordingly acknowledging in practice the authority of their takings of someone as an orectic taker, which is acknowledging the authority of their acknowledgings of authority. Whatever ground level takings of things as something the one being robustly recognized (simply recognized as a simple recognizer) takes to be authoritative the robust recognizer takes therefore to be authoritative. In robustly recognizing you, I must simply recognize whoever you simply recognize.

The effect is to produce the *transitive closure* of the acknowledgment of authority of ground-level takings in which simple recognition consists. By the 'transitive closure' of a relation is meant the relation R' that is generated from R by the two principles: i) $\forall x \forall y[xRy \rightarrow xR'y]$ and ii) $\forall x \forall y \forall z[(xRy \ \& \ yRz) \rightarrow xR'z]$. It is an elementary algebraic fact that the transitive closure of the transitive closure of a relation is just the transitive closure of that relation. (Technically: closure operations are idempotent.) All the structural work has been done the first time around. For *a* to recognize *b* in the 'super-robust' way—simply to recognize *b* as a robust recognizer—would commit *a* to acknowledge as authoritative *b*'s simple recognitions of someone *c* as a simple recognizer. *B*'s simple recognition of *c* as a simple recognizer (which is *b'*s robust recognition of *c*), we have seen, consists in *b*'s practical commitment to inherit *c'*s acknowledgments of another's—*d*'s—ground-level takings as authoritative. The effect is then that *a* must likewise be practically committed to inherit *b*'s inherited acknowledgments of those ground-level commitments as authoritative. But this puts *a* in exactly the position *a* would be in if *a* recognized *b robustly*, rather than *super*-robustly. Formally, once one has established that a

relation is transitive, that $\forall x \forall y \forall z[(xRy \ \& \ yRz) \rightarrow xRz]$, that has as a consequence (and hence requires nothing else to establish) that $\forall w \forall x \forall y \forall z[(wRx \ \& \ xRy \ \& \ yRz) \rightarrow wRz]$.

Since robust recognition is the transitive closure of simple recognition, there is no difference between simple recognition of someone as a robust recognizer, and robust recognition (simple recognition of someone as a simple recognizer) of someone as a robust recognizer. And robust recognition is transitive: for what one is doing to be robust recognizing, it must include commitment to robustly recognize (simply recognize as a simple recognizer) whoever is robustly recognized by those one robustly recognizes. These are facts about the activity pole of the structure of simple and (therefore of) robust recognition. What relates them is that the significance pole of robust recognition is the whole structure of simple recognition—just as the significance pole of simple recognition is the whole triadic structure of ground-level orectic awareness. Indeed, we have seen that the significance pole of ground-level orectic awareness is the crucial element in the activity pole of simple recognition (and therefore of robust recognition). For practical acknowledgment of the authority of the ground-level significances attributed in non-recognitional orectic awareness is what the activity of simple recognizing consists in.

If these are the relations between the *activity* and *significance* poles making up the triadic structure of recognitional awareness, what, then, about the *attitude* or *desire* pole? The story told so far lays it down both that the desire that motivates simple recognizing (and so institutes its characteristic significance) is a *desire for* (simple) *recognition*, and that the only orectic takings on the part of one recognized that a simple recognizer is obliged to acknowledge as authoritative are those that the one recognized takes to be *successful*. So we should ask: which of the recognizings of a simple recognizer should a robust recognizer take to be successful? The answer is: only those that satisfy the relevant desire. That is a desire to be simply recognized, which is to say a desire to have the authority of the simple recognizer's takings acknowledged by another. But that is precisely what a robust recognizer does in simply recognizing anyone as a simple recognizer. So from the point of view of a robust recognizer, *all* the simple recognitions

of the one robustly recognized count as successful, and hence as authoritative. There is nothing that could count as taking someone to have a desire to be simply recognized, motivating that one's simple recognitions, which fails to be satisfied.

With this observation, we have reached our explanatory-interpretive goal. For we wanted to know:

5. how *recognition* should be understood to arise out of *desire*,
6. how *normativity* should be understood as an aspect of *recognition*,
7. how *self*-recognition, that is *reflexive* recognition relations, should be understood to require *reciprocal* recognition, that is to say *symmetric* recognition relations, and
8. how *self-consciousness* should be understood to consist in the self-recognition achieved by reciprocal recognition.

The answer to the first question was supplied by seeing how the tripartite structure of orectic awareness could be applied to itself, so that what something was taken or treated in practice *as* was a desiring, significance-instituting creature. The answer to the second was supplied by seeing how simple recognizing consists in the recognizer's achieving a mediated, distanced, relation to the immediate felt impulse of the recognized one's desire, in the form of its significance, conditional upon the recognizer's own desires, for the recognizer's own practical awareness. In this way the other's desire is practically acknowledged as *authoritative*, and the other's desire shows up for the recognizer in the shape of the recognizer's *commitment* or *responsibility*. The answer to the third question was supplied by showing how (because of the idempotence of transitive closure operations) the social authority structure constitutive of robust recognition is essentially and in principle, hence unavoidably, *transitive*. For it is a basic algebraic fact that wherever a transitive relation happens to hold *symmetrically*, it is also *reflexive*. The argument that a relation's being *de jure* transitive and *de facto* symmetric suffices for it to be reflexive shows a certain kind of sociality to be *sufficient* for self-recognition. What shows it to be *necessary* is that I *cannot* practically distinguish *impulse* from *authority* in my *own* case. It remains only to put these answers together to supply a response to the fourth and final question.

VII: Self-Consciousness

The connection between robust recognition and *self*-consciousness is as immediate as that between the tripartite structure of orectic awareness and consciousness. For to be a self, a subject, a consciousness—for Hegel as for Kant—is to be the subject of *normative* statuses: not just of desires, but of *commitments*. It is to be able to take a normative stand on things, to commit oneself, undertake responsibilities, exercise authority, assess correctness. Recognition of any kind is taking or treating something *as* such a self or subject of normative statuses and attitudes. It is consciousness *of* something *as* (having the normative significance of) a self or subject. For recognition itself exhibits the tripartite structure of orectic awareness—proto-consciousness. The significance it accords to the one recognized is that of exhibiting that same structure. And adopting that practical attitude toward another is taking or treating its states as having normative significance as authorizing and assessing performances—not merely *producing* them but making them *appropriate*. Eating on the part of the one recognized is now treated as something that involves a *commitment* as to how things are, a commitment that can be *assessed* by both recognized and recognizer (who need not agree) as *correct* or incorrect.

Self-consciousness then consists in applying this practical proto-conception of a self to oneself: recognizing not just others, but oneself. Having a self-conception in the second sense is a matter of the *reflexive* character of one's recognition: that among those one recognizes is oneself. The lowest grade of self-conception that exhibits these two dimensions would be simple recognition of oneself: being orectically aware of oneself *as* orectically aware of things. We might call this '*simple* self-consciousness'. But the two dimensions are much more tightly bound up with one another if one is aware of oneself *as* able simply to recognize things. In that case, the conception of selves that one applies to oneself is *as* something that has a conception of selves. We might call this '*robust* self-consciousness'.

If *a* robustly recognizes *b*, then *a* acknowledges the (probative, but provisional and defeasible) authority of *b*'s successful simple recognitions. Robust recognition, we have seen, is a kind of simple recognition: simple recognition as able to take others to be simple recognizers. If *b robustly* recognizes someone, then that recognition is *successful* just in case it satisfies *b*'s desire for robust recognition. If *b*'s robust recognition of someone is successful in this sense, then in virtue of robustly recognizing *b*, *a* must acknowledge *b*'s robust recognition as authoritative. But since by hypothesis *a does* robustly recognize *b*, *b*'s desire for robust recognition *is* satisfied, so all his robust recognitions are successful (in *a*'s eyes). Thus if it should happen that *b* does *robustly* recognize *a*, then since *a* robustly recognizes *b*, we have a symmetry of robust recognition. Since, as we have seen, robust recognition is transitive, this means that *a* will acknowledge the authority of *b*'s robust recognition of *a*. So *a* counts as robustly recognizing himself. Thus robust self-consciousness is achievable only through *reciprocal* recognition: being robustly recognized by at least some of those one robustly recognizes. This means that a *community* (a kind of universal) is implicitly constituted by one's own robust recognitions, and actually achieved insofar as they are reciprocated. That is the sort of reciprocally recognitive community within which alone genuine (robust) self-consciousness is possible: the "'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'".

VIII: Conclusion

I can now bring my story to a quick close. I started it with the concept of *essential* elements of one's self-conception being ones that one *identifies* with, in the sense of being willing to risk or if need be sacrifice for them. One consequence of the transition from desire to commitment within the attitude component of the tripartite structure of orectic awareness is that where the activity-motivating character of desire is extinguished with its satisfaction, the activity-licensing character of commitment need not be. In particular, desire for recognition in the form of a commitment to being recognized is a standing, structural element of self-consciousness. It persists even when fulfilled by the achievement of reciprocal recognition that is self-

consciousness. Because it persists as part of the necessary background against which any other commitments are adopted and relinquished, being for oneself a recognizer is an *essential* element of one's self-conception. One's identification with it consists practically in the structural impossibility of relinquishing that commitment in favor of others. To be self-conscious *is* to be *essentially* self-conscious: to be *for* oneself, and identify oneself with oneself *as* something that is for oneself, a recognized and recognizing being.

A fuller telling would continue with an account couched in the same basic terms of the specific distorted form of self-consciousness that construes itself under the distinctively modern, alienated category of *independence* that Hegel epitomizes in the form of the 'Master'. It would explain how the self-conception characteristic of Mastery arises from overgeneralizing from its capacity immediately to constitute itself as *essentially* self-conscious—making it so just by taking it so—to yield an ultimately incoherent model of a self-consciousness *all* of whose conceptions are immediately constitutive, thus eliding quite generally the crucial "distinction that consciousness involves", between what things are *for* it and what they are *in* themselves. And it would explain what Hegel elsewhere calls "die Wirkung des Schicksals": the metaphysical irony that undermines the Master's existential commitment to possessing authority without correlative responsibility, to being recognized as authoritative without recognizing anyone as having the authority to do that. But that is a story for another occasion.

Handout for Lecture 9

From Subordination, through Autonomy, to Mutual Recognition: Stages in the History of the Metaphysics of Normativity

Hegel sees all subsequent forms of understanding as developing from the rejection of the traditional metaphysics of normativity that I shall call "the subordination-obedience model." The idea of superior-subordinate relationships as part of the objective order of things is the core of the neo-platonic Great Chain of Being (scala naturae) deriving from Plotinus.

The concept of the relative status of superior/subordinate can be construed as having nonnormative circumstances of appropriate application, but normative consequences of application in that the commands of the superior institute normative statuses of *obligation* in those related to them as subordinates.

One important modern idea is that the status of superior, having the *right* to command, to *oblige* those commanded to obey, can be taken to have not only normative *consequences*, but also normative *conditions*. This is the idea that being a superior is a normative status that one must *deserve* (for instance, through the fact of service or an attitude of benevolence).

Another is the idea that the status of being a superior, in the sense of having a *right* or *authority* to impose obligations and command obedience (as opposed to the mere power to punish noncompliance) might be dependent on the *attitudes* of the subordinates: on their having agreed or consented to, or otherwise *acknowledged* that authority.

While Hegel insists that this modern model expresses a genuine and important truth about the metaphysics of normativity, in the end he sees both the traditional and the modern models of normativity as one-sided: the first as hyper-objective and the second as hyper-subjective.

I understand Hegel's use of "independence" and "dependence", when addressed to self-conscious subjects, to be ways of talking about *authority* and *responsibility*, respectively.
I render his distinction between what things are "in themselves" as opposed "for themselves" or "for others" in the normative realm of Geist in terms of the distinction between normative *statuses* (authority and responsibility) and normative *attitudes* (claiming or attributing).

In the natural law tradition, paradigmatically among Catholic theologians, *intellectualists* (such as Aquinas), held that the authoritativeness of commands issued by superiors to subordinates (expressions of the attitudes of those superiors, including God) answered to (depended upon, are responsible to) *reasons* rooted in the same objective natures that determined their relative "primacy" as superiors/subordinates.
This is the basis of Aquinas' distinction between God's "absolute" and his "ordained" power.
By contrast, theological *voluntarists* (such as William of Ockham) reject the constraint on God's normative attitudes by reasons rooted in objective natures. What makes something right or obligatory (institutes those normative statuses) is just God's (the superior's) normative attitudes towards them, his approval or commands. Those attitudes are not constrained by reasons stemming from any antecedent objective normative statuses.
Pufendorf understands normative statuses as instituted by normative attitudes across the board.

> We may define our moral entities to be certain modes superadded to natural things and motions by understanding beings; chiefly for the guiding and tempering of the freedom of voluntary actions… [*On the Law of Nature and Nations* I.I.3.]

We create these "moral entities" as God creates natural ones:

> As the original way of producing natural entities is by *creation*, so the manner of framing moral entities cannot be better expressed than by the term *imposition*. For these…are added at the pleasure of intelligent creatures to beings already perfect in the natural sense…and consequently obtain their whole existence from the determination of their authors. [*OLNN* I.I.4.]
>
> Our business is to declare how, chiefly for the direction of the *will*, a certain kind of attributes have been imposed on natural things and motions…And these attributes are called *moral entities*, because the *manners* and actions of men are judged and tempered with relation to them; and do hence assume a face and habit different from the horrid stupidity of the dumb creation. [*OLNN* I.I.2.]

The natural law and sentimentalist traditions are alike in understanding normative statuses as *natural* products of human *social attitudes*. These three dimensions—attitude-dependence, naturalism and the social-practical character of the institution of norms by attitudes—mark them as distinctively modern approaches to the metaphysics of normativity, contrasting with traditional forms of the subordination-obedience model.

Rousseau performs a remarkable synthesis of the natural law tradition, which introduces the idea of attitude-dependence of normative statuses in the form of a distinctively modern version of the traditional subordination-obedience model, with the perfectionist tradition of self-governance, which includes commitment to the status-dependence of normative attitudes as part of its essential core.

The slogan for Rousseau's reconceptualization is "Obedience to a law one has prescribed for oneself is freedom." [*Social Contract* I.viii.]

Three innovative conceptual syntheses of Rousseau:

1. The self-governance tradition emphasizes the *status-dependence of normative attitudes*, the objective authority of attitude-independent reasons based in the ontological natures of things—exactly the converse of Rousseau's pure attitude-dependence view. Yet Rousseau has managed to synthesize these seemingly incompatible lines of thought.
2. The subordination-obedience model of normativity grounds the normative status of obligation on the essentially asymmetric relation between the normative statuses of superior and subordinate. By contrast, Rousseau's version resembles the perfectionist self-government tradition, which acknowledges no such asymmetry. For this tradition, all of us humans, like God himself, are in the same situation of striving to conform to the reasons that are inherent in the natures of things. Rousseau achieves this symmetry by identifying the commanding superior normative subject whose attitudes institute obligations by laying down laws with the obedient subordinate normative subject the appropriateness of whose attitudes is assessed according to those obligations. The subordination-obedience model looks completely different if it is the *same* normative subject instituting statuses by attitudes of commanding and obeying.
3. Rousseau transmutes the overarching goal driving the process of perfecting our capacity to govern our own attitudes by our appreciation of objective reasons into the form of a master-norm, *freedom*, to which *obligation*, the leading normative status according to the natural lawyers' order of conceptual explanation, is subordinated.

Hegel says that "the principle of freedom emerges in Rousseau…This furnishes the transition to the Kantian philosophy…" [*Lectures on the History of Philosophy,* Volume III].

Kant gets from Rousseau the idea of thinking about positive freedom in *deontic normative* terms, by contrast to the empiricists' negative concept of freedom understood in *alethic modal* terms of possibility and necessity.

In the place of the empiricist opposition of constraint to no constraint, Kant puts the opposition between two kinds of constraint: alethic and deontic, heteronomous and autonomous. That normative force, the bindingness of genuinely normative statuses of obligation, Kant understands as essentially mediated by and dependent on the attitudes of the ones who are bound by those statuses.

Kant turns Rousseau's definition of freedom into a criterion of demarcation for a distinctive sense of normative bindingness. He appeals to the symmetric attitudes involved in obedience to self-imposed obligations to define what it is for a status to count as a *normative* status, using autonomy as a criterion of demarcation for the normative.

Kant synthesizes the modern idea of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses (rooted in the voluntarist wing of the natural law tradition) with the premodern idea of the status-dependence of normative attitudes (rooted in the intellectualist wing of the natural law tradition).

What is a reason for what is a matter of the relation between contentful statuses that is not at all dependent on the attitudes of those whose statuses they are—or indeed, of any attitudes at all. Not only *that* one is subject to normative assessment as to the goodness of one's reasons for the commitments one has undertaken but also *what* would count as fulfilling that responsibility are not attitude-dependent in the way in which what ground-level commitments one undertakes is. In exercising one's authority to undertake responsibilities by adopting attitudes, one also subjects one's attitudes to assessment as to whether they suitably acknowledge those responsibilities and what they attitude-independently entail.

Hegel admires and applauds this synthesis of what each of the pre-modern and modern traditions got right: the structural reciprocity of normative attitudes and statuses, according to which each is both authoritative over and responsible to the other. Here, he thinks, Kant plants the seeds of a post-modern overcoming of the opposition between the one-sided traditional exclusive emphasis on objectivity (the authority of status over attitude) and the one-sided modern exclusive emphasis on subjectivity (the authority of attitude over status).

The point of my rehearsal of some of the large-scale strands of thought shaping the early modern metaphysics of normativity has been to make it possible to show how Hegel weaves them together in an altogether original way. His account of normative statuses as instituted by the proper social constellation of recognitive normative attitudes is the fifth model we need to consider. It is both the successor and product of the four we have already considered: the traditional subordination-obedience model, the modern subordination-obedience model epitomized by the Grotian tradition of natural law, the perfectionist-empiricist-sentimentalist tradition, and the radically modern Kant-Rousseau autonomy model.

According to Hegel's model, normative statuses are instituted by special sorts of normative attitudes when those attitudes exhibit a distinctive kind of *social* structure. The kind of normative attitudes a structurally suitable constellation of which are capable of instituting genuine normative attitudes are attitudes of what he calls "*recognition*" [Anerkennung].

The distinctive social structure of recognitive normative attitudes that Hegel takes to institute normative statuses is *reciprocal* or *mutual* [gegenseitig] recognition. Recognitive attitudes attribute normative statuses. General recognition is attributing a kind of normative metastatus: the status of being a normative subject. Since according to the model this metastatus is instituted by recognitive attitudes when they are symmetric, when one is recognized by someone one recognizes in turn, it is a normative status that can in principle be exhibited only by those who both adopt normative recognitive attitudes and

have such attitudes adopted towards them. So to have normative statuses one must be both subject and object of normative recognitive attitudes.

The subordination-obedience model essentially incorporates an *asymmetric* social relation, however. One party commands and another obeys. Recognition, too is itself an asymmetric social relation. It has a recognizing subject and a recognized object. But it is the essence of Hegel's metaphysics of normativity that the recognitive attitudes in question be symmetric and reciprocal, in that sense, mutual. The roles of recognizer and recognized (being the subject and being the object of recognitive attitudes) are distinct, and the individuals playing those roles are distinct. But all parties must play *both* roles with respect to each other for their normative attitudes to institute normative statuses.

Kant and Rousseau achieved symmetry within a conception that is recognizably a version of the legislating/obeying model by adopting a *reflexivity* strategy: identifying the commanding with the commanded. Hegel does so by adopting a *symmetry* strategy: understanding the key social normative relation to be one where both subjects standing in that social recognitive relation play both roles. Both metaphysical models can be seen as versions of the idea that normative attitudes of command and obedience between individuals standing in subordination relations can institute statuses of obligation that are genuinely *normative* statuses only if they are intelligible as having the structure of *self*-government. The autonomy model applies that idea by requiring that the instituting attitudes be reflexive. The recognition model applies that idea by requiring that the instituting attitudes be symmetric. According to this new essentially *social* conception of normative self-hood, the self-constituting, self-conscious subject of both normative attitudes and the normative statuses they institute is what Hegel calls "the 'I' that is 'we', the 'we' that is 'I'." [*PhG* 177].

The retrospective rational reconstruction of a tradition of concept-applications is the process that "gives contingency the form of necessity." Viewed *pro*spectively, the particularity and contingency of individual attitudes shows up: the sense in which they are explicable in terms of other attitudes without reference to governing normative statuses. Viewed *retro*spectively, the necessity codified in norms as statuses shows up: the sense in which individual attitudes are normatively governed by universals implicit in the tradition, to which they answer for their correctness. Seeing these dual perspectives as two sides of one coin, as indissolubly linked aspects of one rational process by which conceptual content is determined, is what allows Hegel to do justice both to the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and to the status-dependence of normative attitudes. The structure of authority and responsibility it embodies exhibits the structure of reciprocal recognition.

For Hegel the form of reason's march through history is the telling of a distinctive kind of retrospective rationally reconstructive story (an "Erinnerung") recounting a tradition that is expressively progressive in showing up as the gradual emergence into explicitness of determinately contentful conceptual norms and commitments that become visible as having been all along implicit.

Part Three: ***Norms, Self-Consciousness, and Recognition***

Lecture 9

From Subordination, through Autonomy, to Mutual Recognition: Stages in the History of the Metaphysics of Normativity

I. Kant's Normative Turn

Hegel fully appreciated, as many of Kant's readers have not, that one of the axial innovations orienting Kant's thought is his reconceptualization of selves, consciousness, and self-consciousness in *normative* terms. Selves are in the first instance normative subjects: subjects of normative statuses and attitudes. They are what can undertake responsibilities, in the form of duties and obligations, and exercise authority in committing themselves by endorsing epistemic claims and practical maxims. Being conscious in the sense of apperceiving—being sapient, a condition of our kind of sentience—is exercising those normative capacities. It is committing oneself, exercising one's authority to make oneself responsible by judging. Judgment is the minimal form of apperceptive awareness because judgments are the smallest units one can commit oneself to, make oneself responsible for. What Kant calls the "objective form of judgment", the "object=X" is the formal mark of what is represented in a judgment: what one makes oneself responsible *to* for the correctness of one's judgmental act.[186] What he calls the "subjective form of judgment", the "'I think' that can accompany all judgments" and hence is "the emptiest of all representations" is the formal mark of the self who is responsible *for* the judging. What one is responsible for *doing* in judging is integrating one's commitment into a whole exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception. Synthesizing such an apperceptively unified constellation of commitments is extracting and endorsing inferential consequences of one's commitments, offering some of them as justifications of others, and extruding incompatible commitments. Those unities are conscious selves as normative subjects, and the rational process of producing and maintaining them subject to the rules governing the rational relations articulating the conceptual contents of the various commitments is for Kant the the process of self-consciousness.

The rules that determine what commitments are reasons for and against which others are called "concepts." They are rules that govern the synthesizing of apperceptive unities. Kant calls concepts "functions of judgment," and their distinctive functional role in the activity of judging is determining what more specific obligations one has

[186] I offered a down payment on Hegel's account of this representational dimension of discursiveness in Part One.

incurred by committing oneself to a judgeable conceptual content. The concepts that are applied in judging must determine what else one commits oneself to by endorsing those judgments, what other commitments would count as entitling oneself to or justifying those commitments, and what further commitments are incompatible with them, and so must be critically extruded from the evolving constellation of commitments in order to satisfy the normative demand for rational unity characteristic of apperception.

The order of explanation this account pursues is radically novel. Reversing the traditional way of proceeding, the account of the content of *concepts* is to be derived from the account of the content of *judgments*, rather than the other way around. The entire logical tradition before Kant had started with an understanding of particular and general concepts, and built on it an account of judgments as predicating some concepts of others. Even more striking is the reason for this new order of semantic explanation. The *contents* of judgments, and so the contents of the concepts they can be analyzed into, are understood in terms of Kant's distinctive account of the *activity* of judging—of what one is *doing* in applying concepts in judgment. Judgeable contents take methodological pride of place because of their role in Kant's normative account of judging; they are the minimal units of commitment, they are what one can endorse in the sense of take responsibility for. Since the task-responsibility one undertakes in judging is rationally integrating those judgments into a developing whole exhibiting the right sort of unity, fulfilling one's ampliative responsibility to acknowledge inferential consequences of one's judgments, one's justificatory responsibility to have reasons for them, and one's critical responsibility to give up incompatible commitments, judgeable contents must determine the inferential relations among judgments that articulate those ampliative, justificatory, and critical responsibilities. In this way Kant's *semantics*, his theory of judgeable and so conceptual content, is read off of his *pragmatics*, his theory of the *activity* of judging and so of the *use* of concepts. As I think Hegel sees him, Kant is in practice what I call a semantic *pragmatist*, not in the Fichtean sense of prioritizing practical philosophy over theoretical philosophy, but in the more radical sense of according his normative account of discursive *activity* (force, in the Fregean sense) methodological explanatory authority over the account of discursive *content*. This strategy of understanding semantics functionally in terms of pragmatics cuts across and applies equally to practical and theoretical philosophy.

In the *Self-Consciousness* chapter of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel takes over and transforms this normative understanding of self-conscious selves by offering a novel social metaphysics of normativity. The process of synthesizing self-conscious normative subjects, which Kant had understood as an individual affair, Hegel reconstrues as a social practice of mutual recognition that essentially requires the participation of different interacting individuals. *Normative* statuses are understood as essentially *social* statuses, instituted by social recognitive practices and practical recognitive attitudes. Individual self-conscious selves and recognitive communities are jointly synthesized by practices of recognizing each other as normative subjects in the sense of having the authority to make themselves and hold others responsible, to acknowledge and attribute commitments and obligations.

One of Hegel's innovations that can easily remain invisible, since he doesn't explicitly emphasize it, is his taking as his basic topic discursive normativity: the characteristic that distinguishes what he calls "Geist." Looking

backwards through the lens of Kant's treatment of discursivity itself as essentially normative, Hegel can see earlier thinkers who still today are usually grouped together under the rubric of "moral theorists" as offering important insights not just about this particular species of normativity, but about normativity as such. Moral norms are not Hegel's starting-point in thinking about this topic. He starts with conceptual norms as such. ("Language," he says "is the Dasein"—the concrete existence—"of Geist."[187]) After introducing and discussing normativity in general in the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, he moves on to discuss the normativity at the core of intentional agency in *Reason*, and only then, via a discussion of Kantian Moralität, to something recognizable as determinately moral normativity—a discussion that culminates, at the end of *Spirit*, with an account of the moral dimension of discursive normativity in general (Geist überhaupt).

In another (completely unprecedented) move, Hegel *historicizes* his *social* metaphysics of normativity. Seeing normative statuses as socially instituted, as the products of social institution, opens the way for him to see the structure of normativity (what distinguishes "Geist") as varying with different structures of social practice—so as itself having a history. He takes traditional normativity to have a different structure than modern normativity. And for Hegel the point of understanding this difference and the nature of the transition between these structures is to make visible the contours of a third, successor form that normativity can and should take—the form that it *must* take once it becomes sufficiently self-conscious.

In the rest of this lecture [chapter], I offer an overview of some of the most important strands of early modern philosophical thought about the nature of normativity, culminating in Kant's autonomy model that Hegel weaves together in his own metaphysical understanding of normativity in social terms of reciprocal recognition. Hegel himself does not offer a rational reconstruction of this sort of this tradition he inherited and developed. It is, as we have seen, a form of understanding he does both esteem and practice, and to which he assigns the greatest systematic importance. In this case, I think seeing what ideas he picks up as progressive and which he treats as remnants of ossified premodern forms of understanding offers and illuminating perspective on his own metaphysics of normativity, which is at once firmly rooted in previous thinking and radically innovative.

[187] *Phenomenology,* [652].

II. The Subordination-Obedience Model

Hegel sees all subsequent forms of understanding as developing from the rejection of the traditional metaphysics of normativity that I shall call "the subordination-obedience model." He addresses it to begin with in the allegory of the Master and the Servant (Herr und Knecht). The distinguishing feature of this model is that the paradigmatic normative status, *obligation*, is taken to be instituted by the command of a superior. As an explicit metaphysics of normativity, the origins of theories of this sort is in theology, in a picture of God as the ultimate legislator, whose commands institute laws that his creatures are obliged to obey. The voluntarist wing of Catholic natural law theory represented by Duns Scotus and William of Ockham gave rise to Protestant natural law theorists who to one extent or another secularized and naturalized the approach. (I'll say something further along about the significance for Hegel of the contrary intellectualist wing of the natural law tradition—paradigmatically Aquinas, but also Averroes—and of Suarez's characteristic attempt at a synthesis of the two.) Grotius, Cumberland, Hobbes, Pufendorf, Thomasius, and Locke all understood the normatively binding force of laws, their capacity to oblige obedience, as rooted in the antecedent existence of a superior-subordinate relationship between the authoritative promulgator of the law and those responsible for obeying it.

The idea of superior-subordinate relationships as part of the objective order of things is the core of the neo-platonic Great Chain of Being (scala naturae) deriving from Plotinus.[188] This great hierarchical structure traces down from God at the top through the ranks of angelic beings catalogued by Aquinas (seraphim, cherubim, thrones, and dominations at the superior end to archangels and angels at the subordinate end) down through the human hierarchy with kings at the top as superior to various kinds of nobles who stand in the same relation to different estates of less well-born commoners, continuing even to rankings of animals, plants, and minerals according to their "primacy." This picture of relations of subordination as not only matters of objective fact, but in some sense *the* fundamental objective metaphysical structure of reality invited early modern theorists to naturalize such relations, bringing them back down to earth. One principal leading idea for the naturalization of subordination relations—of particular significance for Hegel's discussion of Master/Servant relations—is to construe them as norms that express differences in *power*.

[188] Famous to us from Arthur Lovejoy's classic *The Great Chain of Being*: *A Study of the History of an Idea* [Harvard University Press, 1936].

It is characteristic of early modern thinkers' transitional position between medieval theological conceptions and the post-theological modernity of Rousseau's and Hegel's discussions that the nature of human relations of subordination is typically addressed theoretically in terms of how to understand God's dominion over humans. So Hobbes attributes God's natural right to command obedience to his "irresistible power" to punish disobedience.[189] His "state of nature" is identified precisely with the lack of natural social relations of "sovereignty and subordination," among humans, in which no-one owes obedience to anyone else because power to punish, from which the right to command obedience derives, has not yet been concentrated in a sovereign. Locke, too, thinks that "the inferior, finite, and dependent is under an obligation to obey the supreme and infinite."[190] But he understands God's *authority* to oblige and compel human obedience as consisting not only in his *power* to do so, but as rooted in another matter of objective fact: his status as our creator. A creator, he thinks, has a natural right to lay down laws creating obligations of obedience for his creations.[191]

The status of being a superior is on the obedience model itself a normatively significant status. It entails the right or authority to legislate, to institute obligations, to command obedience. But on these reductive accounts, possession of that status relative to others is itself a non-normative matter of objective fact: a matter of one's power, paradigmatically one's power to compel obedience or punish disobedience, or of the matter-of-factual *dependence* of the subordinates on the superior, for instance in having been created by that superior. The concept of the relative status of superior/subordinate is construed as having nonnormative circumstances of appropriate application, but normative consequences of application in that the commands of the superior institute normative statuses of *obligation* in those related to them as subordinates.

Cumberland offers a characteristically mixed account. He analyzes law into two components, the precept (the content enjoined or proscribed) and the sanctions provided for noncompliance. Possession of the power to punish disobedience is a non-normative matter. But God's paradigmatic possession of normative authority as a superior to legislate for subordinates depends crucially on his *benevolence* towards those subordinates. It is his wishing them well (and knowing what is best for them) that is the basis of his normative status as superior in the sense of having the *right* to legislate.[192] On the one hand, one can think of God's (or a king's) benevolence as a matter of objective

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189 *Leviathan* XXXI.5.

190 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* IV.XIII. 4.

191 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* II.XXVIII.8.

192 Richard Cumberland (1672) *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature*, John Maxwell (trans.), Jon Parkin (ed.). On precept and sanctions, V.i. "the Obligation of a Law *properly so called*, which proceeds from the Will of a Superior," XIX.iv. "the *intrinsick Force*69 *of all those Arguments, with which the Legislator* (God) *uses to enforce Universal Benevolence*, is, in my opinion, all that is meant by

fact. He either has the attitude of wishing the good for his subordinates, or he does not. On the other hand, the attitude of benevolence is itself a *normative* attitude: being motivated to act for their *welfare*, aiming at what is *good* for them.

Pufendorf, too, rejects Hobbes's claim that the superior/subordinate status relationship that is the source of the normative force of obligations consists solely in the differential power of the one who is owed and the one who owes obedience.

> Neither strength nor any other natural pre-eminence is alone sufficient to derive an obligation on me from another's will, but that it is farther requisite that I should have received some extraordinary good [Oldfather: special service] from him, or should have voluntarily agreed to submit myself [Oldfather: should of my own accord consent] to his direction.[193]

God, for instance, gave us an "extraordinary good," performed a "special service" by creating us, so this thought might be seen to be behind Locke's invocation of the right of the creator. Or, as Cumberland has it, God showed us his benevolence towards us by not only creating us, but creating us in his image in the specific sense of making us like him at base universally benevolent. Here we see [Pufendorf and Cumberland introduce] two rising themes challenging the grounding of obligation in prior objective relative statuses of superior/subordinate, calling forth command on the part of the superior and obedience on the part of the subordinate as the consequent appropriate practical acts or normative attitudes.

One is the idea that the status of superior, having the *right* to command, to *oblige* those commanded to obey, has not only normative *consequences*, but also normative *conditions*. This is the idea that being a superior is a normative status that one must *deserve* (for instance, through the fact of service or an attitude of benevolence). This goes beyond the simple idea that *authority* is more than mere *power*. For that distinction can be made entirely on the side of the

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the *Obligation of Laws:* The *Rewards* annext to Universal Benevolence by the *right Reason of Men*, chiefly *oblige*, because they promise, beside the Favour of Man, the Friendship of the*Chief of Rational Beings*, GOD, the Supreme Governour of the World. The *Punishments* they inflict by the same Reason, are both *Parts* of the *present*, and most certain *presages* of the *future*, Divine Vengeance." XXXV.ii. "That the End of the Legislator, and also of him who fulfils the Law of Nature, is far greater and more excellent, than the avoiding that Punishment, or the obtaining that Reward, whence the Law receives its Sanction, and which is what immediately affects every Subject; though the Obligation of every Subject to yield Obedience be indeed, immediately, discover'd by those Rewards and Punishments." For the *End*, that is, the Effect directly intended by *both*, is the *Publick Good*, the Honour of the Governor, and the Welfare of all his Subjects." XLVII.i.

[193] Samuel Pufendorf, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations* (1672), I.vi.12. Basil Kennett (trans.) Fourth Edition, 1729. Alternate interpolated translation from the edition of C.H. Oldfather and W. A. Oldfather, Oxford, 1934. Henceforth "OLNN".

consequences of application of the concept superior. It is the claim that the *circumstances* of application of that concept are themselves normative in character. One has to have *done well by* the subordinates through performing a service, or at least had an attitude of *wishing them well*, that is, benevolence towards them. The second idea is the idea that the status of being a superior, in the sense of having a *right* or *authority* to impose obligations and command obedience (as opposed to the mere power to punish noncompliance) might be dependent on the *attitudes* of the subordinates: on their having agreed or consented to, or otherwise *acknowledged* that authority.

Both these ideas can be seen at play throughout early modern thinking about normativity. And they both stand in substantial tension with the traditional metaphysical picture of normative statuses of obligation as rooted in the prior existence of objective ontological relations of superiority and subordination, as epitomized by the neoplatonic *scala naturae*. The idea that beyond one's power to enforce obedience, status as a superior with the normative authority to impose obligations is something one might or might not be *entitled* to—that the normative issues of one's *right* to command or whether one *deserves* to do so are not settled just by how things non-normatively are—threatens to undermine the idea that *all* normative statuses can be understood to be instituted by the commands of superiors to subordinates. As Leibniz argues in his "Opinion on the Principles of Pufendorf" of 1706, if it is acknowledged that besides power there must be *reasons* justifying commands for them to be legitimately imbued with the authority of a superior, understanding what entitles the superior to command as a normative status instituted by the command of a superior would create a circle "than which none was ever more manifest."[194] The subordination-obedience metaphysical model of normativity that explains the normative status of obligation on the part of the subordinate cannot be extended to explain the normative status of being *entitled* to the authority to command. If the concept of the status of superiority not only has normative *consequences* of application in the form of authority to impose obligations on subordinates, but also normative *circumstances* of application in the sense that the one who commands must be *justified* in doing so, must *deserve,* be *worthy*, or have a *right* to that authority, then some other form of normative status must be acknowledged that is not itself to be understood on the model of institution by the command of a superior. Leibniz, like Cumberland, looked to the attitude of benevolence. The thought that the relative statuses of superiority and subordination are themselves already fully normative statuses is part of what is behind the famous opposition between law and love (for example in the natural law tradition and in the Cambridge Platonists, respectively) as what is taken to be the most basic conception in early modern moral theory.

The second idea is even more momentous. For it is the idea that the normatively significant status of having the authority to impose obligations (which according to the first idea

[194] Leibniz *Political Writings* Patrick Riley (trans. and ed.) Cambridge, 1988, pp. 64-75.

also counts as a normative status in the sense that exhibiting it has normative conditions of desert, worth, or entitlement) is, or at least can be, *attitude-dependent*. Pufendorf's invocation of "consent" (or elsewhere "acknowledgement"[195]) by the subordinate as a condition of the superior's right to command marks a decisive change from traditional views. The idea that the normative statuses instituted by natural law might be dependent on normative attitudes is a distinctively modern one. Indeed, the core of Hegel's understanding of the transition from traditional to modern selves, norms, and societies, as laid out in the *Spirit* chapter, should be understood to consist in a shift in the relative priority of normative statuses and normative attitudes.

The basic thought is that it is of the essence of traditional structures of normativity that normative statuses are conceived of as objective, in the sense that neither their content nor their binding force depends on anyone's normative attitudes. Those normative statuses set the standard for assessments of the propriety of attitudes. The law is what it is, independently of what anyone thinks about it, and one is obliged to acknowledge one's responsibility to its authority. The paradigmatic form of this traditional structure is what I have called the "subordination-obedience" model of normativity. In its classic form, being a subordinate or a superior is an objective normative status, and normative subjects are supposed to (are subject to a distinctive kind of criticism, including punishment, if they do not) acknowledge them by adopting practical attitudes of obedience and command.

By contrast, it is distinctive of modernity to take normative statuses of authority and responsibility, entitlement and commitment, to be instituted by normative attitudes of acknowledging or attributing those statuses: taking or treating someone in practice *as* authoritative or responsible, entitled or committed. While Hegel insists that this modern model expresses a genuine and important truth about the metaphysics of normativity, in the end he sees both the traditional and the modern models of normativity as one-sided: the first as hyper-objective and the second as hyper-subjective. Just as traditional accounts failed to acknowledge the authority of attitudes over statuses, the responsibility of statuses to attitudes that the moderns

[195] For instance at *OLNN* I.VI.8: "…where a person **acknowledges** no superior there can be no essential principle apt to restrain his inward liberty…."

had discovered, even the most sophisticated version of the modern understanding, Kant's autonomy account, though it does also acknowledge the authority of statuses over attitudes, the responsibility of attitudes to statuses, which the tradition had appreciated, fails adequately to integrate the traditional and modern lines of thought. Hegel's own social recognitive metaphysics of normativity is to give each its due.

The vocabulary I am using to express these ideas is mine rather than Hegel's. He does not use the terms "authority" and "responsibility." These are the terms I am adopting to talk about what he discusses under the headings of "independence" and "dependence", neither of which, he insists, can properly be understood independently of its relation to the other, both of which must be understood as themselves interdependent "moments" in a more complex structure. Though he uses these central logical-metaphysical terms in many ways, I want to claim that the normative uses paraphrasable in terms of authority and responsibility are fundamental—their "home language game." Nor does Hegel use the terms "status" and "attitude." These are the terms I am adopting to talk about what he discusses under the headings of what things are *in* themselves (Ansichsein) and what they are *for* themselves or others (Fürsichsein). The discussion in the previous chapter of understanding self-conscious selves as beings such that what they are *in* themselves is an essential element of what they are *for* themselves introduces the idea of a kind of normative *status*, being a self-conscious individual normative subject, that depends on (is responsible to) normative *attitudes* (the commitments one *acknowledges* by identifying with them). Though "in-itself" and "for-itself" (also "for-an-other") are central logical-metaphysical terms Hegel uses in many ways. For instance, in discussion the *Perception* chapter, we saw them used to distinguish, roughly, intrinsic from relational properties. But I claim that their use to distinguish normative statuses from practical normative attitudes in the social recognitive metaphysics of normativity is fundamental—their "home language game." This strategy of understanding "independence" and "dependence" in terms of authority and responsibility and "in-itself" and "for-itself" ("for-an-other") in terms of normative statuses and normative attitudes lies at the core of the semantic reading of the *Phenomenology* I am offering here.

Of course ancient and medieval philosophers acknowledged that there were *some* normative statuses that were instituted by practical normative attitudes. Having the authority or responsibilities exercised by one who holds some elected office, or those conferred by explicit legislation in cases where the aim of the legislation could obviously have been achieved in other ways are central among them. But the most basic norms, those defining the persons or normative subjects of positive laws, were not understood to be of this kind. The whole idea of *natural* law is

intended to contrast with that *artificial* kind of law. The normative statuses articulated by natural laws are to be construed as necessary, as conceptually and metaphysically antecedent to and independent of the contingent attitudes, practices, and institutions of creatures of the kind whose nature they articulate.

III. Voluntarism in Medieval Natural Law Theories as the Thin Leading Edge of Modernity

In this connection it is illuminating to consider the distinction within the natural law tradition between *intellectualists* and *voluntarists*. Intellectualists, paradigmatically among the Catholic theologians, Aquinas, held that the authoritativeness of commands issued by superiors to subordinates (expressions of the attitudes of those superiors) answered to (depended upon) *reasons* rooted in the same objective natures that determined their relative "primacy" as superiors/subordinates. Even God, with the objective status of superior to all, is understood as constrained in the laws he lays down by the demands of reasons concerning the objective good of creatures with the natures with which he has endowed them. God's unconstrained omnipotence is acknowledged by attributing to him the "*absolute*" power to have created beings with different natures than the ones he actually created, but his "*ordained*" power, given the natures he *actually* created, is understood as constrained by reasons provided by those determinate natures. He could not have made murder or (tellingly) adultery right. Even God's normative attitudes, as expressed in his commands, in this sense answer to antecedent objective normative statuses.

By contrast, theological voluntarists, such as William of Ockham reject the constraint on God's normative attitudes by reasons rooted in objective natures, as codified in Aquinas's distinction between his absolute and his ordained power. What makes something right or obligatory (institutes those normative statuses) is just God's normative attitudes towards them, his approval or commands. Those attitudes are not constrained by reasons stemming from any antecedent objective normative statuses. It is his will alone (which I am talking about in terms of his normative attitudes) that institutes normative statuses of obligation and permission. God could, if he so chose, have made murder and adultery right—though he did not in fact do so. The theological disagreement between intellectualists and voluntarists about the relationship between normative statuses stemming from objective created and creating natures and normative attitudes (obligation-instituting acts of divine

will) is intimately entangled with the ontological-semantic dispute between realists and nominalists about universals. Ockham attributes no reality to kinds or natures over and above the reality of the particulars they group. Assimilating particulars by treating them as exhibiting a common universal or nature is itself an act of will, the expression of a practical attitude. The groupings are arbitrary in the original sense—the product of "arbitrium brutum." Understanding universals, including kinds and natures, as the product of contingent activities of naming (hence "nominalism") makes reasons deriving from those natures themselves attitude-dependent.

Divine command theorists understand the obligations—normative statuses obliging the adoption of normative attitudes of obedience—of us subordinates-because-inferiors as instituted by divine attitudes (expressed in commands, acts of will), even if the framework of relative normative statuses of superior-subordinate is understood as objective in the sense of attitude-independent. Where intellectualists see *all* attitudes as answering to attitude-independent statuses, voluntarist natural lawyers do not see the status-instituting attitudes of superiors as themselves constrained to acknowledge prior statuses. The voluntarists can be thought of as holding a variant of the traditional subordination-obedience model. But compared to the still more traditional intellectualists, they substantially inflate the significance of attitudes relative to statuses. In this sense, theological voluntarism in the Catholic natural law tradition represents the first stirrings of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses that would burst into full bloom among the early modern Protestant natural lawyers: the thin leading edge of the wedge of modernity. (Luther and Calvin were voluntarists.)

It is still a huge, distinctively modern, step from understanding the normative statuses of subordinates to be dependent on the normative attitudes of their superiors to seeing the normative status of being a superior ("primacy") as dependent on the attitudes of the subordinates. It is, of course, the driving idea of social contract theories of specifically political obligation. I quoted Pufendorf above rejecting Hobbes's claim that objective matter-of-factual power over others could confer the status of superiority in the sense of the *right* to command attitudes of obedience, when introducing the notion of consent of the subordinates as an attitude that can institute the relative statuses of superior-subordinate. Pufendorf himself recognizes that a thought like this is also present already in Hobbes, quoting him as saying as saying "All right over others is either by nature or by compact."[196] Pufendorf radicalizes Hobbes by rejecting the idea that power all by itself can confer right over others, insisting that only the *combination* of consent and power to punish confers such normative primacy.[197]

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[196] Hobbes, *De Cive:* Chapter XV. Quoted by Pufendorf at *OLNN* I.VI.8.

[197] "Obligation is properly introduced into the mind of a man by a superior, that is, a person who has not only the power to bring some harm at once upon those who resist, but also just grounds for his claim that the freedom of

Hegel sees a paradigm of the shift from traditional to modern modes of thought in what became the popular contrast between status-based "divine right of kings" political theories and the attitude-based consent theories epitomized by Thomas Jefferson's resonant words in the American Declaration of Independence (paraphrasing Locke in his "Second Treatise of Civil Government" of 1690): "…governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." According to this line of thought, the distinction between possessing matter-of-factual power and exhibiting the normative status of *just* power is a matter of the *attitudes* of the subordinates subject to that authority to oblige obedience.

IV. Modern Protestant Natural Law Theories

Pufendorf is in many ways the clearest spokesman for the distinctively modern approach that gives explanatory priority to normative attitudes over normative statuses in its metaphysics of normativity. For he understands normative statuses as instituted by normative attitudes across the board. On his picture, an antecedent and self-sufficient natural world has normative significances imposed on it by human attitudes. For him, there were no normative statuses, no obligation or authority, before people adopted attitudes of taking or treating each other *as* obliged or authoritative. His generic term for normative statuses is "moral entities":

> We may define our moral entities to be certain modes superadded to natural things and motions by understanding beings; chiefly for the guiding and tempering of the freedom of voluntary actions…[198]

We create these "moral entities" as God creates natural ones:

> As the original way of producing natural entities is by *creation*, so the manner of framing moral entities cannot be better expressed than by the term *imposition*. For these…are added at the pleasure of intelligent creatures to beings already perfect in the natural

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our will should be limited at his discretion." [*OLNN* I.II.5]. Without fear of sanctions for noncompliance, Pufendorf thinks, the motivational significance of obligation cannot be explained, while without acknowledgement of normative authority of the superior, its legitimacy cannot be explained. (See also *OLNN* III.IV.6.)

[198] *OLNN* I.I.3.

> sense…and consequently obtain their whole existence from the determination of their authors.[199]

This realm of normative significances is the ancestor of Hegel's Geist. Understanding it and how we create it is a principal task of philosophy.

> Our business is to declare how, chiefly for the direction of the *will*, a certain kind of attributes have been imposed on natural things and motions…And these attributes are called *moral entities*, because the *manners* and actions of men are judged and tempered with relation to them; and do hence assume a face and habit different from the horrid stupidity of the dumb creation.[200]

The most important of these moral entities are laws and obligations. "That norm is called a law that is a decree by which a superior obliges a subject to conform his actions to what he prescribes."[201] So Pufendorf has a modern version of the traditional subordination-obedience model, but transposed so that normative statuses are seen as imposed by normative attitudes. For the dependence of the normative statuses of obligation on the part of subordinates on the attitudes of superiors is balanced by the reciprocal dependence of the status of the superior as one who has a *right* to impose obligations by his attitudes on the attitudes of consent or acknowledgement of just authority by the subordinate. In this way the relative primacy statuses of superior/subordinate are themselves understood as attitude-dependent. Here, I think, we find an important ancestor of Hegel's view of normative statuses as instituted, imposed, or synthesized by reciprocal practical recognitive attitudes.

Pufendorf goes a long way to secularizing and naturalizing normativity. God is not out of the picture entirely. He, too, imposes normative statuses on natural things and doings by his attitudes. He is a superior to whose laws we ought to consent. But the focus has moved to the sphere of human practical attitudes.

> *Moral entities* are of this kind; the original of which is justly to be referred to Almighty God, who would not that men should pass their life like beasts, without culture and without rule, but that they and their actions should be moderated by settled maxims and principles, which could not be effected without the

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199 *OLNN* I.I.4.

200 *OLNN* I.I.2.

201 *OLNN* I.II.2 and I.IV.1.

application of such terms and notions. But the greatest part of them were afterwards added at the pleasure of men, as they found it expedient to bring them in for the polishing and methodizing of common life.[202]

Seeing normative statuses (Pufendorf's "moral entities") as instituted by the practices and practical attitudes of human beings brings them back down to earth, as our products. In this he was following his hero Hugo Grotius (the "father of natural law" in the Protestant tradition), who famously provoked outrage with what came to be referred to as his "etiamsi daremus" saying that everything he said about natural law would still be true

> …even if we should concede [etiamsi daremus], what without the greatest wickedness cannot be granted, that there is no God, or that he takes no care of human affairs.[203]

Grotius was not asking his readers to entertain just a counterfactual possibility, or even just a counternomological one. He was asking them to think about how things might be in case the most basic and pervasive metaphysical structure of the universe were radically different than they knew it to be. Even then, he says, our essential social nature would oblige us to act in certain ways, according to certain laws, in order to avoid ceaseless conflict. The necessity of the natural laws he sought to identify is rooted, he claims, in facts about human nature that go deeper than the relatively contingent fact of humans with that nature having actually (along with everything else) been created by God.

> The Mother of Natural Law is human nature itself, which, though even the necessity of our circumstances should not require it, would of itself create in us a mutual Desire of Society: and the mother of civil law is that very obligation which arises from consent, which deriving its force from the law of nature, nature may be called as it were, the great grandmother of this law also.[204]

This was a radical naturalism indeed. Even for those who could not or would not officially countenance so much as the intelligibility of the situation he asks us to consider (surely the majority of his early modern readers), a question is raised by the standard his "etiamsi daremus" sets for the assessment of claims about the metaphysics of normativity. Are there obligations or other normative statuses whose bindingness swings free of the acts and

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[202] *OLNN* I.I.3.

[203] *The Rights of War and Peace* Richard Tuck (editor) from the translation of Jean Barbeyrac. Liberty Fund (Indianapolis) 2005. Preface, XI. p. 89. Original publication 1625. Compare Laplace's later remark to Napoleon, concerning the relation of God to his physics (by contrast to Newton): "I had no need of that hypothesis," ["Je n'ai pas eu besoin de cette hypothèse"].

[204] *The Rights of War and Peace* Preface, XVII p. 93. See also Book I, I.XII p.159:

> That anything is or is not by the law of nature is generally proved either *a priori*, that is, by arguments drawn from the very nature of the thing, or *a posteriori*, that is, by reasons taken from something external….The proof by the former is by showing the necessary fitness or unfitness of anything with a reasonable and sociable nature.

attitudes of God? Viewed from the theological point of view of the Catholic tradition he inherits and transforms, Grotius's naturalistic view about norms seems compounded of equal measures of intellectualist natural law theory (as in Aquinas) and triumphant Pelagianism—thought of as the view (anathema to Augustine) that recognition of the fundamental practical obligations requisite for living a good human life (and so, for Christian salvation) are not in principle dependent on specifically religious knowledge or belief.

I have been pointing to two rising tides of thought in early modern thinking about the metaphysics of normativity. First is the idea that normative statuses are instituted ("imposed") by human normative attitudes. I emphasized here the transformation of the voluntarist version of the traditional metaphysics of subordination and obedience by the thought that the status of superiors as having the authority to institute obligations by their attitudes depends on its acknowledgment by or the consent of the subordinates, as in Pufendorf and Locke. Second is the allied naturalization of normativity consequent upon seeing normative statuses as instituted by human normative attitudes, evident already in Grotius. It was not only the natural law tradition that carried these ideas forward. They are equally manifest in the thought of those who are often seen primarily in terms of their contrast with the natural lawyers during the early modern period, as being on the other side of the "law vs. love" divide: those who are sometimes called "sentimentalists." Early modern British theorists such as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Butler, and Hume, in part inspired by the Cambridge Platonists, can also be read as understanding normative statuses in terms of normative attitudes, which are prior in the conceptual order of explanation. They give pride of place to attitudes of normative assessment, of reflective approval or disapproval by a distinctive moral faculty, which in turn is somehow rooted in a characteristic kind of feeling or sentiment, paradigmatically, benevolence. Even those who would not go as far as the reductive materialism of Bayle and Hobbes aimed at naturalizing normativity in a broader sense. The characteristic order of explanation of this tradition, from felt motivation to reflective normative attitude to normative status, was self-consciously pursued in a naturalistic spirit. Potentially puzzling normative statuses such as the distinction between right and wrong actions are to be explained as arising as part of the natural history of a certain kind of creature: reflective beings whose feelings of benevolence give rise to discursive attitudes of approval and disapproval that are intelligible as normative assessments of doings *as* right or wrong. Both strands of thought are present here. The normative empiricists put commitment to the attitude-dependence of norms in the order of understanding, seeing them as human products, in the service of naturalizing those norms.

There is a third element in the emerging modern account of the metaphysics of normativity that is common to the natural law tradition and the sentimentalists, in spite of the difference of orientation marked by the "law vs. love" slogan. Grotius put at the center of his

theory the idea that norms are instituted to solve a problem arising from the essentially *social* character of human beings.

> [A]mongst the things peculiar to man, is his desire of society, that is, a certain inclination to live with those of his own kind, not in any manner whatever, but peaceably, and in a community regulated according to the best of his understanding.[205]

> This sociability, which we have now described in general, or this care of maintaining society in a manner conformable to the light of human understanding is the fountain of right, properly so-called.[206]

Natural law is natural in stemming from this feature of human nature. On the one hand we are sociable creatures, and on the other conflicts will inevitably arise and must accordingly be managed. That is why we institute the obligations and rights that articulate the normative spheres of property, contract, and merited punishment.[207] From his very different anthropological starting-point, Grotius's contemporary Hobbes, too understands obligations and rights to be instituted to solve the social problems that conflicting desires and interests would otherwise create. In the other modern normative tradition, the sentiments of love or benevolence motivating the normative attitudes in terms of which normative statuses of right and wrong are to be understood are essentially *social* attitudes: relational attitudes toward *others*.

I have been claiming that the natural law and sentimentalist traditions are alike in understanding normative statuses as *natural* products of human *social attitudes*. These three dimensions—attitude-dependence, naturalism, and the social-practical character of the institution of norms by attitudes—mark them as distinctively modern approaches to the metaphysics of normativity, contrasting with traditional forms of the subordination-obedience model. One important respect in which these modern traditions differ from one another that is of particular importance for understanding what Kant and Hegel did with these shared ideas concerns the relative explanatory priority accorded to understanding the *bindingness* of normative statuses and their *motivational* force. Suarez had made much of the distinction between the relative normative statuses that justify the claim that the subordinate must obey the superior and the motives that might lead the subordinate in fact to obey the superior. The capacity of the superior (including

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[205] *The Rights of War and Peace* Preface VI pp.79-81.

[206] *The Rights of War and Peace* Preface VIII pp. 85-6.

[207] The passage just quoted continues by articulating the notion of "right, properly so-called":
…to which belongs the abstaining from that which is another's, and the restitution of what we have of another's, or of the profit we have made by it, the obligation of fulfilling promises, the reparation of a damage done through our own default, and the merit of punishment among men.

God) to punish disobedience is understood as relevant only to the second issue. We saw that Pufendorf appeals to this distinction in objecting to Hobbes's understanding of the superior/subordinate relation exclusively in terms of relative power. In general, the natural law tradition focuses its attention on the nature of the normative bindingness of the law, its capacity to oblige obedience from those subject to it, the way in which it provides reasons to act one way rather than another. It treats the issue of motivation as a secondary, merely practical issue of how to see to it that the normative statuses of obligation and right, once properly instituted, are in fact acknowledged, treated *as* reasons, in the attitudes of those they bind. By contrast, the empiricist sentimentalists focus to begin with on the motivational issue. They understand what it is to be a reason in terms of what in fact moves reflective natural creatures like us. Hobbes, like Machiavelli before him, appeals only to individualistic, selfish, or at least self-interested motives. Cumberland and the Cambridge Platonists adopt a complementary posture, emphasizing social motives of love and benevolence. Both approaches seek to understand and explain normative statuses in terms of what is practically efficacious in bringing about actions.

In his magisterial survey *The Invention of Autonomy*, to which the present discussion is much indebted, Jerome Schneewind says

> Hobbes and Cumberland originated views whose descendants are still live options for us. Pufendorf's theory is dead. We need to know about all three in order to understand the varied seventeenth-century effects of the Grotian impetus.[208]

I disagree with this minimizing assessment of Pufendorf's contemporary significance. What Schneewind says is true only if we read "Pufendorf's theory" very narrowly. Secular natural law theory is no doubt not as robustly pursued as the descendants of Hobbes's and Cumberland's approaches are. But his pathbreaking idea that "moral entities" (normative statuses) are "imposed" on natural things by human practical attitudes and the social practices within which those attitudes arise is still of the first importance. Further, the big methodological divide that distinguishes Pufendorf's tradition from that of Hobbes and Cumberland—concerning the explanatory priority of accounts of the normative bindingness of normative statuses such as obligations relative to accounts of the motivational efficacy of normative attitudes—is the origin of the hugely important contemporary debate between broadly kantian and broadly humean approaches to practical reasoning. The Hobbes and Cumberland strands of thought indeed live on within contemporary theories that follow the Humean strategy of understanding reasons for action generally in terms of an antecedent account of what moves practical agents. Contemporary rational choice theory is perhaps the most prominent such heir. The tradition Pufendorf speaks for so eloquently lives on in theories that follow Kant in developing first an account of reasons for action in terms of normatively binding obligations, and then concerns itself with issues of

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[208] Jerome Schneewind *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* [Cambridge University Press, 1997], Ch. 5, p. 82.

motivation only afterwards, in seeking to make intelligible the notion of a rational will in terms of attitudes of acknowledging normative statuses.

I have been appealing to Pufendorf to emphasize the distinctively modern idea that normative statuses are dependent on normative attitudes. This thought transforms the subordination-obedience model of normativity, enforcing a distinction between traditional and modern forms. In effect, we distinguished three stages in the development of this model. Most traditional are intellectualist theological natural law theorists, such as Aquinas. They understands the attitudes of superiors, in the form of the commands they issue, as instituting laws and so obligations. The status of being a superior, in the sense of having the authority to issue binding commands, is understood as objective, in the sense of being an attitude-independent matter of metaphysical fact, determined by what kinds there are. Further, intellectualists see *all* attitudes, including the commands of superiors, as answering for their correctness to attitude-independent statuses, rooted in the actual kinds, which provide *reasons* for some attitudes rather than others—reasons binding even on God's ordained power (though not his absolute power). A crucial intermediate step on the way to modernity is represented by the voluntarist theological natural law theorists, such as Ockham, who do not see the status-instituting attitudes of superiors as themselves constrained to acknowledge the bindingness of prior statuses, or objective reasons deriving from the natural kinds there actually are. A third stage is then achieved by the Pufendorfian idea of normative statuses as imposed by attitudes, not only from above in the direction from superiors to subordinates, but also from below, in the converse direction. Here there is a gesture to tradition, in allowing objective, attitude-independent "service" or the fact of benevolence to warrant superior status, but modernity kicks in with the category of attitude of "consent" or "acknowledgment" of superior as instituting the authority that defines that status. I am now suggesting that the order of explanation that distinguishes the Pufendorf-Kant tradition from the Hobbes-Cumberland-Hume tradition reinstates a crucial strand of thought from the intellectualist natural lawyers. In particular, the crucial intellectualist thought that attitudes answer to antecedent statuses providing reasons for those attitudes does not go away. This is a rich, tangled heritage. But how can this thought be reconciled with the attitude-dependence of normative statuses that was a key discovery of modernity? Kant's autonomy model and Hegel's reciprocal recognition model are different ways of weaving together the strands of thought we have been distinguishing in the early modern tradition.

V. The Perfectionist Self-Government Tradition

To appreciate their different answers, and how Kant and Hegel, each in his own distinctive way wove together the strands of thought put in play by their predecessors that I have been rehearsing, we need to consider one more such strand. This is the perfectionist tradition, leading to ideas of self-government that come to full flower with Rousseau and with Kant's understanding of normative bindingness and freedom as two necessarily correlative aspects of the autonomy characteristic of rational agents. Schneewind is particularly concerned to trace the origins and limn the boundaries of this line of thought, since his principal interest lies in the way Kant's concept of autonomy grew out of a rejection of the traditional understanding of normativity in terms of normative statuses of superiority and subordination and expressions of normative attitudes in law-instituting commands and obedience to them. The tradition he assembles has as its slogan St. Paul's observation that the gentiles, "which have not the law," are a "law unto themselves."[209] Its earliest modern proponents were Machiavelli and particular Montaigne, who began by "rejecting every conception of morality as obedience that he knew."[210] Here is how Schneewind describes this alternative to the tradition of natural law:

> Where the natural lawyers saw the maintenance of social order as the crucial issue, others took individual self-perfection as the central theme for moral reflection. Influenced by Stoicism, rationalist thinkers from Lord Herbert of Cherbury and Descartes through Leibniz offered various versions of perfectionist ethics. Some thought we should focus on perfecting our knowledge, others, especially the Cambridge Platonists, emphasized perfecting our wills.[211]

Theologically, the perfectionists were heirs to Aquinas' intellectualism and to Suarez, who though a classical obedience theorist says that obedience can come immediately from a direct concern with righteousness aroused by awareness of a law. The very same considerations, rooted in the objective nature of things, that give God reasons for laying down the laws he does (constraining his ordained power) are accessible also to our minds, albeit less adequately. And we are capable in principle of shaping our wills in response to this knowledge of those same reasons God acknowledges.[212] Indeed, the principal manifestation of God's benevolence has been to make us in his own image in these epistemological and practical respects: to make us in principle capable of being *self-governing*, able to know and do what is right. Our task is to develop and improve these capacities to the limit of our finite abilities, thereby making our minds and our wills ever more closely resemble the divine mind and will.

Among later thinkers, Samuel Clarke sees reasons for acting one way rather than another as reflecting "fitnesses" that are grounded in the "necessary and eternal" relations of things. Even God necessarily rationally

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[209] Romans 2.14. Jerome Schneewind *The Invention of Autonomy* op. cit. Ch. 22 p. 483.

[210] Schneewind Ch. 23.ii p. 513.

[211] Schneewind, Introduction, v, p. 13.

[212] Strenuously denying this claim is the first tenet of Five Point ("TULIP") Calvinism, under the heading of the "total depravity" of humanity.

obliges himself to conform to those objective fitnesses, and so ought we.[213] Richard Price, Adam Smith, and Thomas Reid all understand us as fully self-governing, in that we can discern for ourselves what we ought to do and are able in principle to make ourselves do it. They accordingly deny the need for authoritative commands or external sanctions. We need such things no more than God does. Our imperfect but indefinitely perfectible self-governance is modeled on God's own. But for all these intellectualists, self-governance is situated in a metaphysical structure in which normative attitudes answer to antecedent objective, attitude-independent normative statuses (Clarke's "eternal fitnesses"). Our capacity to govern ourselves is the capacity to conform our epistemic and practical attitudes to an antecedent normative order.

I think Schneewind is right to emphasize the importance of this perfectionist tradition of self-governance in providing raw materials for what would become Kant's understanding of the metaphysics of normativity in terms of autonomy. But these thinkers set their faces resolutely against the voluntarist tradition's distinctively modern emphasis on the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. I think the key to understanding Kant's autonomy idea—in particular, to understanding it from the point of view of what Hegel made of it—is to see how he sought to reconcile the modern idea (rooted in the voluntarist wing of natural law theory) that normative statuses are attitude-dependent with the traditional idea (rooted in the intellectualist wing of natural law theory) that normative attitudes ought to conform to antecedent normative statuses. The perfectionist self-government tradition emphasizes this latter idea. In Hegel's terms, a proper metaphysics of normativity must explain the structural interrelationship between what things are "for consciousness," what I am calling "normative attitudes," and what they are "in themselves," what I am calling "normative statuses." Both views that focus exclusively on the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and those that focus exclusively on the status-dependence of normative attitudes are one-sided and inadequate. As I read Hegel's language, "dependence" [Abhängigkeit] is at its base a normative notion. It is his way of talking about responsibility. What he talks about using the correlative term "independence" is authority. The metaphysical model of normativity Hegel discusses allegorically under the heading of "Mastery" is "pure independence": authority without correlative responsibility, the "moment" of independence construed apart from its necessary relation to a moment of dependence. Understood like this, modern claims about the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and traditional claims about the status-dependence of normative attitudes are claims about some kind of *authority* attitudes are taken to have over *statuses*, that is, some kind of *responsibility* statuses have to attitudes, and about some kind of authority statuses are taken to have over attitudes, some kind of responsibility attitudes have towards statuses. Filling in these ideas is specifying what sorts of authority and responsibility are envisaged by claims of the various kinds.

I think Kant thinks that there is something importantly right about both points of view. The idea of normative statuses such as obligation (or of authority and responsibility) is unintelligible apart from consideration of attitudes of acknowledging obligations. Theoretical commitments in the form of judgments and practical commitments in the form of intentions (paradigms of normative statuses) are products of our attitudes of

[213] See Schneewind, Ch 15.ii, pp. 314 ff..

endorsement. They are instituted by our attitudes every bit as much as the status of obligations incurred by promising are. It is an essential feature of rational knowers and agents (selves in the sense of subjects of normative statuses and attitudes) that they can acquire normative statuses of commitment or obligation by adopting normative attitudes. On the other hand, some normative statuses are authoritative in obliging knowers and agents to adopt attitudes of acknowledging them. Commitment to the lawfulness of nature and the dignity of rational knowers and agents are statuses we must rationally acknowledge. Here our attitudes are responsible to objective normative facts. It is a principal criterion of adequacy of Kant's metaphysics of normativity that it be able to reconcile these two lines of thought, make sense of both of these directions of dependence relating normative attitudes and normative statuses. Hegel takes it that Kant is not fully successful in this enterprise. As we will see, his reciprocal recognition account of normativity aims to articulate the complex interdependences between what norms are for consciousness (attitudes) and what they are in themselves (statuses), and between necessity in the form of dependence (responsibility) and in the form of independence (authority).

What in my rehearsal I have added to the story about early modern moral philosophy, for instance as so comprehensively told by Schneewind, is principally the perspective on it provided by Hegel's understanding of the transition from traditional to modern conceptions of normativity in terms of the relations between the moment of status-dependence of normative attitudes that traditional conceptions one-sidedly focus on and the moment of attitude-dependence of normative statuses that modern conceptions one-sidedly focus on. In Hegel's terms the first is the moment of dependence of what things (paradigmatically, consciousness and self-consciousness) are for consciousness on what they are in themselves—which for full comprehension will have to be balanced by an appreciation of the corresponding moment of *in*dependence of what things are for consciousness relative to what they are in themselves. The second is the moment of dependence of what things (paradigmatically consciousness and self-consciousness) are in themselves on what they are for consciousness. In my terms, these are to be understood in terms of the distinctive authority of normative statuses over normative attitudes: the sense in which our attitudes answer or are responsible to, are assessed by the standard set by normative statuses that have some independence of those attitudes, and the distinctive authority of normative attitudes over normative statuses: the sense in which normative statuses of obligation and permission, indeed, of authority and responsibility themselves, are instituted by attitudes of attributing or acknowledging obligation and permission (commitment and entitlement), attitudes of taking or treating normative subjects *as* authoritative or responsible.

VI. Rousseau: Freedom as Self-Governance

The proximal source of Kant's way of understanding the attitude-dependence of normative statuses is Rousseau. In addition to this filiation, Rousseau is independently important to Hegel,

who takes from him some ideas that Kant does not take up. In particular, one cannot read Hegel's discussion of the subordination-obedience model of normativity in terms of the allegory of masters and servant ("lordship and bondage", Herrschaft und Knechtschaft) without thinking of the startling second sentence of Rousseau's *Social Contract* which it is evidently intended to explicate: "One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater servant than they." Rousseau performs a remarkable synthesis of the natural law tradition, which introduces the idea of attitude-dependence of normative statuses in the form of a distinctively modern version of the traditional subordination-obedience model, with the perfectionist tradition of self-governance, which includes commitment to the status-dependence of normative attitudes as part of its essential core. To be sure, Rousseau has substantial disagreements with the natural lawyers—principally along dimensions that Hegel makes more of than Kant does. He follows them in seeing normativity as having a prehistory, in envisaging a state of nature, to be contrasted with the result of imposing Pufendorfian "moral entities" (normative statuses), paradigmatically by some kind of social contract. But he insists that Grotius and Hobbes at the beginning of the modern natural law tradition, in locating the impetus for instituting norms in aboriginal conflict of wills have projected back into the state of nature sophisticated motives and modes of thought that only become available when the natural sweet generosity of *amour de soi* has been institutionally corrupted into the vain, jealous, aggressive *amour propre* of already thoroughly socialized (and, importantly for him, fully linguistic) beings, which is the late-coming source of the dominance relations of superior and subordinate.

But Rousseau also substantially builds on the natural law tradition, and in so doing transforms it. He, too, unlike the perfectionist tradition, takes the concept of <u>obligation</u> to play a central role. Like them, he takes over the subordination-obedience model of normativity. But he radicalizes the modern idea of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses that had emerged within the natural law tradition by combining it in an unexpected and unprecedented way with the idea of <u>self-governance</u> (thought of by its earlier champions in terms of a capacity to shape one's attitudes to one's understanding of antecedently constituted objective norms) central to the perfectionist tradition. He did that by placing all these conceptions in the framework of a radically new conception of *freedom*—which serves as a kind of metanorm for him. It is this idea that inspired Kant and Hegel, and came to define German Idealism generally.

The slogan for Rousseau's reconceptualization is "Obedience to a law one has prescribed for oneself is freedom."[214] He endorses this model both in the individual case of the 'I', where Émile's education is to bring him up to be the kind of self who can resolutely commit himself and feel himself self-consciously free in such self-binding, and in the social case of the 'we', where the essence of the social contract is for *us* to be free in obeying laws *we* have laid down for *our*selves expressing the *volonté générale*.

In the context of our rehearsal of prior approaches to normativity, a number of features of this view stand out.

1. Freedom, a normative status, is understood as instituted by the normative attitudes expressed by practical acts of command and obedience. This is a purely modern view of the wholly attitude-dependent status of norms. It radicalizes the strand of thought we have seen develop from voluntaristic forms of medieval natural law theory through its early modern Protestant and secular heirs. In this respect, Rousseau is a proper descendent of Descartes, who without explicitly realizing the normative character of the mental (a lesson that would have to wait for Kant) nonetheless defined the mind ontologically in terms of its pure attitude-dependence. Mental occurrences were defined as those where the represented and the representing of it coincide, events that consist in the attitude of taking oneself to have such an event. They are (a status) exactly what they *seem* to be (an attitude). More important in the line of filiation to Rousseau's thought, on the practical side willings are conceived as acts where the attitude of trying guarantees the status of success. One cannot try to will and fail to do that.
2. It is a form of the subordination-obedience model of normativity.
3. Freedom is also here clearly a norm of self-governance.

Rousseau's remarkable synthesis of these disparate ideas shows up clearly if we lay these points alongside three further observations. First, the self-governance tradition emphasizes the status-dependence of normative attitudes, the objective authority of attitude-independent reasons based in the ontological natures of things—exactly the converse of Rousseau's pure attitude-dependence view. Yet Rousseau has managed to synthesize these seemingly incompatible lines of thought. Second, the subordination-obedience model of normativity grounds the normative status of obligation on the essentially asymmetric relation between the normative statuses of superior and subordinate. By contrast, Rousseau's version resembles the perfectionist self-government tradition, which acknowledges no such asymmetry. For this tradition, all of us

[214] "[L]'obéissance à la loi qu'on s'est prescrite est liberté." *Social Contract* I.viii.

humans, like God himself, are in the same situation of striving to conform to the reasons that are inherent in the natures of things. God is just much better at it than we are (OK, perfect, rather than merely indefinitely improvable). Rousseau achieves this symmetry by identifying the commanding superior normative subject whose attitudes institute obligations by laying down laws with the obedient subordinate normative subject the appropriateness of whose attitudes is assessed according to those obligations. The subordination-obedience model looks completely different if it is the *same* normative subject instituting statuses by attitudes of commanding and obeying. (Nietzsche would later *temporalize* this process, focusing on the mastery of later temporal stages of an individual over the significance of the deeds of earlier time-slices of that same individual. In this he follows Hegel. But he does not combine this *a*symmetric historicized relation with a *symmetric social* recognitive structure.) Further, Rousseau transmutes the overarching goal driving the process of perfecting our capacity to govern our own attitudes by our appreciation of objective reasons into the form of a master-norm, freedom, to which obligation, the leading normative status according to the natural lawyers' order of conceptual explanation, is subordinated.

In his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* Hegel says that "the principle of freedom emerges in Rousseau…This furnishes the transition to the Kantian philosophy…"[215] This assessment seems entirely just. For Kant, too, *freedom* provides the overarching basis for normative meta-assessment. The whole German Idealist tradition he founds is defined by its reworkings of the story he tells about the intimate interrelationships of the concepts of freedom, reason, and self-consciousness. Rousseau is the prophet of freedom (and, like Montaigne before him, an immensely influential, emblematic *practitioner* of self-consciousness, though not an important theorist of it). As we are now in a position to appreciate, all this takes place within the context of a revolution in the understanding of the metaphysics of normativity.

VII. Kant's Autonomy Model

[215] *Lectures on the History of Philosophy,* Haldane and Simpson (trans.) [Routledge, Kegan, Paul, London 1968] Volume III, p. 402.

On the way to combining it with new conceptions of reason and self-consciousness, Kant takes Rousseau's *idea* about freedom and develops it into a fine-grained *account*. Some elements of that account are elaborations of what Kant sees as implicit already in Rousseau's ideas. Others involve combining that idea with other strands of thought in the traditions I have been discussing. One of the things Kant appreciates about Rousseau's idea is that it presents what Isaiah Berlin (acknowledging the roots of the distinction in Kant) would later call a "positive" conception of freedom, rather than a "negative" one.[216] Crudely put, it is a conception of freedom as the freedom *to do* something, rather than as freedom *from constraint* of some sort. It is an active, rather than a passive conception of freedom. Kant sees that Rousseau's conception of freedom is the actualization of a potential, the doing of something, rather than just the potential to do it without hindrance. For obeying is doing something. It is concretely and practically expressing an attitude in a performance. Merely being *able* to obey is not this kind of freedom. Of course, according to the negative conception of freedom, obeying a command, being obliged to act one way rather than another, is a paradigm of *un*freedom. It is just the sort of constraint freedom contrasts with. Rousseau's idea is that it is otherwise with *self*-command. Governance by one's *own* attitudes, by commitments one endorses and embraces, is not the sort of constraint even the negative conception forbids. Nevertheless, where the negative conception can admit obeying one's own commands as an *exercise* of the *capacity* of freedom, Rousseau insists that freedom *consists in* the doings which are active obedience. Freedom is acting in a certain way: responsively to acknowledgment of obligations instituted by one's own attitudes.

A second feature of Rousseau's idea of freedom that Kant focuses on is that it is an essentially *normative* conception of freedom. Being free is acting as one is *obliged* to act, so long as one has laid those obligations on oneself. What makes an act free is the kind of *authority* one is acknowledging in performing it, what one is acknowledging *responsibility* to: in each case, one's own attitudes. The modality here is *deontic*, not *alethic*. It concerns obligation and permission, not necessity and possibility. What matters in the first instance is not that it be *possible* for one to have done otherwise. That consideration will come in only much later, if at all, in the order of conceptual explication. Kant's *autonomy* conception of freedom, developing Rousseau's idea, contrasts with *heteronomy*: acting according to some obligation that one has *not* laid down for oneself. This way of thinking about freedom contrasts strongly with that of the empiricist tradition, for which the contrast with freedom is something like the causal constraint invoked by determinism. Rousseau's idea is transformative here. It determines the order of explanation Kant pursues in the

[216] Berlin, I. (1958) "Two Concepts of Liberty." In Isaiah Berlin (1969) Four Essays on Liberty. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

second *Critique*. The empiricists first ask whether the agent could have done otherwise or was necessitated to perform that action. This is a question concerning alethic possibility and necessity: *could* the agent have done otherwise, *if* she so chose? If not, if the action was in this sense necessary, they conclude, the action was not free. Therefore, the agent cannot be counted as responsible for it. Kant exploits the same conceptual connections in the opposite direction. We start with what the agent is properly held responsible for. This is a normative question concerning deontic responsibility and authority. If the doing was an exercise of the agent's authority, if she is in that sense responsible for it, then it *thereby* count as free.

This radical difference in orders of explanation can be muddied by the dual sense that terms like "responsible", "obliged", "must" and "necessary" can express. For they have both alethic and deontic readings. The empiricists can talk about someone being "responsible for an action" in a *causal* sense of "responsible", and being "obliged" to do it in the sense that it was causally necessitated by factors outside the agent's control. And the normativist can say that one *must* do what one is normatively obliged to do, without meaning thereby to claim that it is impossible physically to do otherwise. Whether this is merely a systematic ambiguity between alethic and deontic modalities, or indicative of a deep connection between them is itself a philosophical question of the first importance. In this book, I have been claiming that seeing deontic and alethic modal concepts as two sides of one coin is of the essence of Hegel's objective idealism. (That these modal terms have an original, undifferentiated sense is also argued—without the heavy metaphysics—by Paul Grice in *Aspects of Reason*, though he does not get very far in his diagnosis of why this is or what it means.[217]) In a move that was of the utmost significance for Hegel, Kant acknowledges the kinship between these concepts by distinguishing "natural necessity" from "practical or moral necessity", as species of a single genus. "Necessary" [notwendig] for Kant means "according to a rule." What distinguishes the two species of necessity is attitude-dependence. Natural necessity is constraint by rules whose paradigm is laws of nature. The sense in which they necessitate performances is independent of the attitudes of those who obey them in the sense of conforming to them. Practical necessity, Kant says, is "acting according to *representations* of rules."[218] The sense in which representations of rules matter is that those representations are the contents of our attitudes of *endorsing* those rules, *obliging* ourselves to follow them, which are what institute the normative necessities. Those rules in the form of representations are what Kant calls "concepts." We endorse them in our attitudes by applying concepts theoretically in judgments and practically in endorsing practical maxims. According to this conception, freedom does not contrast with acting from necessity. It consists in acting from *practical* necessity, that is, from the *normative* necessity of obligations we have

[217] Paul Grice and Richard Warner (editor) *Aspects of Reason* [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2005], chapters III and IV.

[218] Allen Wood (ed. and trans.) Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* [Yale University Press, 2002], p. 17 (Ak 4:402).

instituted by our own attitudes of endorsement, according to commitments or responsibilities we have ourselves undertaken.[219]

Kant gets from Rousseau the idea of thinking about positive freedom in deontic normative terms, by contrast to the empiricists' negative concept of freedom understood in alethic modal terms of possibility and necessity. Acting freely is acting autonomously, in the sense of producing performances that express attitudes of obedience to obligations one has instituted by one's own attitudes. Positive freedom in this sense is not lack of constraint, it is a special kind of constraint: constraint by *norms*. Normative constraint in the sense that matters here is practical necessity, understood in terms of self-imposed obligations. By understanding the practical species of necessity in terms of autonomy, Kant is in effect transforming Rousseau's definition of *freedom* into a *criterion of demarcation of the normative*. Only statuses that result from exercises of our freedom in the sense of autonomy count as genuinely *normative* statuses. Statuses we have not instituted, those imposed by others, paradigmatically by superiors commanding subordinates, show up by contrast as exercises of *power*. As heteronomous they do not have genuinely obliging normative force. "Obligations" instituted by the commands of others are obligations in name only. They can compel obedience at most in the alethic sense, making it impossible for a subordinate to do otherwise on pain of punishment, not in the deontic normative sense defined that requires obedient acknowledgments of the obligation to be acts of freedom in Rousseau's sense.

Turning Rousseau's definition of freedom into a criterion of demarcation for a distinctive sense of normative bindingness is a big conceptual move. It provides an account of the distinction Pufendorf had put in place between the causal force of "physical entities" and the normative force of "moral entities," which he understood as "imposed by" the attitudes of normative subjects. In the place of the empiricist opposition of constraint to no constraint, Kant puts the opposition between two kinds of constraint: alethic and deontic, heteronomous and

[219] Kant is often thought of as having endorsed (indeed, as having been the first to endorse) a principle of "ought implies can." His actual view about the relation between deontic and alethic modalities is more complex and fluid. For an introduction to the subtleties, see Robert Stern "Does 'Ought' Imply 'Can' and Did Kant Think it Did?" *Utilitas* 16 (1), pp. 42-61. I think Kant's thought is a compound of two claims: that one cannot be obliged to do what one cannot *will* to do, and that one cannot will what one knows to be in all circumstances impossible. It does not follow that one cannot in determinate circumstances be obliged to do something that is as a matter of fact impossible in those circumstances.

autonomous. That normative force, the bindingness of genuinely normative statuses of obligation, Kant understands as essentially mediated by and dependent on the attitudes of the ones who are bound by those statuses. (The constraint involved is mediated by attitudes whose contents include *representations* of rules.) The symmetric-because-reflexive relation between the commanding attitudes instituting obligations and the obedient attitudes acknowledging them marks out the normative realm by appeal to the special sort of reflexive attitude-dependence Rousseau had identified with freedom. Kant understands us as living, moving, and having our being in a normative space: a space of obligations and commitments. Rousseau gave him the clue as to how to distinguish that realm of norms from the realm of nature, which can then be seen to include the obedience of subordinates non-normatively compelled by the threat of sanctions from superiors. The normative realm is *by definition* the realm of freedom.

Appealing to the symmetric attitudes involved in obedience to self-imposed obligations to define what it is for a status to count as a *normative* status, using autonomy as a criterion of demarcation for the normative, has consequences for the structure of those statuses, in particular for the structure of their *attitude-dependence*. To be a normative subject, that is, to be able to act autonomously and so be the subject of obligations that are genuinely normatively binding, that is, are genuine normative statuses, is itself to have a normative status. It is, first, to have the *authority* to make oneself *responsible* by an act or attitude of endorsing, whether doxastically in judging or practically in willing, that is endorsing a practical maxim. This is the authority to undertake and acknowledge *commitments.* It is the normative capacity (in deontic sense of authority, not alethic possibility) to *commit* ourselves, to *bind* ourselves in the normative sense of *oblige* ourselves to do something, rather than the ability to become responsible for a doing in the empiricists' sense of making it happen. This is a status (authority) in virtue of which one's attitudes (expressed in acts of command and endorsement) institute statuses (obligations, commitments, responsibilities). In fact, this is exactly the constellation of statuses and attitudes that constitute the status of a *superior* according to the subordination-obedience model. It is, second, to have the *responsibility* to *fulfill* obligations that have been instituted by one's own attitudes. This is a status (responsibility) in virtue of which one's attitudes (expressed in acts of obedient conduct) acknowledge one's attitude-dependent obligations (statuses). This is exactly the constellation of statuses and attitudes that constitute the status of a *subordinate* according to

the subordination-obedience model. Rousseau's idea was that freedom is the status that results when the *players* (be they organic individuals or communities) of these roles of superior and subordinate coincide. By transmuting this definition of freedom into a criterion of demarcation of *normative* statuses and attitudes, that is, by using it as the structure of a new metaphysics of normativity, Kant requires that the *roles* of superior and subordinate coincide. By this I mean that on his account they are both reciprocally sense-dependent and reciprocally reference-dependent. That neither is intelligible apart from the other, and actually playing either role depends on the actual playing of the other. This much might be said already of the traditional superior/subordinate statuses. But in Kant's case, the normative attitudes and statuses whose complex interrelationships constitute this structured constellation are themselves both intelligible as and actually ontologically qualify as *normative* only in virtue of the roles *they* play in this larger whole. Hegel uses the terminology of "independence" and "dependence" in a normative sense to talk about authority and responsibility. So in his terms, the fundamental Kantian notion of normativity essentially involves "moments" both of independence and dependence. If and insofar as the basic form of normativity is what Kant takes it to be, namely having the authority to make oneself responsible to commitments one has oneself undertaken, that constellation of independence and dependence is more basic conceptually than either the authority (independence) or the responsibility (dependence). For neither can be understood apart from their complementary relations to each other.

Notice that the Grotian rationale for imposing Pufendorfian "moral entities," which pervades and helps define the modern natural law tradition, namely the management of social conflict, has completely dropped out of the Kantian story. The negative freedom from social conflict that provides the overarching goal and metavalue for the natural lawyers has been replaced by the individual positive freedom to acknowledge genuinely normative (because self-imposed) constraint—following up on central ideas of the individualistic perfectionist self-government tradition that contrasted with and opposed that of natural law). The loss of the social dimension is a consequence of having identified, not just the *players* of the roles of superior/subordinate, but also the *roles* of superior/subordinate. Rousseau maintains a social dimension by contrasting individual freedom with the communal freedom that consists in obedience to the *volonté general.* In Kant, the *social* dimension of the previous stages in the history of metaphysics of normativity has gone missing, in service of the overcoming (Aufhebung) of the subordination-obedience model by incorporating freedom as autonomy as the criterion of demarcation of the normative. Further, Rousseau thinks freedom can be achieved only in a certain kind of *social* situation. This, too, is a thought that seems to drop out in Kant. Hegel will weave these strands of acknowledgement of its essentially social character back into his metaphysics of normativity.

But Kant does not just synthesize the natural law and self-government traditions. He also synthesizes a modern commitment to the attitude-dependence of normative statuses, which originated with voluntarist versions of medieval natural law theory, with a traditional commitment to the status-dependence of normative attitudes, which originated in intellectualist versions of medieval natural law theory and was picked up and developed by the perfectionist self-government tradition. For within the complex of self-command and obedience-to-self that he constructs in working out his autonomy criterion of demarcation of genuinely normative binding *force*, Kant thinks both the authority of the superior role and the responsibility of the subordinate role involve substantial structural constraints on the *contents* of status-instituting attitudes that are not obvious on the surface. Those structural constraints are revealed only by a distinctively philosophical kind of self-consciousness. Conveying those constraints, raising his readers to that distinctive kind of philosophical self-consciousness, is a task that is equally central to Kant's project as is teaching us to understand the nature of normativity in terms of autonomy.

The activity of Kantian normative subjects exclusively takes the form of self-bindings: exercising their authority to make themselves responsible. The rules they bind themselves by are concepts. The contents of the concepts determine what they have made themselves responsible for, what they are obliged to do, in virtue of the commitments articulated by those concepts that they have undertaken. On the theoretical side of empirical knowing, what Kantian normative subjects become responsible for and committed to by applying concepts is judgements. On the practical side of intentional acting, what Kantian normative subjects become responsible for and committed to by applying concepts is practical maxims. Kant thinks that by undertaking conceptually explicit commitments of these two sorts, normative subjects as knowers-and-agents *implicitly* acknowledge commitments that articulate the framework within which knowing and acting are possible. These implicit, framework-articulating commitments are normative statuses that all of the ground-level discursive normative attitudes (applications of concepts in judging and acting) answer to. This is the dimension of status-dependence of normative attitudes in Kant that complements the attitude-dependence of normative statuses expressed by his autonomy criterion of demarcation of normative force.

Here I think we can distinguish four sequential steps in Kant's thought about discursive normativity. The first is his central revolutionary idea that concepts and norms are two sides of one coin: concepts must be understood in terms of the normative force of applying them (that is, in terms of what one is doing in judging and acting intentionally) and norms must be understood in terms of the conceptual contents that articulate and relate them. This idea transforms the traditions concerning the metaphysics of normativity, some of whose strands and filiations I have been gesturing at, not just by applying it to thought about concepts, but by transposing it into a *discursive* key. In this way the considerations and lessons of those traditions are brought to bear no less on theoretical than on practical activity—in a distinctively modern fashion quite different from the direct connection medieval thinkers starting with Aquinas saw between issues of nominalism vs. realism about universals and voluntarism vs. intellectualism about norms. Kant's insight into the normative character of concepts and the conceptual character of norms frames all of his thought.

Second, he sees an intimate connection between *descriptive* and *explanatory* uses of concepts. He sees that, as Wilfrid Sellars will later put the point, that "the descriptive and explanatory resources of language advance hand in hand."[220] Any concept that cannot be appealed to in an explanation, an account of why something that did happen had to happen, according to a law, also cannot be appealed to in empirical description. That is the difference, as Sellars again will later say, between describing and merely labeling. So Hume could not be in the position he took himself to be in: understanding empirical descriptive concepts perfectly well, but getting thereby no grip on the lawful connections among them that underwrite causal explanations. Sellars expresses this thought yet again as the title of one of his earliest essays: "Concepts as Involving Laws and Inconceivable Without Them." We have seen Hegel developing this line of thought in making the transition from understanding empirical consciousness on the model of perception to understanding it on the model of understanding.

Third, one of Kant's biggest ideas is that besides the empirical concepts used in description and explanation, there are concepts whose distinctive expressive task it is to make explicit necessary structural features of the framework that makes description and explanation possible. Those concepts can be thought of as implicit in all the ordinary empirical descriptive-explanatory concepts, in the sense that one must implicitly know everything one needs to know to deploy them, in order explicitly to deploy the ordinary empirical descriptive vocabulary. In this sense, these concepts are *pure* concepts, graspable *a priori*. For grasping them does not depend on grasping any *particular* empirical concepts, or making any *particular* empirical judgments. These "pure concepts of the understanding" he calls "categories."[221] Central among these are the alethic modal concepts expressing the lawful necessary connections among concepts expressed by counterfactual-supporting hypothetical judgments: if one *were* to heat the copper coin beyond 1085° C., it *would* melt. It is entirely up to the individual concept-user whether to apply the concept copper to the coin, whether to adopt that attitude, to undertake that commitment. But if she adopts *any* such attitude, makes *any* empirical judgment, it is *not* up to her whether she thereby undertakes further commitments, for instance as to its malleability, melting point, and electrical conductivity. And it is not up to her *what* else she thereby commits herself to. That the concept she applied stands in lawful relations to others is not a status that is instituted by her (or anyone else's) attitudes. It is part of the framework within which not just responding differentially to copper things, but responding by describing them as *copper* (applying the concept copper to them) is possible. And the particular lawful connections that concept stands in are also a matter of the status (responsibility, commitment) the judger undertook, and are not themselves attitude-dependent. The *force* of her commitment is attitude-dependent, but not its *content*. In instituting statuses by their attitudes, Kantian judgers make their further attitudes (what other commitments they acknowledge) liable to normative assessment according to standards set by statuses—paradigmatically what is a lawful, so counterfactual-supporting *reason* for what—that are *not* themselves attitude-dependent. In holding this view, Kant stands firmly in the earlier self-government

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[220] "Counterfactuals, Disposition, and the Causal Modalities" [220] §108.

[221] I discuss this particular idea as it has been developed by later thinkers, starting with Carnap and Sellars, in the first chapter of *From Empiricism to Expressivism: Brandom Reads Sellars* [Harvard University Press, 2015].

tradition, where we are supposed to govern our attitudes so as to conform them to antecedent attitude-independent normative statuses concerning what is a reason for what (grounded in the nature of the things we are thinking about). That the statuses knowers institute by their attitudes, the commitments they undertake and acknowledge, are in this way constrained by lawful relations in general, and by the particular lawful hypothetical relations their contents dictate, in no way makes them heteronomous. The idea that empirical contentfulness is possible and intelligible only within the sort of framework of lawful connections articulated by categorial concepts (such as the alethic modal ones implicit in subjunctively robust hypothetical judgments) is meant to explain how that can be.

Fourth, Kant thinks that there are some *judgments* relating categorial concepts that we must acknowledge as true, if only implicitly, simply in virtue of the distinctive expressive role of those concepts. The contents of empirical descriptive concepts must stand to one another in lawful, explanation-supporting rational (in the sense of inferential, reason-supplying) relations. In Kant's idiom, the object-language correlate of the necessity expressed by laws of nature is "cause" (Hegel's "force"). So he can see the material-mode expression of the metadiscursive (transcendental) necessary connection between explanation and empirical description as the claim that all empirical events have causes—that is, are in principle explainable in terms of other empirical events. Claims with this special expressive role have a special epistemic status: they are synthetic (since not derivable from the relations between contents of any particular empirical descriptive concepts) and knowable *a priori* (since not their status does not depend on the truth of any particular empirical judgments).

Viewed against the background of this set of nested claims about concepts, Kant's Copernican Revolution, and the transcendental idealism that informs it, appears as an optional, late-coming account of the status of pure categories and synthetic judgments knowable *a priori*. It depends on a constellation of claims about the role of sensuously immediate intuition in the use of empirical concepts that is in principle independent of this line of thought about concepts. Hegel rejects this further step, as an expression of modernity's one-sided emphasis on the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. We have followed, in our discussion of the *Consciousness* chapters, the alternative way Hegel wants us to think about the role of sensuous immediacy in empirical cognition.

On the practical side, Kant thinks that when we look at the framework presupposed by exercises of intentional agency (applying concepts in endorsing practical maxims), we find implicit commitment to acknowledge the dignity of normative subjects (knowers and agents). In the context of some other substantive collateral commitments, Kant argues that these implicit commitments are codified in various formulations of categorical imperatives. I am not concerned here with the details of the arguments for the existence either of synthetic truths knowable *a priori* or of categorical imperatives, important as those arguments are in other contexts. The structure I want to emphasize is rather the way in which—if we ignore the bridge too far (according to Hegel) of the Copernican revolution optionally grafted on to the four-part line of thought I have just rehearsed, which has no real analogue on the practical side—Kant has synthesized the modern idea of the attitude-dependence of normative

statuses (rooted in the voluntarist wing of the natural law tradition) with the premodern idea of the status-dependence of normative attitudes (rooted in the intellectualist wing of the natural law tradition). On the Kantian story, it is entirely up to the normative subject what explicit commitments she undertakes. She is autonomous, free in the sense Rousseau identifies. Which determinate conceptual norms she binds herself by, which particular judgments or intentions she endorses, are for her to decide. Her attitudes institute normative statuses, commitments and responsibilities, that bind her by conceptually articulated norms. As a normative subject, a knower and agent, she has the authority to undertake those responsibilities by adopting attitudes acknowledging them. That without such normative attitudes of acknowledging and attributing commitments there are no commitments or responsibilities, no normative statuses, is the fundamental modern insight into the metaphysics of normativity, according to Hegel. (For Kant, the attitudes of attributing are all *self*-attributions.) But Kant also claims that in *explicitly* undertaking *any* determinate commitments, exercising the authority to undertake *any* determinate responsibilities, knowers and agents thereby, whether or not they want to, intend to, or realize that they are doing so, *implicitly* acknowledge substantial categorical commitments. Paradigmatically, these are commitments to the lawfulness of empirical events and the unconditional dignity of rational normative subjects: subjects liable to normative assessment as to the *reasons* that would justify what in virtue of that very liability count as their *discursive* commitments: judgments and intentions. These responsibilities are *transcendentally* imposed, but *empirically* are only to be acknowledged in the attitudes of normative subjects.

What the framework-articulating categorial judgments express is that the *autos* of autonomy is just one element of a structure that equally essentially includes *nomos*. It is up to the individual subject of normative statuses *which* commitments she binds herself by, which responsibilities she undertakes. But those attitude-instituted statuses then *bind* the one who instituted them. What is a reason for what is a matter of the relation between contentful statuses that is not at all dependent on the attitudes of those whose statuses they are—or indeed, of any attitudes at all. Having undertaken one commitment obliges one to acknowledge others: those that are its rational consequences. That one is obliged to have reasons for one's commitments is a responsibility that is not an attitude-dependent feature of theoretical or practical experience. Not only *that* one is subject to normative assessment as to the goodness of one's reasons for the commitments one has undertaken but also *what* would count as fulfilling that responsibility are not attitude-dependent in the way in which what ground-level commitments one undertakes is. In exercising one's authority to undertake responsibilities by adopting attitudes, one also subjects one's attitudes to assessment as to whether they suitably

acknowledge those responsibilities and what they attitude-independently entail. It is the business of transcendental philosophy to teach us not only about the attitude-dependence of normative statuses in the sense of autonomy (freedom as constraint by norms we have imposed by our own attitudes) but also about how this autonomy is necessarily exercised within a context of normative statuses that knowers-and-agents are rationally obliged to acknowledge in their attitudes.

VIII. Hegel's Social Recognitive Model of Normativity

Hegel admires and applauds this synthesis of what each of the pre-modern and modern traditions got right: the structural reciprocity of normative attitudes and statuses, according to which each is both authoritative over and responsible to the other. Here, he thinks, Kant plants the seeds of a post-modern overcoming of the opposition between the one-sided traditional exclusive emphasis on objectivity (the authority of status over attitude) and the one-sided modern exclusive emphasis on subjectivity (the authority of attitude over status). He rejects, however, the particular structure Kant has put forward to achieve this synthesis. For Kant's understanding of the relation between the two dimensions of authority and responsibility relating normative statuses and attitudes is hylomorphic. The normative statuses that rationally demand acknowledging attitudes on the part of knowers-and-agents, which Kant sees as commitments implicit in the undertaking or acknowledging of any particular determinate commitments (the endorsement of any judgments or rules for acting), are those that articulate the *framework* that makes empirical knowledge and practical intentional action possible in the first place. What they express is features of the conceptual *form* that particular conceptual contents and their applications must exhibit. The normative statuses that normative attitudes are dependent upon are those articulating the *form* of normative attitudes. The normative attitudes that normative statuses are dependent upon are those determining the *content* of those statuses. My talk of categorial concepts as making explicit features of the "framework" within which empirical description and explanation are conducted on the theoretical side, and determinate exercises of intentional agency are conducted on the practical side, is a way of indicating this form-articulating expressive role played by those categorial concepts, and the synthetic judgments knowable *a priori* to which they give rise. From Kant's point of view, the premodern tradition

was right about the *form* of normativity: it provides substantial normative statuses that our normative attitudes are unconditionally obliged to answer to. The moderns were right about the *content* of normativity: determinately contentful normative statuses are instituted by the normative attitudes of those subject to assessment according to them.

There is a potential for confusion here. Kant did not, and we should not, run together the hylomorphic distinction between form and content in the sense of matter with the Fregean distinction between pragmatic force and semantic content. Kant applies the distinction between form and matter *both* to the acts of judging (and intending or willing, generically: endorsing) *and* to what is judged (or willed), the conceptual contents of those acts. Neither the form of the act (what one is doing in judging or intending, namely exercising one's authority to make oneself responsible) nor the form of the content (standing in relations of inferential inclusion and exclusion that determine the potential for those contents to be integrated into apperceptive unities) is within the authority of the normative subject. It is up to the subject which particular determinate conceptually contentful acts to perform: the matter that takes the form of normative acts with conceptual content. Judgeable contents have conceptual form and intuitive matter.

Acts of judging (the original kind of synthesizing) also have a form and a matter. Their subjective form is the "I think." Their objective form is the "object=X", which indicates that in judging one has made oneself responsible *to* something (what is in that normative sense represented by it), which exercises authority over assessments of the correctness of the judging. Their matter is the actual concrete unrepeatable act of synthesizing *that* content (intuitions and concepts) at *this* time (in the context of just *these* collateral commitments). That judgeable contents have conceptual form is to be understood in terms of the form of acts of judging. Judgeable contents stand to one another in determinate relations of inferential containment and exclusion. It is these relations that determine their potential for integration into a constellation of doxastic-epistemic commitments exhibiting the rational unity characteristic of apperception. That is a dynamic unity subject to normative assessment of the extent to which its process of development (the activity of apperceiving) is responsive to structural norms obliging the apperceiver to have reasons for the commitments it acknowledges, to acknowledge commitments that are consequences of those it acknowledges, and to reject commitments materially incompatible with them. The requirement that conceptual contents stand to one another in determinate material inferential and incompatibility relations is accordingly a categorial demand binding the attitudes of individual knowers (and agents)—a demand deriving from the form of the apperceptive act of judging.

As I read him, Hegel endorses the aspiration to give both the status-dependence of normative attitudes and the attitude-dependence of normative statuses their due, and to see these reciprocal relations of authority and responsibility between normative statuses and normative attitudes as

two sides of one coin, inseparably intertwined and jointly constitutive of the very concepts of normative status and normative attitude. But he does not think understanding them related as articulating respectively the form and the content of normativity does justice to their actual relationships. Here, as elsewhere, he thinks that distinguishing the essential elements of this constellation of metaconceptual dimensions of reciprocal authority and responsibility on the hylomorphic model of form and content is an unsatisfactory, because ultimately dualistic, construal. He sees it as a paradigmatic strategy of Verstand. The proper conception, utilizing his preferred metaconcepts structured as Vernunft, requires moving from the model of individual autonomy to the social model of reciprocal recognition.

The point of my rehearsal of some of the large-scale strands of thought shaping the early modern metaphysics of normativity has been to make it possible to show how Hegel weaves them together in an altogether original way. His account of normative statuses as instituted by the proper social constellation of recognitive normative attitudes is the fifth model we need to consider. It is both the successor and product of the four we have already considered: the traditional subordination-obedience model, the modern subordination-obedience model epitomized by the Grotian tradition of natural law, the perfectionist-empiricist-sentimentalist tradition, and the radically modern Kant-Rousseau autonomy model.

According to Hegel's model, normative statuses are instituted by special sorts of normative attitudes when those attitudes exhibit a distinctive kind of *social* structure. The kind of normative attitudes a structurally suitable constellation of which are capable of instituting genuine normative attitudes are attitudes of what he calls "*recognition*" [Anerkennung]. (He takes over the term from Fichte, but assigns it as distinctive and novel a function and so content as, for instance, as he does with his adaptation of Kant's vocabulary of "Verstand" and "Vernunft.") Recognizing something is recognizing some*one*: taking or treating someone *as* a normative subject, that is, as the subject of normative statuses and (so, on this model) as both the subject and object of normative attitudes. The distinctive social structure of recognitive normative attitudes that Hegel takes to institute normative statuses is *reciprocal* or *mutual* [gegenseitig] recognition. Recognitive attitudes attribute normative statuses. General recognition is attributing a kind of normative metastatus: the status of being a normative subject. Since according to the model this metastatus is instituted

by recognitive attitudes when they are symmetric, when one is recognized by someone one recognizes in turn, it is a normative status that can in principle be exhibited only by those who both adopt normative recognitive attitudes and have such attitudes adopted towards them. So to have normative statuses one must be both subject and object of normative recognitive attitudes.

This last point is particularly important. Hegel takes over from Kant a normative understanding of what it is to be a self. Selves just are normative subjects, whatever exhibits normative statuses. The idea that to be a self is to be self-*conscious*, a self-consciousness, then shows up for both Kant and Hegel as the claim that the normative *attitudes* of the self play an essential role in constituting or instituting normative statuses, and so normative selfhood. For Kant, to be a self is to be a judger and an agent. According to his normative understanding of empirical consciousness and agency, this is to be the subject of epistemic and practical *commitments*. And to *be* committed is to adopt normative *attitudes*, to *acknowledge* commitments, to *endorse* judgeable contents and practical maxims. What *makes* one committed is that one *takes* oneself to be committed. (Adopting those explicit attitudes of acknowledgment turns out to involve implicitly acknowledging the authority of various other commitments and responsibilities, including framework-articulating categorial ones and those articulating the determinate contents to which one has made oneself responsible by endorsing particular judgments and practical maxims.) On this account, the phrase "self-conscious selves" is redundant: selves as such are self-conscious.

One big difference between Kant's and Hegel's versions of this line of thought is that Kant takes *individual*, self-regarding normative attitudes to be *immediately* constitutive of normative statuses. By contrast, on Hegel's account, no single individual's attitudes institute normative statuses, and no single attitude is immediately constitutive of any normative status. The attitudes of multiple normative subjects, each playing the role both of recognizer and recognized, subject and object of normative attitudes, are required to institute normative statuses—including the metastatus of being a self or subject of normative statuses. Any particular individual recognitive attitude is constitutive of a normative status only when mediated by a corresponding recognitive attitude on the part of the one to whom it is addressed. For Hegel, this normative achievement, being a subject of normative statuses, is a social achievement. Normative statuses are social

statuses. And self-consciousness is equally a social achievement and a social status. It is not something that happens between the ears of an individual. It is, we could say, the product of a recognitive conversation.

Hegel's is a paradigmatically modern view according to his own understanding of modernity, in that it acknowledges the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. Like Pufendorf's notion of imposition, or Kant's autonomy view, or what I have been calling the "perfectionist-empiricist-sentimentalist" metaphysics of normativity (a baggy, capacious term that wears on its face the crass assimilations it incorporates), it understands normative statuses as instituted by normative attitudes. But like the traditional subordination-obedience model, and the modern Grotian version that Pufendorf develops, and unlike Kant's, it sees the institution of statuses by attitudes as an essentially *social* affair. Rousseau's understanding of freedom as self-legislation, which Kant is developing, *can* take a social subject—when the collective *volonté générale* institutes obligations binding on all citizens of the community constituted thereby—but it is like Kant's in taking the communal attitudes then to be both self-regarding (reflexive, rather than symmetric) and immediately constitutive of genuinely binding normative statuses. Hegel combines his version of the essentially modern idea that normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes with the Kantian normative conception of self-hood as essentially self-conscious, to arrive at a social theory of self-conscious selves as subjects of both attitudes and statuses.

The subordination-obedience model essentially incorporates an *asymmetric* social relation, however. One party commands and another obeys. Recognition, too is itself an asymmetric social relation. It has a recognizing subject and a recognized object. But it is the essence of Hegel's metaphysics of normativity that the recognitive attitudes in question be symmetric and reciprocal, in that sense, mutual. The roles of recognizer and recognized (being the subject and being the object of recognitive attitudes) are distinct, and the individuals playing those roles are distinct. But all parties must play *both* roles with respect to each other for their normative attitudes to institute normative statuses. Since no single recognitive attitude is immediately constitutive of a normative status, the asymmetry of recognition relations does not make the "imposition" of normative statuses by attitudes asymmetric. Kant and Rousseau achieved symmetry within a conception that is recognizably a version of the legislating/obeying model by

adopting a *reflexivity* strategy: identifying the commanding with the commanded. Hegel does so by adopting a *symmetry* strategy: understanding the key social normative relation to be one where both subjects standing in that social recognitive relation play both roles. Both metaphysical models can be seen as versions of the idea that normative attitudes of command and obedience between individuals standing in subordination relations can institute statuses of obligation that are genuinely *normative* statuses only if they are intelligible as having the structure of *self*-government. The autonomy model applies that idea by requiring that the instituting attitudes be reflexive. The recognition model applies that idea by requiring that the instituting attitudes be symmetric. The dyadic symmetry requirement can be thought of as a species of the monadic reflexivity requirement in which the self-governing unit that is the subject of both the instituting attitudes and the instituted statuses is no longer an individual 'I' but a social 'we' forged by symmetric recognition. According to this new essentially social conception of normative self-hood, the self-constituting, self-conscious subject of both normative attitudes and the normative statuses they institute is what Hegel calls "the 'I' that is 'we', the 'we' that is 'I'."[222]

So Hegel presents a social theory at once of the relation between normative attitudes and normative statuses, of the nature of selves as normative subjects of such attitudes and statuses, of self-consciousness understood in terms of the relations between attitudes, statuses and selves, and of freedom according to the self-governance tradition as integral to self-consciousness instituting normative statuses by its attitudes. On this account, communities are synthesized along with essentially self-conscious normative subjects, by their recognitive attitudes and practices. Especially in the *Preface*, Hegel refers to such recognitive communities as (social) *substance*. The normative character of such substantial communities, the attitudes and statuses whose interplay synthesize it, he refers to as its *essence*. He is particularly concerned there to emphasize that as he understands them, social substance and individual self-conscious subjects are two sides of one coin, joint products of recognitive processes. Those are the processes by which *particular* desiring organisms become self-conscious normative *individuals*, with a normative *essence* and not just an organic *nature*, by adopting towards one another recognitive attitudes that synthesize them as members falling under a *universal* or community. This model of the relations between particularity, universality, and individuality as particularity characterized by universality serves as the governing paradigm for his understanding of these logical metaconcepts in their most general applications.

[222] [*PhG* 177].

Hegel's recognitive account of sociality is of a distinctive kind. It is instituted by dyadic recognitive relations. It is accordingly a kind of 'I'-'thou' sociality, rather than the sort of 'I'-'we' sociality Rousseau, for instance, envisages. The 'we' Hegel identifies with the 'I' in the passage quoted just above is in the first instance the 'we' constituted by the dyad of recognized and recognizer when that relation is symmetric. It is symmetry of such dyadic recognitive relations that institutes the reflexive normative self-relation of being essential self-consciousness. Larger communities ('we's) are synthesized by linking such symmetric 'I'-'thou' recognitive attitude pairs. In fact, as I argued in the previous chapter and will return to below, for Hegel general recognition is in principle transitive: one is committed to recognizing those recognized by those one recognizes. When recognitive attitudes are in fact also symmetric (and therefore reflexive), recognition relations take the ideal shape of equivalence relations: transitive, symmetric, and reflexive. In that case, recognitive communities ('we's as universals) take the ideal shape of recognitive equivalence-classes of individuals.

The story of the emergence of egalitarian models of normative communities from hierarchical ones during the early modern period is a complex one. Viewing it through the lens of the distinction between I-we and I-thou construals of the metaphysical constitution of communities (and in Hegel's case, of self-conscious individuals) exhibits a further level of fine structure. The tradition, too, had understood normative social relations to begin with in terms of an intrinsically asymmetric dyadic relation: of statuses of superiority and subordination, and attitudes (informing practices) of command and obedience. Its purest expression is in a rigidly hierarchical view of communities in which the station of each individual is defined by the (at the limit empty) chain of superiors above and the (at the limit empty) chain of subordinates below. (This is the social structure that is then projected into the metaphysics of an objective *scala naturae* legitimating such an asymmetric hierarchical normative social structure of authority and responsibility.) Hobbes's Leviathan version of the metaphysics of normativity Grotius introduced, driven by the natural imperative to moderate social conflict, though, instituted a normative 'we' represented by a sovereign. Its members did form an equivalence class of all those voluntarily (by their implicit normative attitudes) sharing the normative status of subordination to the *same* sovereign. The authority of the sovereign over the individual is the authority of the 'we' over the 'I'. And in spite of starting from motivational raw materials diametrically opposed to the individual self-interest on which Hobbes erects his metaphysics of normativity, his great opponent Cumberland's invocation of a primitive sentiment of universal (if admittedly defeasible) benevolence also culminates in the institution of a 'we' (all those to whom one feels benevolence, oneself showing up only as a somewhat special case) whose interests are accorded a certain priority over those of the 'I'. These are the seeds that flower into the 'we' of Locke's democratic polity and the 'we' of Rousseau's *volonté générale*. Hegel's route from what appears to be an intrinsically asymmetric 'I'-'thou' recognitive relation to recognitively egalitarian communities of recognized recognizers whose defining normative status of self-conscious individuality is itself a social product of recognitive normative attitudes expresses a metaphysical strategy strikingly different from both traditional hierarchical and later egalitarian 'I'-'we' understandings of communities. Though it weaves together the strands of thought provided by all the early modern approaches to the metaphysics of normativity in a wholly new

way, on this dimension of the structure of communities Hegel's account perhaps bears the closest resemblance to that of the sentimentalists downstream from Cumberland's envisaged community of individuals bound together by benevolence of each for all and all for each.

IX. The Social-Recognitive Model as Naturalizing Normativity

Another way in which Hegel's account of the social institution of normative statuses by reciprocal recognitive normative attitudes (the paradigm of raising particulars to individuals by bringing them under universals) develops themes central to the tradition of early modern metaphysics of normativity is that his social story of the origin of normative statuses in normative attitudes is also a way of *naturalizing* them. This point is particularly evident if we contrast his story with Kant's, in which the normative properties essential to discursivity and rationality, such as the Verbindlichkeit of concepts and the Gültigkeit of judgments, are accorded a somewhat ethereal noumenal, ultimately *sui generis* character. Empirical activity, both cognitive and practical, presupposes the normative character of concept-use, that judging and willing are kinds of *endorsement,* are the exercise of distinctive sorts of *authority*, the undertaking of characteristic species of *commitment*. Hegel's construal of normative statuses as *social* statuses, as instituted by social practices and processes and recognition, removes the realm of norms from the hidden interior of individual self-consciousnesses and brings it out into the public light of day, "a display of what is one's own in the element of universality whereby it becomes, and should become, the affair of everyone."[223] This social move at the same time brings normativity down to earth from the transcendental heaven in which Kant had located it. It is recognizably a development in the long tradition that opens with the gradual secularization of normativity. Schneewind says

> Grotius removed natural law from the jurisdiction of the moral theologian, to whom Suarez assigned it, and made its theory the responsibility of lawyers and philosophers. Numerous Protestant writers on ethics and the foundations of politics followed him in using the language of natural law while detaching it from the

[223] *Phenomenology* §417.

> specific doctrines of any particular religious confession, whether Protestant or Catholic. In a broad sense they are all Grotians.[224]

Pufendorf, in particular, we have seen, pushed this process along by understanding normative statuses as "imposed" by the attitudes and activities of human beings. Hegel synthesizes this strand of the tradition with the British strand of which Hobbes and Cumberland are emblematic, including the later sentimentalists which seeks to ground normative statuses in antecedent material motivations and attitudes. His recognitive social account of the advent of normativity also picks up Roussean naturalism. Hegel's story about how particular desiring organisms raise themselves into individual denizens of the universal realm of Geist by adopting normative attitudes towards one another develops all these currents of thought in a unique way.

The naturalism in question is not predicated on the possibility of reduction of the normative products of social interactions to processes intelligible from the standpoint of the natural sciences. New things happen at the social level. Specifically, the normative realm of Geist and so discursivity itself is instituted. Hegel's is a naturalism more akin to that of the later Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein, like Kant and Hegel, sees its normativity as a defining characteristic of intentionality. He is interested in the way intentional states such as believing something, meaning something, desiring of intending something, as it were reach out to various possible states of affairs and sort them into those that are and those that are not in accord with the content of the intentional state.

> Someone says to me: "Show the children a game." I teach them gambling with dice, and the other says "I didn't mean that sort of game." Must the exclusion of the game with dice have come before his mind when he gave me the order?[225]

The thought is that the retrospective claim about what was meant, intended, ordered, or requested is quite correct: she did *not* mean that kind of game. We might find ourselves puzzled about this normative significance, as about how a sign-post can show us the right way to go. Wittgenstein aims to demystify the normativity that articulates discursive content by showing it as a feature of the natural history of beings like us, who produce and consume such normative significances through our social practices. If we can fully understand how we come to learn to engage in practices of being guided by (responding appropriately to) sign-posts and requests, then the idea that something metaphysically spooky, non- or super-natural is going on is dispelled.

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[224] Schneewind, Chapter 5, p. 82.

[225] *Philosophical Investigations* §70.

Wittgenstein is in Huw Price's sense a "subject naturalist" rather than an "object naturalist."[226] That is, he is a naturalist about our implicitly normative social practices (of Pufendorfian "imputation" and "imposition") rather than being concerned about how to fit normative significances into a physicalist ontology.

Hegel's naturalism includes this strand of thought, but goes far beyond it. His sophisticated metaphysics of normativity, and how it relates to the natural, causal order studied by natural science, is a central topic of the rest of this book. Hegel has explicit views about the sort of reductive naturalism that would lead, later in the nineteenth century, to *genealogical* assaults on the idea that discursive norms can be genuinely *rationally* binding. Such views invoke the possibility of naturalistic causal accounts of normative attitudes, paradigmatically believings, that do not provide reasons for or evidence justifying the truth of the content believed. On this account there are not really any norms (normative statuses), but *only* attitudes of attributing and acknowledging them. According to genealogical accounts, explanation of the advent and antecedents of such attitudes need make no reference to normative statuses at all. Such a view is the *ne plus ultra* of modern subjectivism, a view that counts as alienated just insofar as it makes no room for normative statuses serving as standards for assessments of the correctness of normative attitudes. Hegel addresses such views at the end of the *Spirit* chapter, using the allegory of the Kammerdiener or valet. Hegel's own attitude is summed up in the slogan "No man is a hero to his valet—but that is not because the hero is not a hero, but because the valet is a valet."[227] The edelmütig hero is the one who acts as he is committed to act, who adapts his attitudes and the conduct that expresses them to norms that transcend those attitudes. The niederträchtig Kammerdiener is the one who sees only subjective attitudes. (I discuss these passages in detail in Chapter Fifteen, "Edelmütigkeit and Niederträchtigkeit: The Kammerdiener.") Hegel's own view is a kind of compatibilism about naturalism and normativity. He acknowledges the possibility of a reductive explanation of normative attitudes that appeals only to other attitudes and not to norms determining reason-relations between them. But he tells a balanced story comprising not only the attitude-dependence of normative statuses but the status-dependence of normative attitudes.

Wittgenstein's deep concern—only one of whose expressions is what have come to be known as "the rule-following considerations"—is to understand how, in the context of ongoing social practices, our actual attitudes and peformances can bring into play genuine, determinately contentful normative statuses (norms, commitments, entitlements, reasons), to which our attitudes answer normatively, that normatively govern our performances in the sense of providing standards of assessment of their correctness. Wittgenstein, too, sees a genealogical

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[226] Huw Price "Naturalism without Representationalism," in *Naturalism in Question,* ed. Mario de Caro and David Macarthur, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 71-90.

[227] *Phenomenology* §665.

challenge to the intelligibility of the genuine bindingness of conceptual norms. He appreciates and teaches us to appreciate the radical *contingency* of the norms implicit in our practices—their counterfactual sensitivity to accidental features of our embodiment, the vagaries of the process by which the norms developed through prior applications, the way they have responded to the presence of collateral commitments that might have little rational bearing on them. Once we understand the variety of the dependences of the contents of our conceptual norms on factors that do not provide reasons for applying them one way rather than another, all the true subjunctive conditionals specifying that if these contingencies *had* been different, the content of our concepts *would* have been different, how are we to make sense of those concepts as nonetheless genuinely normatively binding on us? These discursive norms articulate our rationality, by articulating what is a reason for what. What becomes of the idea that some applications of concepts in judgment and intention *rationally* commit us to others, *rationally* bind our further attitudes?

Hegel's answer to this question is his account of the relation between the normative *force* of recognitive attitudes that are actually adopted, in contingent circumstances, and the determinate conceptual *contents* that are conferred on them by that particular history of use. Those contents determine what one is actually committing oneself to by applying those concepts, that is, what normative status one is adopting by taking up a certain attitude, by endorsing a particular content in a context. So the account of the relation of reciprocal dependence between normative attitudes and normative statuses that takes us beyond the one-sided traditional emphasis on the status-dependence of normative attitudes and the one-sided modern emphasis on the attitude-dependence of normative statuses is part and parcel of the story about the relation between normative *force* and conceptual *content*. The key to Hegel's story, as I see it, is that *only* a certain kind of process of incorporating contingencies of actual applications of a concept *can* confer *determinate* content on it. The reconstrual of determinateness this insight requires is the core of the move from the standpoint of *Verstand* to that of *Vernunft*.

X. The Historical Dimension of Recognition

Hegel's answer depends not only on the *social* recognitive strand put into play in *Self-Consciousness*, but also, crucially, on the *historical* strand we saw for the first time in the

Introduction, and which is further developed in *Reason* and *Spirit*. (We saw it foreshadowed also in *Sense Certainty*'s discussion of *anaphora* as anaphoric-historical connection between attitude-tokenings, needed for the determinate contentfulness of responsively elicited empirical judgments.) The retrospective rational reconstruction of a tradition of concept-applications is the process that "gives contingency the form of necessity." Viewed *pro*spectively, the particularity and contingency of individual attitudes shows up: the sense in which they are explicable in terms of other attitudes (both prior and collateral) without reference to governing normative statuses. Viewed *retro*spectively, the necessity codified in norms as statuses shows up: the sense in which individual attitudes are normatively governed by universals implicit in the tradition, to which they answer for their correctness. Seeing these dual perspectives as two sides of one coin, as indissolubly linked aspects of one rational process by which conceptual content is determined, is what allows Hegel to do justice both to the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and to the status-dependence of normative attitudes. The structure of authority and responsibility it embodies turns out to exhibit the structure of reciprocal recognition. We have to consider recognition in this historical form in order fully to appreciate Hegel's version of the modern idea that normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes. According to his story, the retrospective rational reconstruction of particular contingently adopted attitudes—the process that turns a past into a tradition, a history—institutes the *representational* dimension of conceptual content. It is what gives us access to the idea of noumena behind the phenomena, of a way things are in themselves that provides a standard for assessing the correctness of the various ways they show up for consciousness. It is what makes sense of discursive attitudes as answering to attitude-transcendent norms, to conceptual contents that determine what is *really* a reason for what, as opposed to what consciousness at various points in the process *takes* to be a reason for what. Hegel elaborates this historical structure in his discussion of intentional agency in the *Reason* chapter, and returns to it at the end of the *Spirit* chapter in his treatment of the final, historically self-conscious form of reciprocal recognition, in the allegory of confession and forgiveness. Filling in the details of this story is the task of the rest of this book.

For Hegel the form of reason's march through history is the telling of a distinctive kind of retrospective rationally reconstructive story (an "Erinnerung") recounting a tradition that is expressively progressive in showing up as the gradual emergence into explicitness of

determinately contentful conceptual norms and commitments that become visible as having been all along implicit. In this lecture [chapter], I have told a story of this sort encompassing some of the major philosophical landmarks of early modern thinking about the metaphysics of normativity. The standpoint from which I look back on and reconstruct this tradition is Hegel's own social-recognitive metaphysics of normativity, and especially his diagnosis of modernity as having at its theoretical core the rise of subjectivity in the form of an appreciation of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. In this respect it aspires to compare as a minor-league instance of the same genre as Schneewind's major-league reconstruction of the same tradition construed as culminating in Kant's individual-autonomy metaphysics of normativity, in his magisterial book *The Invention of Autonomy*.[228] In my story, Kant plays a decisive role in raising the stakes for a metaphysics of normativity. Before him, even for his hero Rousseau, normativity mattered for practical philosophy, for moral, social, and political thought. Appreciating for the first time the essentially normative significance of concept-use generally, Kant broadens the significance of normativity to take in the whole of the discursive realm. Schneewind does not see this side of Kant's achievement, which shows up most vividly Hegel's radicalization of this Kantian insight. The rationally reconstructed story of the antecedents of Hegel's view that I have told here is mine, not Hegel's. (His treatment in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* of Pufendorf, one of the figures I see as absolutely central, for instance, is quite perfunctory—though he does refer to him one of the "great writers" on the topic.[229]) I have been guided throughout by where I take it Hegel got to, rather than by his own rational reconstructions.

Hegel is the first to see that not only do philosophical *theories* of the metaphysics of normativity, what normativity is *for* philosophical consciousness, have a history, but that what normativity is *in itself* also changes, develops, and has a history. That is so precisely because of the dimension of attitude-dependence of norms that is, according to him, the great discovery of modernity. Normativity is, for Hegel as for Kant, the fabric of self-consciousness, and as essentially self-conscious creatures, what we are in ourselves depends on what we are for ourselves. As we will see, the *Spirit* chapter of the *Phenomenology* presents a history of the

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[228] Jerome Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* [Cambridge University Press, 1997].

[229] Haldane, E.S. and Simson, F.H (trans.) *Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy* [Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968], Volume III, pp. 321-2. The "great writers" remark is at p. 399. Hegel discusses Pufendorf as characteristic of the "skeptical understanding" of which Hobbes, Locke, and Clarke are also representative. Mostly what he emphasizes is the *social* element, taken as basic, which he shares with Grotius.

metaphysics of normativity in this ontological sense. On the side of intellectual history what shows up in the first instance is the shift from traditional subordination-obedience *models* of normativity to modern self-governance models (comprising both Kantian species in terms of individual autonomy and Hegelian species in terms of social recognition) and the theoretical shift from traditional exclusive emphasis on the status-dependence of normative attitudes to modern exclusive emphasis on the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. But intertwined in tandem with this development of structural ways of understanding the metaphysics of normativity is a corresponding development in the phenomenon understood. At the center of the rise of modernity is a development of the structure of social recognitive attitudes and practices that articulate the normative discursive realm of Geist.

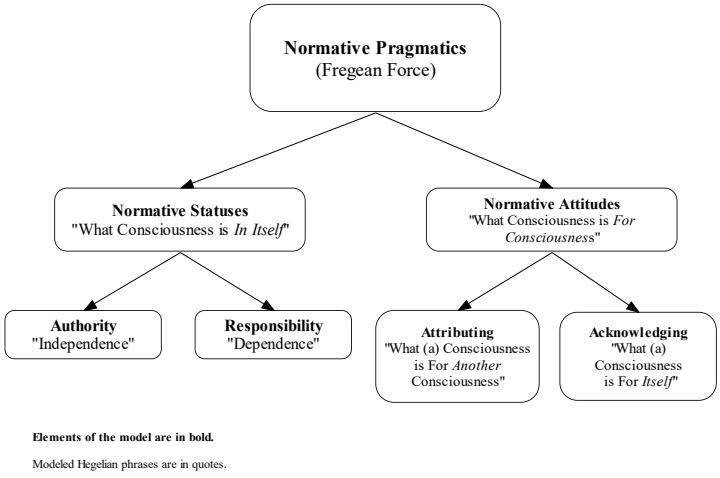
My topic here has been the intellectual antecedents of Hegel's social-recognitive theory of the metaphysics of normativity. Principal moments in my rehearsal begin with the development of traditional subordination-obedience accounts into distinctively modern versions of the subordination-obedience structure, within the natural law tradition. From the point of view of Hegel's overarching understanding of modernity in terms of the dawning appreciation of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses, the voluntarist strand in this tradition is of particular significance. We saw here too the origins of the progressive idea that a status (superiority) that includes having attitudes (commands) that can institute statuses is itself a status that is normative not only in its consequences, but in its conditions. The social functional origin of and rationale for norms is emphasized by everyone downstream from Grotius. The combination of thinking of normative statuses as instituted by normative attitudes and an appreciation of the social setting in which this process of "imposition" takes place are motives for the growing secularizing and naturalizing of normativity, not only in the Grotian tradition, but also in the sentimentalist wing of early modern thought about normativity. In the same naturalist, empiricist, sentimentalist tradition, an understanding of normativity in terms of self-governance develops. Crucially, Kant broadens the significance of all these considerations, by seeing normativity as not just of narrowly moral significance in practical philosophy, but as the fundamental structure of consciousness and self-consciousness überhaupt. And he turns Rousseau's understanding of freedom in terms of self-governance into a full-blown metaphysics of this broader notion of normativity as autonomy. The self-governance tradition had rejected asymmetric subordination

models in favor of symmetric, universal relations of benevolence or subjection to a common ideal sovereign. These traditions are then synthesized in Rousseau and Kant in the form of a symmetric model of freedom and normativity generally as social or individual autonomy. Hegel's symmetric social-recognitive metaphysics of normativity pulls together all of these strands of thought. In the *Self-Consciousness* chapter we get our first glimpse of Hegel's picture of the realm of discursive norms or universals, Geist, as the product of the practical attitudes of particular creatures who become essentially self-conscious individual normative subjects by subjecting their attitudes to assessment according to the norms the recognitive community has historically instituted.

Handout for Lecture 10

The Fine Structure of Autonomy and Recognition: The Institution of Normative Statuses by Normative Attitudes

In my regimented idiom, the distinction between normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes* corresponds to Hegel's distinction between *what consciousness is* ***in itself*** and *what consciousness is* ***for consciousness***.
Within the category of normative *statuses*, the distinction *authority* and *responsibility* corresponds to Hegel's use of the terms "independence" and "dependence" ("Unabhängigkeit"/"Abhängigkeit") when they are applied to the *subjects* of consciousness rather than the *objects* of consciousness.
Within the category of normative *attitudes* is the further distinction within the category of normative attitudes in terms of the different social perspectives they embody is that between *attributing* a normative status (to another) and *acknowledging* or claiming a normative status (oneself). This is the distinction, within the domain of what consciousness is *for* consciousness, between what a consciousness is for *another* consciousness and what a consciousness is for *itself*.

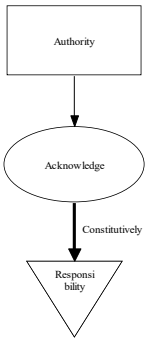


Though the concern of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter is ultimately with the *subjects* of normative attitudes and statuses, those attitudes and statuses also have *objects*. On the side of attitudes, what is attributed or acknowledged is just statuses of authority and responsibility. One normative subject, X, can attribute authority or responsibility to another, Y. X is then the *subject* of the attitude, the normative status attributed is the *object* of the attitude, and the subject *to* whom the status is attributed is the *indirect object* or *target* of the attribution.

Kant' construal of normativity in terms of autonomy is at base the idea that rational beings can *make* themselves responsible (institute a normative status) by *taking* themselves to be responsible (adopting an attitude). His idea (developing Rousseau's) is that so long as the attribution of responsibility is self-consciously self-directed, that is, so long as it takes the form of *acknowledgment* of oneself *as* responsible, it is *constitutive*, in the sense that adopting that attitude is sufficient, all by itself, to institute the status.

Kant's conception of normative subjects as autonomous, as I am reading it, is a conception of them as able to *bind* themselves normatively by their attitudes, to *make* themselves responsible (acquire an actual normative status) by *taking* themselves to be responsible (adopting a normative attitude). The basic Kantian normative status [BKNS] is a complex, attitude-involving status. For it is the authority (the complex status) to adopt a certain kind of attitude: an immediately status-instituting attitude, what I am calling an "immediately constitutive" attitude.

Autonomy:
The Basic Kantian Normative Status

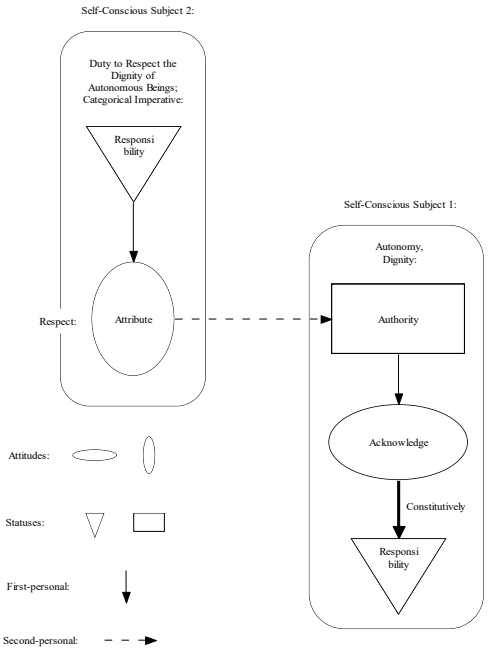


The claim that i) normative attitudes *institute* normative statuses goes beyond the mere claim of ii) attitude-*dependence* of normative statuses. Beyond these two is the claim that iii) at least some normative attitudes are *immediately constitutive* of normative statuses. This sort of *taking* someone to be committed is sufficient for *making* that one *be* committed.

We can think of Hegel's diagnosis of the metaphysical error that manifests itself as forms of self-consciousness understanding itself in the way characteristic of Mastery as having three levels, proceeding from the more to the less abstract.
First, it is characteristic of self-consciousness with the structure of Mastery to understand itself as being, in itself, "pure independence." That is, it conceives itself as exercising authority unmixed and unmediated by any correlative responsibility, which is normative "dependence."
Second, as "pure independence," the Master cannot acknowledge the responsibility of his attitudes to normative statuses: the status-dependence of normative attitudes that was, Hegel thinks, a genuine insight of traditional forms of normativity (Geist), albeit one that was expressed in deformed, because one-sided, practical conceptions of normativity in terms of the model of subordination and obedience.
Third, the Master has a conception of normative *force*, in Frege's sense of the pragmatic significance of statuses and attitudes—what one is *doing* in becoming authoritative or responsible, and in attributing and exercising authority or attributing and acknowledging responsibility—that leaves no room for the contrast and division of labor between such force and the determinate conceptual *content* of either normative states or attitudes. This is the form of complaint that binds together the treatment of all the forms of self-consciousness conceiving itself according to categories of Mastery. There is no intelligible *semantics* (account of content) that is compatible with the *pragmatics* (account of normative force, status, and attitude) to which they are committed.

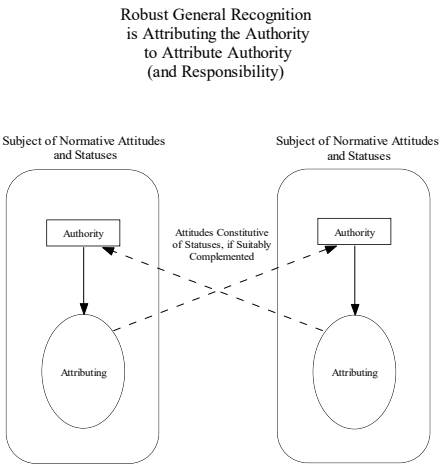
Hegel's recognition model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes articulates the idea that other-regarding attitudes of attributing responsibility and authority (holding other normative subjects responsible, taking them to be authoritative) are equally essential to them really being responsible or authoritative (having the statuses of being committed or entitled) as are self-regarding attitudes of acknowledging those statuses.

The Social Dimension
of the Kantian Autonomy Model



Suppose one accepted the motivations that lead Kant to the conception of the complex of basic attitudes and statuses that is the socially extended BKNS, but thought both that *all* normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes, and that such institution requires not only the attitude of the subject of the status but also the attitude of some other who attributes it. This latter is the idea that the attitudes of any one individual normative subject can institute normative statuses only when they are *suitably complemented* by the attitudes of others.
Recognition, the recognitive attitude of attributing the authority distinctive of autonomy, is an essential component required to institute that very authority. These are the thoughts that lead from the Kantian model of *individual* autonomous normative subjects as *immediately* instituting their determinate responsibilities by their attitudes of acknowledging them to the Hegelian model of the *social* institution of normative statuses by attitudes of normative subjects that must be *mediated* by each other's suitably complementary attitudes.

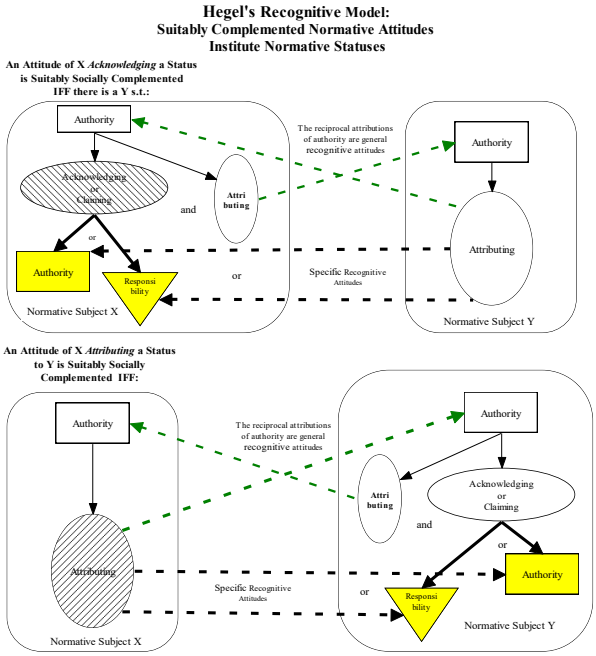
I am understanding Hegel as taking *this* very basic constellation of normative attitudes and statuses to be the underlying metaphysical structure of (genuine) normativity:



"Self-consciousness exists *in* and *for itself*, because and by virtue of its existing in and for itself for an other; which is to say, it exists only as recognized." [*PhG*178].

Instituting a self in the sense of something with the status of a normative subject requires recognitive attitudes that are *symmetric, reciprocal,* or *mutual*.
"Each is for the other the middle term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself; and each is for itself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own account, which at the same time is such only through this mediation. **They *recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another**." [*PhG* 184].
"Thus the movement is simply the double movement of the two self-consciousnesses. Each sees the *other* do the same as it does; each does itself what it demands of the other, and therefore also does what it does only in so far as the other does the same. Action by one side only would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by both." [*PhG* 182].
Hegel refers to the recognitive community of recognizing-and-recognized individual normative subjects as "Spirit" [Geist]: "…this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'. [*PhG* 177].

As with the Kantian autonomy structure, attributing a responsibility has to be complemented by the acknowledgment of the subject of the responsibility. One only *is* responsible (a status) for what one *acknowledges* responsibility for (an attitude). The status of responsibility, which is virtual in the sense of just being the object of these paired attitudes of attribution and acknowledgment, only becomes actualized—a status outside the attitudes it is an object of—when the status attributed is also acknowledged. This is just the other side of the coin of the requirement that for acknowledging a commitment or responsibility to succeed in instituting that status (for it to be constitutive of the commitment it acknowledges, for it to be a successful undertaking of that commitment, a status) someone else must both be authorized to *hold* the subject responsible (attribute the commitment, an attitude) and must *actually* do so.



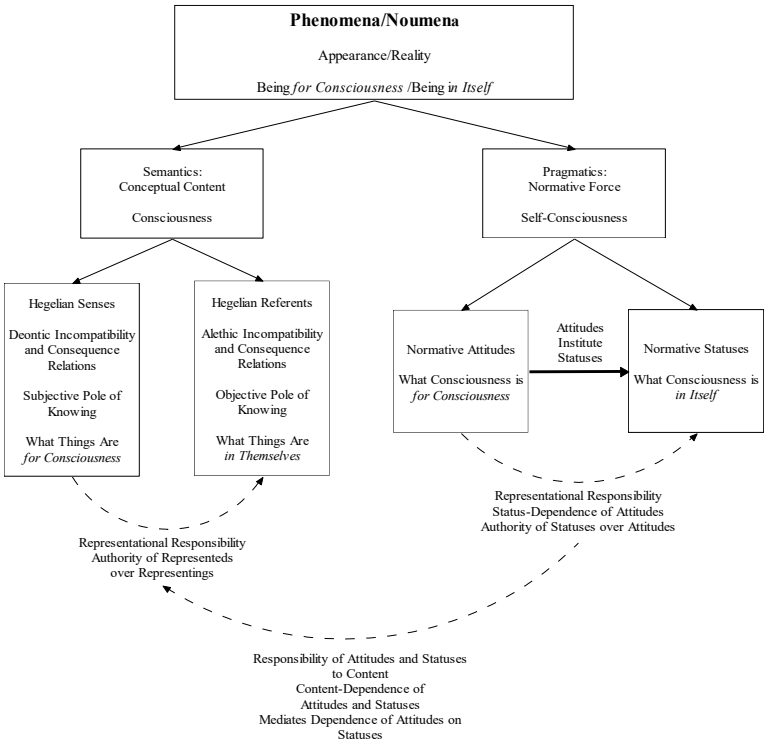
What one sees here is essentially the diagram of the basic Kantian normative status of autonomy. Each subject has the authority to institute normative statuses (including specific ones) by acknowledging them. The big differences are:

- *All* the normative statuses are instituted by appropriate constellations of normative attitudes—constellations in which they are suitably socially complemented.
- The attribution by others of the authority to adopt constitutive (status-instituting) attitudes, which corresponds to Kantian respect, is an essential element, a *necessary* condition, of the institution of that authority.
- The whole structure of statuses and attitudes, including other-regarding ones, in which the substructure taking the place of the Kantian autonomy structure of statuses and attitudes is embedded, is being taken to be the context *sufficient* for the institution of statuses by attitudes.

According to the model, the *authority* to recognize (which is, *inter alia*, attributed by the attitude of recognition) and the *responsibility* to recognize are two sides of one coin. Attributing recognitive authority implies acknowledging recognitive responsibility.

For the authority attributed by attitudes of general recognition to be the authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes, it must be accompanied by the attribution to *everyone* one recognizes of responsibility to take or treat those statuses in practice *as* actual

To be a self in the full normative sense is to have not only actual normative attitudes, but also actual normative statuses: not only to *take* oneself or others to have authority or be responsible, but actually to *have* authority or *be* responsible. To achieve such a status, a normative subject must participate in a general recognitive dyad: must actually be recognized by someone that subject actually recognizes. For only suitably socially complemented attitudes institute actual statuses



The retrospective, rational-reconstructive *historical* phase of the process of experience, Hegel's "Erinnerung", explains how, on the semantic side, objective conceptual contents (referents, noumena) articulated as laws, facts, and objects with properties both are to be understood in terms of and serve as standards for assessments of the correctness of the process of manipulating subjective conceptual contents (senses) by applying rules, propositions, and singular terms and predicates in adopting doxastic attitudes. The *social* character of the recognitive process that institutes both normative subjects and their communities explains, on the pragmatic side, both how normative statuses (noumena, what self-conscious subjects are in themselves) are instituted by (and in that strong sense dependent upon) normative attitudes (phenomena, what self-conscious subjects are for themselves) and how those statuses have authority over those attitudes in serving as standards for assessment of their correctness. This is the dimension of status-dependence of normative attitudes, the responsibility of those attitudes to (Hegel's "dependence on") statuses that balances the attitude-dependence of normative statuses.

The recognitive model is Hegel's way of synthesizing two crucial insights. First is what he sees as the founding insight of modernity, the idea that normative statuses are attitude-dependent, as boiled down and purified in the Kant-Rousseau idea of autonomy into the idea that at least some normative statuses are *instituted by* normative attitudes. The second is what was right about the traditional idea (one-sidedly overemphasized by premodern thought) of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the idea that our attributions and acknowledgments (or claimings) of responsibility and authority answer for their correctness to facts about what people really are committed and entitled to. The complex social-historical recognitive model of normativity is Hegel's way of performing the Eiertanz required to make simultaneous sense both of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes and of the role of normative statuses as standards for assessments of the correctness of normative attitudes. At its base is the idea that to undertake a *responsibility* must always also be to acknowledge the *authority* of others to *hold* one responsible—implicitly to attribute that authority. And explicitly to attribute determinately contentful authority to someone is also always to attribute implicit responsibilities defined by that content, administered on its behalf by others to whom one has made oneself responsible by the original assertion of the authority to make oneself responsible.

Part Three ***Norms, Self-Consciousness, and Recognition***

Lecture 10

The Fine Structure of Autonomy and Recognition: The Institution of Normative Statuses by Normative Attitudes

I. Introduction

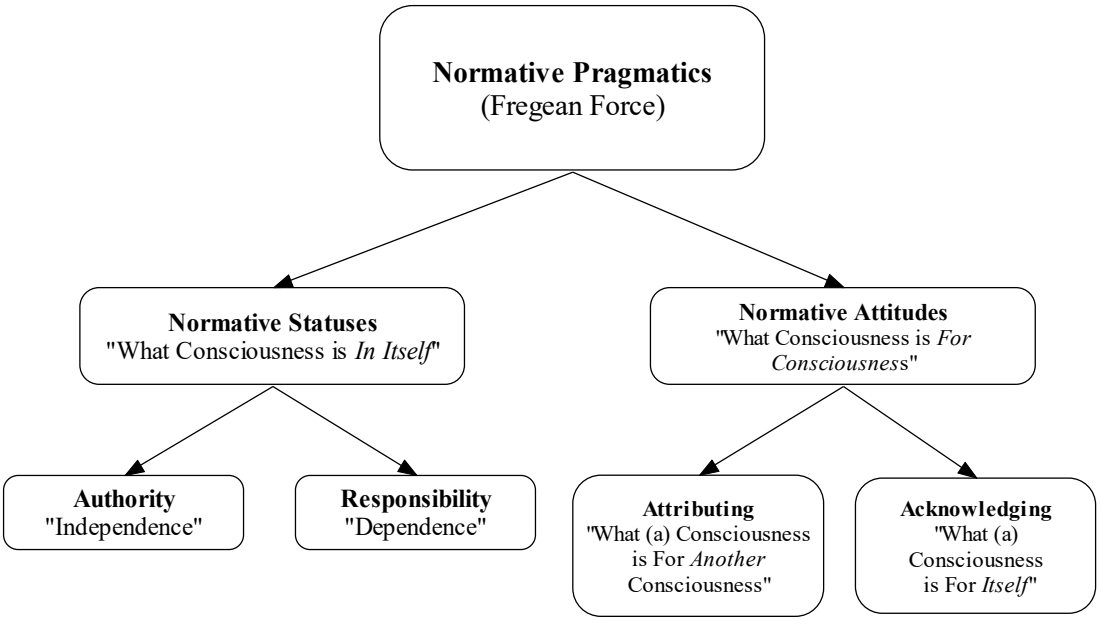
II. Normative Statuses and Normative Attitudes: A Regimented Idiom

The aim of this lecture is to develop a regimented idiom to explore the normative pragmatics (the theory of what corresponds to Fregean "force") that the investigation of semantics (the theory of what corresponds to Fregean "content") in the *Consciousness* chapters has led us to, and then, in the next lecture, to use it to read the various allegories of Mastery that Hegel recounts in *Self-Consciousness*. In keeping with the discussion of the previous lecture [Chapter 9], its base is the distinction between normative statuses and normative attitudes. In the idiom of the regimentation, this distinction corresponds to Hegel's distinction between *what consciousness is* ***in itself*** and *what consciousness is* ***for consciousness***. Where in the *Consciousness* chapters we were concerned with conceptions of the *objects* of consciousness, and so the distinction *to* consciousness between what things are *in themselves* and what things are *for consciousness*, our topic here becomes the *subject* of consciousness, consciousness itself. And here, too, the distinction that consciousness essentially involves is a distinction not only for us (Hegel's readers, the phenomenological consciousness) but also *to* consciousness itself.[230] It is this distinction between what *consciousness* is *in itself* and what it is *for consciousness* that I will model in terms of the regimented distinction between normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes*.

[230] Compare "the distinction that action essentially involves" at PG §400, discussed in Chapter 11.

Hegel also distinguishes, within the domain of what consciousness is for consciousness, between what a consciousness is for *another* consciousness and what a consciousness is for *itself*. So for instance, what the Master is for the Servant (a different consciousness) can at various points in Hegel's story be distinguished from what the Master is for himself, and *vice versa*. This distinction is rendered in the present model by distinguishing two sorts of normative attitudes, in terms of the different social perspectives they embody: *attributing* a normative status (to another) and *acknowledging* or claiming a normative status (oneself). This additional distinction within the category of normative attitudes is matched in the model by a distinction within the category of normative statuses. This is the distinction between *authority* and *responsibility*. It corresponds, according to the interpretation being presented here, to Hegel's use of the terms "independence" and "dependence" ("Unabhängigkeit"/"Abhängigkeit") when they are applied to the *subjects* of consciousness rather than the *objects* of consciousness.

The structure envisaged is accordingly the following:



Elements of the model are in bold.

Modeled Hegelian phrases are in quotes.

So, in the regimented idiom of the model, the paradigmatic normative statuses are identified as responsibility and authority, or commitment and entitlement. The attitudes in question include attributing these statuses to another, and acknowledging or claiming them oneself.

I am claiming that the vocabulary of this regimentation is not far from that Hegel himself uses, however. Although his usage is broader, I understand Hegel's distinction between what things are *in themselves* and what they are *for consciousness*, when applied to the domain of normativity that is first addressed in the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, just to be the distinction between normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes*. And though again his terms have uses outside the realm of normativity, I understand Hegel's distinction between *independence* and *dependence*, when applied to the normative realm, to be essentially that between the normative statuses of *authority* and *responsibility*.

Though the concern of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter is ultimately with the *subjects* of normative attitudes and statuses, those attitudes and statuses also have *objects*. On the side of attitudes, what is attributed or acknowledged is just statuses of authority and responsibility. One normative subject, X, can attribute authority or responsibility to another, Y. X is then the *subject* of the attitude, the normative status attributed is the *object* of the attitude, and the subject *to* whom the status is attributed is the *indirect object* or *target* of the attribution. So, for instance, in Hegel's terminology one consciousness can be independent or dependent not only *in itself*, but also *for itself* or *for another consciousness*. In the case of acknowledgments, the subject and the target are the same—not just *de facto*, but *de jure*, as part of what it means for the attitude in question to be *acknowledgment*. Acknowledgments are to be distinguished from self-attributions, in just the way that essentially indexical uses of first-person pronouns express, by contrast to forms of contingent self-reference.[231] So attitudes of acknowledging practical commitments can, in the central case, *be* intentional doings.[232]

Normative statuses of authority and responsibility also have both subjects and objects. The subject of the status is the normative subject who is authoritative or responsible. The objects are

[231] [ref.] to Perry and Lewis, and to my discussion of this in *MIE* Ch. 8.
[232] More on this in Chapters 11 and 12.

what they have authority over or responsibility for. The topic of the *Reason* chapter is the central case where it is intentional doings that one has authority or responsibility to perform. Our concern here is rather with the equally fundamental case where what one has the authority or responsibility to do (what one is entitled or committed to do) is adopt normative attitudes of attributing or acknowledging further normative statuses. The fact that the objects of normative attitudes can be normative statuses, and the objects of normative statuses can be normative attitudes means that complex constellations of basic attitudes and statuses are possible. It is in these terms that I will suggest we ought to understand both the Kantian individualistic *autonomy* model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes and the Hegelian social *recognition* model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes, and the way in which the latter develops elaborates and develops the former (the sort of Aufhebung it is).

III. The Kantian Autonomy Model of the Institution of Normative Statuses by Normative Attitudes

If we start with two basic normative statuses, normative independence and dependence as authority and responsibility, and two basic normative attitudes, attributing responsibility or authority to another and acknowledging or claiming responsibility or authority for oneself, and think about them in the context of the idea that normative statuses might be not just dependent on normative attitudes but instituted by them, then an important compound of statuses and attitudes becomes visible. Kant' construal of normativity in terms of autonomy is at base the idea that rational beings can *make* themselves responsible (institute a normative status) by *taking* themselves to be responsible (adopting an attitude). His idea (developing Rousseau's) is that so long as the attribution of responsibility is self-consciously self-directed, that is, so long as it takes the form of *acknowledgment* of oneself *as* responsible, it is *constitutive*, in the sense that adopting that attitude is sufficient, all by itself, to institute the status.

What is it for an attitude of claiming or acknowledging responsibility to be *constitutive* of the status of responsibility it claims or acknowledges—that it *immediately* (that is, all by itself, apart

from any other attitudes) *institutes* that status? As the object of an attitude, as what is acknowledged or attributed, a normative status such as responsibility or authority has a kind of virtual existence. There need not in general be an actual status corresponding to the attitude. One subject might wrongly attribute a responsibility to another, or claim an authority she herself does not in fact possess.

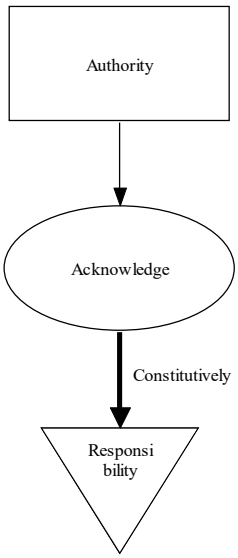
Kant's conception of normative subjects as autonomous, as I am reading it, is a conception of them as able to *bind* themselves normatively by their attitudes, to *make* themselves responsible (acquire an actual normative status) by *taking* themselves to be responsible (adopting a normative attitude). In the favored cases, adopting the attitude actualizes the virtual status that is the object of the attitude. The resulting status is not just attitude-dependent (no attitude → no status) but immediately instituted by the attitudes (attitude → status). That is what it is to understand the attitude as *constitutive.*

Further, being able to adopt such immediately constitutive self*-attributions is itself a normative status. For Kant thinks that rational knowers-and-agents have the *authority* to adopt immediately constitutive self*-attributions or acknowledgments. To be a discursive being is to have the authority to commit oneself, epistemically in judgment and practically in intention ("adopting a practical maxim"). Both of these are undertakings or acknowledgings of responsibility: committing oneself to how things are or how they shall be. This *authority* to *make* oneself responsible just by *taking* oneself* to be responsible might be called the *basic Kantian normative status* (BKNS, for short). Being a normative subject, for him, is being an autonomous agent-and-knower: one that can be the subject of normative statuses such as responsibility and authority. Furthermore, one is in the end committed to (responsible for) only what one explicitly *acknowledges* as one's commitments (responsibilities)—and for commitment that turn out to be implicit in those acknowledgements as consequences or presuppositions of them. It is that authority to make oneself responsible that, according to Kant, other rational beings are obliged to recognize, as the fundamental dignity of rational knowers-and-agents.

The basic Kantian normative status is a complex, attitude-involving status. For it is the authority (the complex status) to adopt a certain kind of attitude: an immediately status-

instituting attitude, what I am calling an "immediately constitutive" attitude. This sort of attitude is an attributing of a status (in the case of the BKNS, exclusively to oneself*) such that adoption of that attitude is sufficient all by itself for the status to be exhibited by the one to whom it is attributed (in the case of the BKNS, so long as that is also the one by whom it is attributed). In Hegel's terminology, it is a way consciousness can be *for* a consciousness that is sufficient to determine that that is the way consciousness is *in* itself. For one's consciousness to be *that* way *for* one's own consciousness *is* to be that way *in* oneself.

Autonomy:
The Basic Kantian Normative Status



The bulk of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter consists of an investigation of the conception of this kind of immediately status-constituting attitude. For the idea of individual attitudes of attributing statuses that suffice, all by themselves, just in virtue of the kind of attitudes they are, to institute the statuses they attribute, is the idea of Mastery, or pure independence. (What it is purified of is all hint of dependence, that is, responsibility correlative with that authority.) And that is the topic of all the allegories of kinds of self-consciousness recounted in *Self-Consciousness.*

The concept of immediately status-constitutive attitudes is an extreme version of what I have claimed Hegel thinks of as the basic idea of modernity. On this rendering of the transition from traditional to modern, traditional forms of life revolved around an appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes, what we can now recharacterize as the *authority* of norms over attitudes, of how what obligations and authorities there are determine what responsibilities and authority normative subjects should acknowledge and attribute. By contrast, modern forms of life are characterized by an appreciation of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses, what we can now recharacterize as the *authority* of attitudes over norms, the way in which what obligations and authorities there are, and what they are, answers to the attributions and acknowledgments of normative subjects. The idea that some attitudes can *immediately institute* the normative statuses that are their objects, that in their case, *taking* someone to be authoritative or responsible can by itself *make* them have that authority or responsibility, is, on Hegel's view a characteristic deformation of the modern insight into the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. It is the idea allegorized as Mastery. Hegel sees modernity as shot through with this conception of the relations between normative attitudes and normative statuses, and it is precisely this aspect of modernity that he thinks eventually needs to be overcome. In the end, he thinks even Kant's symmetric, reflexive, self*-directed version of the idea in the form of the autonomy model of normativity is a form of Mastery. In Hegel's rationally reconstructed recollection of the tradition, which identifies and highlights an expressively progressive trajectory through it, Kant's is the final, most enlightened modern form, the one that shows the way forward—but it is nonetheless a form of the structural *mis*understanding of normativity in terms of Mastery.

So the claim that normative attitudes *institute* normative statuses goes beyond the mere claim of attitude-*dependence* of normative statuses. But beyond these two is the claim that at least some normative attitudes are *immediately constitutive* of normative statuses. This sort of *taking* someone to be committed is sufficient for *making* that one *be* committed. Self-consciousness that understands itself in terms of the categories of Mastery construes normativity in terms of *immediately* status-constitutive attitudes. Hegel clearly thinks that such a conception

takes the insight of modernity concerning the attitude-dependence of normative statuses too far. As we shall see, the form of his objection to all forms of self-conceptions that have the characteristic shape of Mastery—and that is essentially all the forms of self-consciousness discussed in the rest of the book, not just in the chapter on *Self-Consciousness*—is the same. We can think of Hegel's diagnosis of the metaphysical error that manifests itself as forms of self-consciousness understanding itself in the way characteristic of Mastery as having three levels, proceeding from the more to the less abstract.

First, it is characteristic of self-consciousness with the structure of Mastery to understand itself as being, in itself, "pure independence."[233] That is, it conceives itself as exercising authority unmixed and unmediated by any correlative responsibility, which is normative "dependence." This, Hegel claims, is an ultimately incoherent conception. It is something the Master can be at most *for* himself, not *in* himself. As so conceived, the Master would be unable to *commit* himself, for a determinately contentful commitment involves being responsible to the *content* to which one has committed oneself, in the sense that one makes oneself liable to assessment of one's success in fulfilling that commitment (a judgment's being true or an intention successful) to the normative standard set by the content of one's status. The Master cannot acknowledge that moment of dependence-as-responsibility.

Second, as "pure independence," the Master cannot acknowledge the responsibility of his attitudes to normative statuses: the status-dependence of normative attitudes that was, Hegel thinks, a genuine insight of traditional forms of normativity (Geist), albeit one that was expressed in deformed, because one-sided, practical conceptions of normativity in terms of the model of subordination and obedience. The question of whether the normative status the Master acknowledges or claims—what he is *for* himself*—is what he *really* is, *in* himself, cannot arise within the conception of Mastery. For to acknowledge facts about what someone is *really* committed or entitled to, what responsibility or authority they *really* have, what they are *in* themselves, is to acknowledge something that serves as normative standards for the evaluation of the correctness of normative attitudes of attributing, acknowledging, or claiming those statuses.

[233] [ref.]

By contrast, the Master must understand his attitudes as answering to (responsible to, dependent on) *nothing*.

Finally, as already indicated, the Master has a conception of normative *force*, in Frege's sense of the pragmatic significance of statuses and attitudes—what one is *doing* in becoming authoritative or responsible, and in attributing and exercising authority or attributing and acknowledging responsibility—that leaves no room for the contrast and division of labor between such force and the determinate conceptual *content* of either normative states or attitudes. This, I will claim, is the form of complaint that binds together the treatment of all the forms of self-consciousness conceiving itself according to categories of Mastery. There is no intelligible semantics (account of content) that is compatible with the pragmatics (account of normative force, status, and attitude) to which they are committed. A key to this line of thought is that Hegel understands the relations between Fregean force and content, between statuses and attitudes, on the one hand, and content on the other, in normative terms of authority and responsibility (independence and dependence). Developing a lesson he learned from Kant, Hegel takes the notion of content itself to be something that must be understood in terms of the way in which to understand statuses and attitudes as contentful is to understand them as responsible to, and so normatively dependent on, something determined by that content.

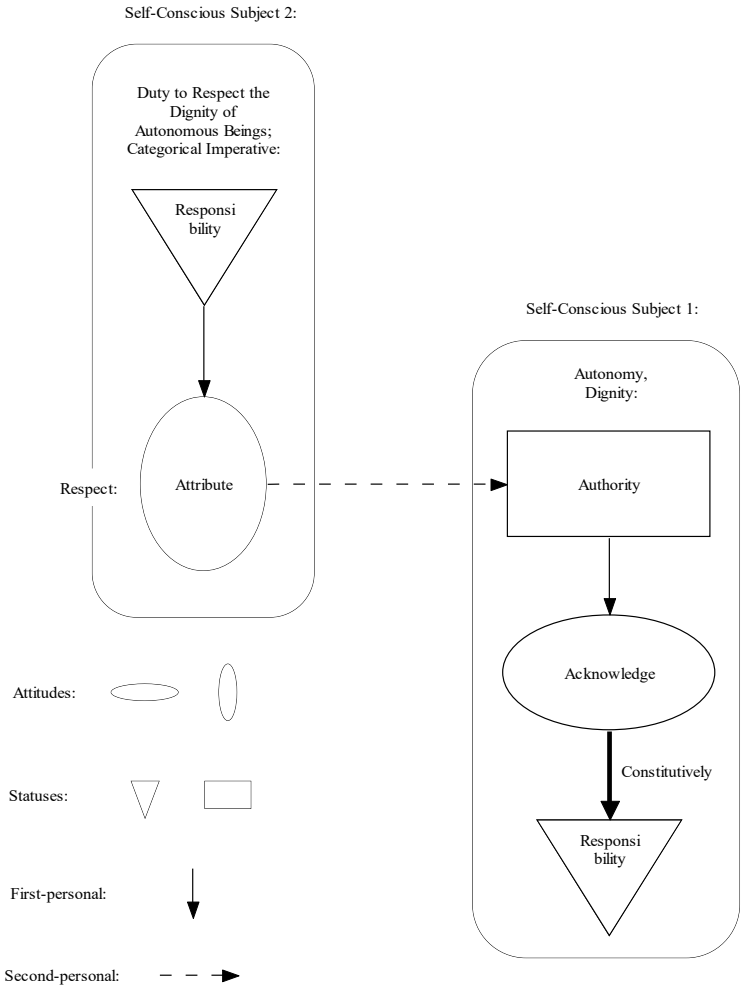
IV. A Model of General Recognition

Hegel thinks that there is something deeply defective about the idea of normative attitudes that are *immediately constitutive* of normative statuses, which lies at the core of the Kantian understanding of normativity in terms of individual autonomy. Though there is also something deeply right about the Kant-Rousseau development of the self-government tradition in the modern metaphysics of normativity, the insight it affords about normative statuses as not only attitude-dependent, but as instituted by attitudes must be reconciled with the insight that normative statuses are at base *social* statuses. Hegel's recognition model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes articulates the idea that other-regarding attitudes of

attributing responsibility and authority (holding other normative subjects responsible, taking them to be authoritative) are equally essential to them really being responsible or authoritative (having the statuses of being committed or entitled) as are self-regarding attitudes of acknowledging those statuses.

The social dimension provided by normative attitudes of attribution is not simply absent from Kant's picture, however. It is true that having the authority to make oneself responsible (institute that kind of normative status) by adopting a purely self-regarding attitude of acknowledging the responsibility (committing oneself) owes nothing to its attribution by others. It is a status that is constitutive of being an autonomous discursive being, a subject of normative attitudes and statuses. And that basic constitutive normative status is not itself instituted by normative attitudes. In this respect, Kant acknowledges not only the attitude-dependence of ground-level responsibilities, but also the dependence of the status-instituting capacity of those attitudes on the normative status that is the authority to institute responsibilities by acknowledging them: the authority to commit oneself. But that status as an autonomous normative subject, the subject of commitments just insofar as one is able (has the authority) to commit oneself, to bind oneself by norms that are binding just insofar as the one bound acknowledges them *as* binding, is a constitutive kind of *dignity*. As such, it unconditionally deserves the *respect* of other autonomous normative subjects. They have a *duty*—an obligation, a responsibility—to respect the dignity that consists in the authority to make onself responsible by taking oneself to be responsible. So Kant's picture does have a social dimension, in which attribution as well as acknowledgment plays a role. We could diagram it like this:

The Social Dimension
of the Kantian Autonomy Model



This is complex interpersonal constellation of basic normative attitudes and normative statuses, in which relations of statuses as objects of attitudes and attitudes as objects of statuses are piled on one another five levels deep. As rational beings we have a standing formal obligation or responsibility (status—level 5) to respect, in the sense of attributing (attitude—level 4) to each rational being *as* a rational being, the dignity, in the sense of having the *authority* (a status—level 3) (which we *attribute* at level 4) constitutively to acknowledge (status-instituting attitude—level 2) responsibilities or commitments (status—level 1), both doxastic and practical.

All of these elements Hegel can applaud, and they are the basis for him to say that Kant was *almost* right. He had all the crucial conceptual elements, just not arranged properly. So Kant has the idea that it is a necessary condition of *being* responsible that one *acknowledges* that responsibility. (That is autonomy.) And he does leave room for a distinction between *explicitly* acknowledging the responsibility, and acknowledging it only *implicitly*—for instance, just by being a knower and agent, thinking, talking and acting intentionally. But one might think—I think Hegel does think—that this is not yet a full-blooded sense of *being responsible*. It might well be laid alongside of another important but not yet full-blooded sense of *being responsible* that consists in being *held* responsible—a matter of *attributing*, rather than *acknowledging*.[234] Hegel claims that genuine responsibility requires *both* of these attitudes, arranged as reciprocal recognition (dual attitudes of acknowledging and attributing) of the status. His view is what one gets by accepting this Kantian picture, but treating *both* attitudes, the attribution of authority as well as its exercise in acknowledging responsibility, as necessary, and jointly sufficient, for the institution of normative statuses.

Looking at the diagram of the complex constellation of basic attitudes and statuses that make up the Basic Kantian Normative Status makes clear that although the determinate responsibilities at the bottom of the diagram (cognitive commitments to claims and practical commitments to doings) are instituted by immediately constitutive attitudes, the authority to do that, which is autonomy, is not conceived as itself instituted by attitudes. And looking at the diagram of the social extension of the BKNS likewise makes clear that the duty to respect the autonomy of others is also a status that it is not itself instituted by attitudes. Being autonomous and having the responsibility to respect autonomy by attributing the authority to commit oneself are both statuses that are not instituted by attitudes but are for Kant constitutive of the status of being a rational, discursive being. That is why for him a special story needs to be told about how they are two sides of one coin, two necessarily intertwined aspects of one conception of such beings.

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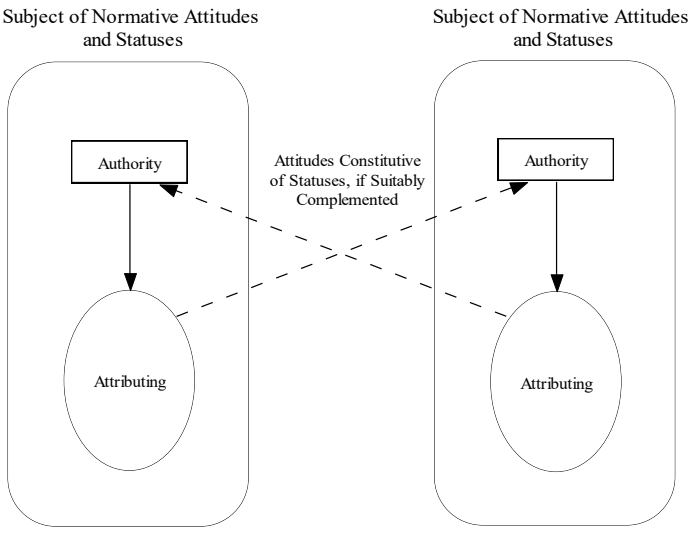
[234] This is the pure social-status "Queens Shilling" sense of "responsible": doing something that (whether one knows it or not) has the social significance of entitling others to attribute a responsibility. In *MIE* I try to make go as far as it can all on its own. Such an enterprise can seem perverse, but it is adopted with with Popperian methodological malice aforethought. The idea is to explore the strongest, most easily falsifiable hypothesis, to see what explanatory work it can do, how far it will take one, before its explanatory resources are exhausted.

Suppose one accepted the motivations that lead Kant to the conception of the complex of basic attitudes and statuses that is the socially extended BKNS, but thought both that *all* normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes, and that such institution requires not only the attitude of the subject of the status but also the attitude of some other who attributes it. This latter is the idea that the attitudes of any one individual normative subject can institute normative statuses only when they are *suitably complemented* by the attitudes of others. According to this line of thought, the respect others owe to autonomous normative subjects is not something *added to* the authority those subjects have, as autonomous, to institute responsibilities by acknowledging them (to make themselves responsible by taking themselves to be responsible). Recognition, the recognitive attitude of attributing the authority distinctive of autonomy, is an essential component required to institute that very authority. These are the thoughts that lead from the Kantian model of *individual* autonomous normative subjects as *immediately* instituting their determinate responsibilities by their attitudes of acknowledging them to the Hegelian model of the *social* institution of normative statuses by attitudes of normative subjects that must be *mediated* by each other's suitably complementary attitudes.

What results from modifying the socially extended complex of basic attitudes and statuses that comprises both autonomy and the duty to respect it is a complex of attitudes and statuses that has a different, symmetrical, essentially social structure. At the crudest level, the structure is this:

Robust General Recognition
is Attributing the Authority
to Attribute Authority
(and Responsibility)



This is a very basic constellation of normative attitudes and statuses. I am understanding Hegel as taking *this* to be the underlying metaphysical structure of (genuine) normativity.

All that is shown here of the complex constellation of attitudes and statuses exhibited by the two normative subjects is what corresponds to the top two-thirds of the BKNS. It does not represent the specific responsibilities and other statuses that each is recognized as having the authority to acknowledge. What is represented is a structure of general recognition, not specific recognition. It represents recognition in the sense of recognizing as, taking to be, a general recognizer. It is what in my first lecture [Chapter Eight] was called "robust recognition." This is attributing the authority to adopt attitudes that are constitutive of statuses, not immediately, but in the sense that they institute statuses *if suitably socially complemented*. In order to institute the authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes (here, attributions), one must oneself be taken to have (be recognized as having) that authority by another, whom one in turn recognizes as having that very same authority. The idea is that recognitive attitudes can institute recognitive authority just in case those attitudes are "suitably (socially) complemented" in the sense of being reciprocated. Recognitive authority—the authority that corresponds to autonomy in the BKNS, the authority to

institute statuses by one's attitudes—is itself instituted by suitably complemented recognitive attitudes. It is only when those attitudes are suitably complemented that they have the *authority* to institute normative statuses. *Hegelian recognition* is what *Kantian respect* (for the authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes) becomes when that *attribution* of authority by another is understood as essential to the institution of the authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes.

As autonomous, Kantian normative subjects can, in a certain sense, lift themselves up by their own bootstraps. For they can actualize normative statuses that are merely virtual, that is, that exist only as the objects of their normative attitudes. But the authority to do that, that authority in which their autonomy consists, is not itself the product of their own attitudes, nor of the attitudes of other normative subjects who are obliged to respect their autonomy by attributing that authority. Their possession of that authority is just a fact about them, as is everyone else's responsibility to respect it. By contrast, the recognitive authority of Hegelian normative subjects is instituted entirely by recognitive attitudes that correspond to Kantian respect for the autonomy of others. The recognitive status that is virtual as the mere object of recognitive attitudes (attributions of authority) is actualized, according to the recognitive model, when and only when the recognizing subject is recognized (as a recognizing subject) by another recognizing subject whom the first subject recognizes in turn. They do not individually lift themselves up into the normative status of having recognitive authority by the bootstraps of their own recognitive attitudes (attributions of authority), but the recognitive unit they form when their recognition is mutual *does* lift the attitudes of *both*; it does promote their statuses (recognitive authority) that are merely virtual as the objects of their attitudes up to the level of actual normative statuses. The recognitive statuses are not immediately instituted by recognitive attitudes, but they are instituted by suitably socially complemented recognitive attitudes.

V. Model of Specific Recognition

This, I claim, is the basic constellation of attitudes and statuses (we'll look further at its fine structure below) that Hegel invokes under the rubric of "the process of the pure Notion [Begriff]

of recognition, of the duplicating of self-consciousness in its oneness."[235] He introduces the topic by saying

Self-consciousness exists *in* and *for itself*, because and by virtue of its existing in and for itself for an other; which is to say, it exists only as recognized.[236]

What a normative subject is *in itself* is its normative statuses. What it is *for itself* is its normative attitudes. Being a subject of normative statuses and attitudes depends on being recognized as such by another normative subject. "A self-consciousness exists *for a self-consciousness.* Only so is it in fact self-consciousness."[237] This is the step that sees recognition, the successor attitude to Kantian respect as an essential constitutive element of the status of normative self-conscious self-hood that is the successor status to Kantian autonomy.

Furthermore, instituting a self in the sense of something with the status of a normative subject requires recognitive attitudes that are *symmetric, reciprocal,* or *mutual*.

Each is for the other the middle term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself; and each is for itself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own account, which at the same time is such only through this mediation. **They *recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another**.[238]

Here we see the move from Kantian *immediate* institution of statuses by individual attitudes to the Hegelian recognitive institution of statuses by attitudes that are socially *mediated* by the attitudes of others.

Thus the movement is simply the double movement of the two self-consciousnesses. Each sees the *other* do the same as it does; each does itself what it demands of the other, and therefore also does what it does only in so far as the other does the same. Action by one side only would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by both.[239]

It is this symmetric recognitive constellation of basic normative attitudes and statuses that he refers to in the very next sentence as "the pure Notion of recognition, of the duplicating of self-consciousness in its oneness." It is the basic structure of robust general recognition, in which

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[235] *PhG* [M185].
[236] *PhG* [P178]. [The "P" indicates this is Pinkard's translation, rather than Miller's.]
[237] *PhG* [M177].
[238] *PhG* [M184]. Emphasis added.
[239] *PhG* [M182].

suitably socially complemented recognitive attitudes institute statuses of recognitive authority, their normative subjects, and the dyadic community that consists of normative subjects who actually reciprocally recognize and are recognized by each other. "The elaboration of the concept of this spiritual unity within its doubling presents us with the movement of *recognition*."[240]

Recognizing another is taking or treating that other in practice as a normative self: as the subject of normative attitudes and statuses. More specifically, in the model, it is the attitude of attributing the status of authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes, when those attitudes are suitably complemented. This is a version of the sort of authority that is Kantian autonomy, differing in the understanding of the constellation of attitudes that can institute (actualize otherwise virtual) statuses as socially mediated rather than individually immediate. Adopting recognitive attitudes in this sense is applying to the one recognized an articulated normative concept of a self. It is consciousness of a self *as* a self. The recognizing consciousness also has that concept applied to it; it is a recognizing self *for* a recognizing self. But the self it is a self for, the one that is conscious of it as a self is not itself, but the recognized-recognizing other self. The self-consciousness that is instituted and actualized for the recognizing-and-recognized individuals making up the recognitive dyad is a property they have *as* a recognitive dyad. It is only secondarily and as a result that it is a property of each individual. Hegel refers to the recognitive community of recognizing-and-recognized individual normative subjects as "Spirit" [Geist]:

this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'.[241]

"Independence" is in the model *authority*: the authority of the several recognitive subjects. It is not *immediate* authority (independence), but authority that is socially *mediated* by the attitudes of others, who attribute it in recognizing the independent normative subject *as* authoritative. "Freedom" is Hegel's term for the symmetric recognitive constellation that integrates immediacy

[240] *PhG* [P178].
[241] *PhG* [M177].

as the actuality of attitudes with their social mediation (through the requirement of suitable complementation of attitudes for their institutional authority).

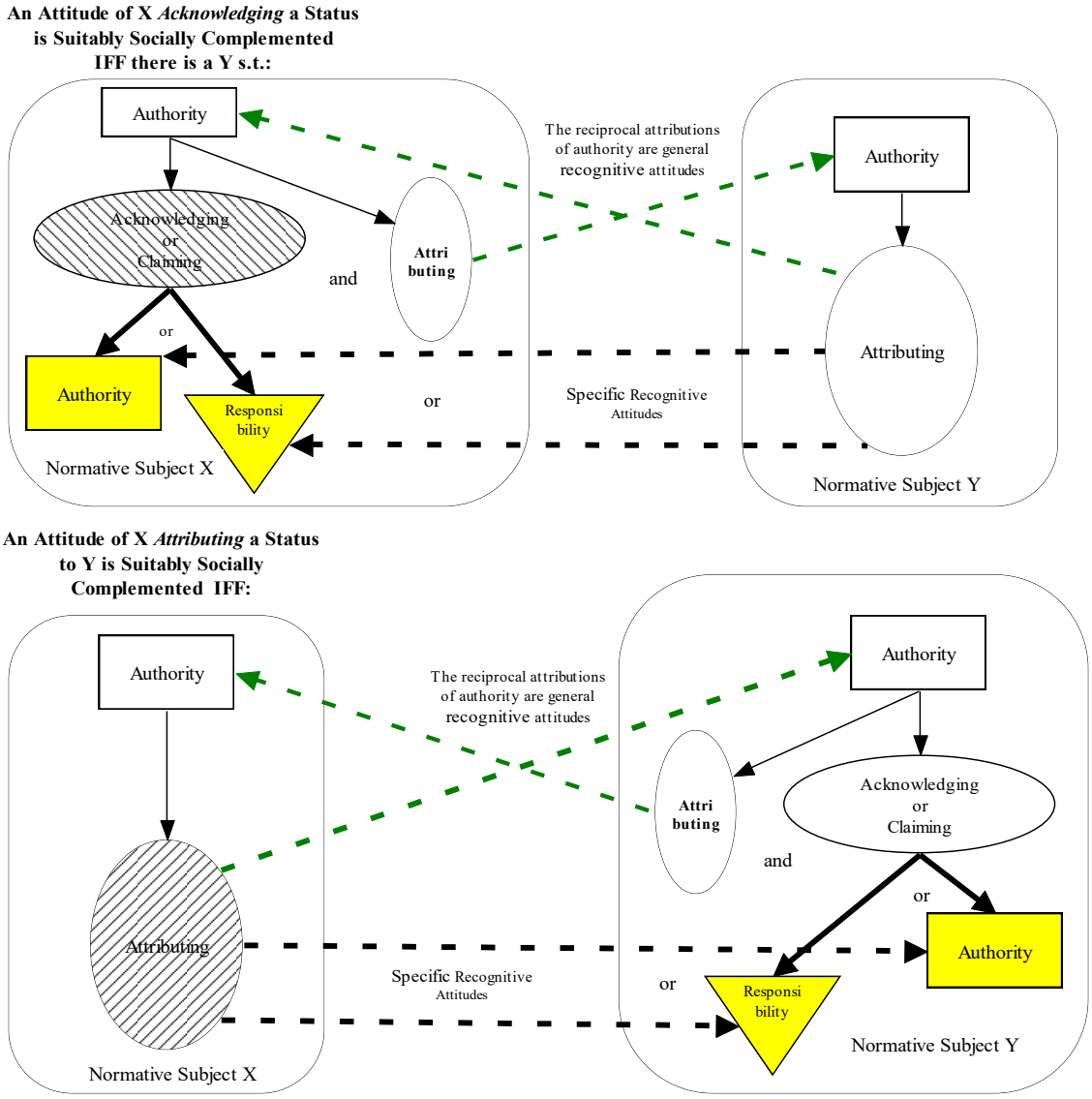
The diagram above represents only the most general outlines of the complex constellation of basic normative attitudes and statuses that is the model of Hegelian recognition being proposed as a successor to the model of Kantian autonomy. For it characterizes only the structure of robust *general* recognition, the recognitive attitudes that institute the recognitive status of having, which requires being recognized as having, recognitive authority. What is left out of that diagram are the *specific* (nonrecognitive) statuses of responsibility and authority (paradigmatically for claimings or judgings, and intentional doings) that Kant took autonomous normative subjects to have the authority to institute by their attitudes of acknowledgment. Focusing on conditions on possession of *specific* normative statuses, we can start with the one Kantian autonomy emphasizes: responsibility. Hegel does not want to relinquish Kant's insight that one is responsible only for what one acknowledges responsibility for. He wants to supplement it with the thought that it is nugatory to acknowledge a commitment unless one has licensed someone to *hold* you responsible. (Ultimately, this will be a matter of conditions of the determinate contentfulness of the commitment. Unless *administered*, the commitment is not determinately contentful.) The recognition model requires suitable social complementation of atittudes for statuses that are the objects of those attitudes to be actualized.

It follows that as with the Kantian autonomy structure, attributing a responsibility has to be complemented by the acknowledgment of the subject of the responsibility. One only *is* responsible (a status) for what one *acknowledges* responsibility for (an attitude). The status of responsibility, which is virtual in the sense of just being the object of these paired attitudes of attribution and acknowledgment, only becomes actualized—a status outside the attitudes it is an object of—when the status attributed is also acknowledged. This is just the other side of the coin of the requirement that for acknowledging a commitment or responsibility to succeed in instituting that status (for it to be constitutive of the commitment it acknowledges, for it to be a successful undertaking of that commitment, a status) someone else must both be authorized to *hold* the subject responsible (attribute the commitment, an attitude) and must *actually* do so. Kant does *not* require this social complementation of attitudes, but thinks that autonomous

individual subjects just come with the authority to actualize the statuses that are the objects of their attitudes—immediately, in the sense of not depending on any other actual attitudes. And according to the social recognitive model, the same paired conditions requiring social complementation of normative attitudes to institute normative statuses holds for attributions and acknowledgments (claims) of authority. One only *has* authority (including the authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes) if others *take* one to have that authority by attributing it. A claim of authority only actually institutes the authority claimed if others whom the authoritative subject recognizes as having the authority to do so recognize that authority by attributing it. Absent others treating one *as* authoritative, one's own claim to authority is incomplete. The authority in question is merely virtual, as the object of the subject's claiming attitude. It is a presupposition of the actualization of determinate statuses that the one who holds the first subject responsible is authorized to do so, and that that recognizing subject takes it that the first one is authorized to acknowledge the commitment. Acknowledging a status such as responsibility is suitably complemented only if some recognized recognizer also attributes it—holds one responsible. And attributing a status such as responsibility is suitably complemented only if it is also acknowledged by the recognized recognizer to whom it is attributed.

So the full constellation of basic attitudes and statuses that is the Hegelian recognitive model developed on the basis of the Kantian autonomy model (as socially extended to include the duty to respect autonomy) is more complex. It can be diagramed like this:

Hegel's Recognitive Model:
Suitably Complemented Normative Attitudes
Institute Normative Statuses



The attitude that is socially complemented is cross-hatched.

Resultant specific, determinate (nonrecognitive) statuses are in color.

This is the fine structure of the Hegelian reciprocal recognition model of the social institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes.

The top half of this diagram shows the recognitive dyad in which the attitude of acknowledgment of specific normative statuses by normative subject X (shown as shaded) is

suitably complemented by Y's attitudes of attribution so as actually to institute those specific statuses. The bottom half shows the recognitive dyad in which the attitude of attributing of specific normative statuses by normative subject X to normative subject Y (shown as shaded) are suitably complemented by Y's attitudes of acknowledgment so as actually to institute those specific statuses. Within each dyad, the reciprocal general recognitive attitudes of attributing authority are included at the top. They differ from those in the previous, simplified, diagram of reciprocal general recognition only in that the authority that is reciprocally attributed is now articulated into authority not only to adopt attitudes of attribution of normative statuses (including specific ones), but also attitudes of acknowledgment—in each case, constitutively if suitably complemented. The specific normative statuses instituted by the suitably complemented attitudes are on the lower left of the top dyad and on the lower right of the bottom one. What one sees there is essentially the diagram of the basic Kantian normative status of autonomy. Each subject has the authority to institute normative statuses (including specific ones) by acknowledging them. The big differences are:

- *All* the normative statuses are instituted by appropriate constellations of normative attitudes—constellations in which they are suitably socially complemented.
- The attribution by others of the authority to adopt constitutive (status-instituting) attitudes, which corresponds to Kantian respect, is an essential element, a *necessary* condition, of the institution of that authority.
- The whole structure of statuses and attitudes, including other-regarding ones, in which the substructure taking the place of the Kantian autonomy structure of statuses and attitudes is embedded, is being taken to be the context *sufficient* for the institution of statuses by attitudes.

The core idea of the recognitive model concerns what is required for statuses of responsibility and authority that are virtual in the sense of being the objects of attitudes of attribution and acknowledgment to be actualized. It is the idea that it is necessary and sufficient for the attitudes in question to be part of an appropriate constellation of other attitudes. A constellation of attitudes appropriate for realizing their objects is one in which the attitudes of attributing or acknowledging responsibility and authority are suitably complemented by other attitudes. When the statuses that are attributed to another subject are also acknowledged by that

subject, and when the statuses that are acknowledged by one subject are attributed to that subject, and when the normative subjects of these symmetric attitudes generally recognize each other, then genuine normative statuses are instituted. To recognize someone in the general sense is to attribute the *authority* to adopt attitudes that will, if suitably complemented, institute statuses, that is *actualize* the statuses that are the objects of those attitudes.

VI. The Recognitive Institution of Statuses, Subjects, and Communities

According to the recognitive model, the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes, the actualization of the objects of those attitudes, requires *complementary* attitudes: attributions of statuses and acknowledgements of those statuses must symmetrically balance each other. Corresponding to this symmetry of attitudes is a symmetry of recognitive statuses. According to the model, the *authority* to recognize (which is, *inter alia*, attributed by the attitude of recognition) and the *responsibility* to recognize are two sides of one coin. Attributing recognitive authority implies acknowledging recognitive responsibility. To say this is to say more than just that if X has authority over Y then Y is responsible to X. That is indeed a fundamental principle relating these normative statuses. But one must look more closely at the concept of general recognition to discern the symmetry of general recognitive attitudes and statuses.

So far I have talked about suitable complementation of attitudes, but not about the actualization or institution of statuses that, according to the model, it brings about. What is the result of exercising the authority attributed to a subject when one recognizes that subject? What does it mean to say that the statuses that are the objects of attitudes that are suitably complemented by the attitudes of others who recognize and are recognized by the subject of those attitudes become *actual*? In the first instance, it means that anyone who recognizes a subject attributes to it the statuses that are the objects of its suitably complemented attitudes. Anyone who recognizes that subject takes the subject really to have the responsibilities and authority that it acknowledges (when the acknowledgment is suitably complemented by attributions), and joins the recognized subject in attributing the specific responsibilities and authority to the subject to whom the recognized subject attributes them (when the recognized subject's attributions are suitably complemented by acknowledgments on the part of their target). If X recognizes Y, X takes Y to have the authority to institute determinate authority and responsibility by acknowledging or attributing those statuses, so long as Y's attitudes are suitably complemented by those of another subject (including X) whom Y recognizes in turn. X attributes the statuses that are the objects of Y's suitably complemented attitudes to Y, or to whomever Y attributes them to. That is part of X's taking the statuses Y acknowledges or attributes to be actual, when Y's attitudes are suitably complemented.

But there is more to X taking the statuses that are the objects of Y's suitably complemented attitudes to be actual than just X attributing those statuses. X's taking the statuses actually to have been instituted by Y's suitably complemented attitudes also includes attributing the *responsibility* to attribute those statuses to *everyone* X recognizes, as well as acknowledging it itself. That is, part of general recognition, of attributing to one subject Y the authority to institute (actualize) normative statuses by adopting suitably complemented normative attitudes is attributing to everyone who has the authority to institute such statuses the responsibility to attribute the statuses so instituted. What is at issue is a universal quantification in the indirect object place of an attribution of responsibility. In recognizing anyone, one is attributing not only authority, but responsibility. The authority to

institute statuses by one's suitably complemented attitudes comes with a responsibility to attribute statuses so instituted by those one recognizes. For attributing those statuses just is taking them to be actual. So the cash value of recognizing someone as having the authority to institute statuses by their attitudes (when the attitudes are suitably complemented) is that one takes everyone, not just oneself, to be obliged practically to treat those instituted statuses as actual—that is, to be responsible for attributing them. Attributing and acknowledging a *responsibility* of that distinctive kind—universally quantified in the indirect object position—is a necessary part of the attribution of *authority* that is recognition. For it is what taking the authority being attributed to be authority to *actualize* the objects of the recognized subject's attitudes, to be the authority to *institute* statuses by adopting attitudes (when those attitudes are suitably complemented), consists in.

The fact that for the authority attributed by attitudes of general recognition to be the authority to institute statuses by one's attitudes it must be accompanied by the attribution to everyone one recognizes of responsibility to take or treat those statuses in practice *as* actual has a number of consequences. One is that in recognizing any normative subject one thereby obliges oneself to recognize anyone that subject recognizes. If X recognizes Y then X takes it that Y has the authority to institute statuses by Y's attitudes, if they are suitably complemented by the attitudes of someone Z whom Y recognizes and who recognizes Y. (X can play this role, but it need not be X who does.) In that case X takes it that everyone, including X has the responsibility to attribute the statuses that are instituted by the suitably complemented attitudes of the recognitive dyad of Y and Z. But that means X is obliged to take Z as having the authority to adopt attitudes that can suitably complement those of Y. Attributing the authority to adopt attitudes that can suitably complement and be suitably complemented just is general recognition. So in recognizing Y, X makes itself responsible for recognizing whoever Y recognizes. Granted, Z might not actually recognize Y, even though Y recognizes Z. Or, though Z does generally recognize Y, Z might not actually adopt specific attitudes that suitably complement Y's specific attitudes (acknowledging what Y attributes or attributing what Y acknowledges). Nonetheless, X is committed to its being the case that *if* Z did those things, genuine normative statuses would be instituted thereby. And that is to say that in recognizing Y, X becomes responsible for attributing to any Z whom Y recognizes the *authority* to do those things: to generally recognize Y and to adopt attitudes that suitably complement Y's attitudes, so as to actualize the statuses that are the objects of those attitudes. And to attribute that authority to Z just is to generally recognize Z.

In this sense, then, general recognition is *transitive*. It need not be the case that if X actually recognizes Y and Y actually recognizes Z that X *actually* recognizes Z. X might not in fact adopt the relevant attitude, might not actually attribute to Z the authority to adopt attitudes that can institute statuses when suitably complemented and that can suitably complement the attitudes of others. But if X actually recognizes Y and Y actually recognizes Z, it is the case that in virtue of his recognition of Y, X is and acknowledges being *responsible* for, *committed* to recognizing Z.

To be a self in the full normative sense is to have not only actual normative attitudes, but also actual normative statuses: not only to *take* oneself or others to have authority or be responsible, but actually to *have* authority or *be* responsible. To achieve such a status, a normative subject must participate in a general recognitive dyad: must actually be recognized by someone that subject actually recognizes. For only suitably socially complemented attitudes institute actual statuses. It follows that normative statuses, normative subjects of such statuses, and recognitive communities of normative subjects are all synthesized simultaneously by recognitive processes that have an appropriate structure: the structure of reciprocal recognition, Hegel's "gegenseitig Anerkennung." The basic normative statuses in this model are responsibility and authority, corresponding to Hegel's "Abhängigkeit" and "Unabhängigkeit" when those terms are applied on the side of subjects. Being a self in the sense of being a subject of such basic normative statuses is another kind of normative status, as is being a *member* of a *community* of selves or normative subjects, synthesized by normative attitudes of reciprocal recognition between such subjects. The model

explains how it is that these two in some sense derivative normative statuses, being a normative self or subject and being a member of a normative community, are actually and necessarily the *same* normative status, looked at in two different ways. It is the normative, social "substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses… 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'."[242]

The minimal community that is *self-instituting* in the dual sense of instituting both selves and a community of selves (along with normative statuses of responsibility and authority) is a recognitive dyad: two individuals who each recognize and are recognized by the other, who both attribute and acknowledge normative statuses. Much larger such communities are possible, in which each member stands in reciprocal recognitive relations to each other member: *each* recognizing and being recognized by *all* the others *as* at once normative subject and a member of the recognitive community. Hegel uses "self-consciousness" to describe the dual status each member of such a recognitive community has as both a subject of genuine normative statuses and a member of a recognitive community. Self-consciousness in the sense of this normative status is not the immediate achievement of an individual, as it is for Kant. It is an essentially *social* status, a kind of self-relation that is mediated by recognitive relations to others. It is a paradigm case of a kind identity forged from differences, as a status that essentially includes relations to others, who also have that status in virtue of their recognitive relations. Each exercises independent *authority* in adopting attitudes of recognition towards others, and each is in turn *responsible* to those others in being dependent upon them for their recognition in turn (on pain of no actual normative statuses being instituted, including those of being a self-conscious normative subject and community member). This constitutive constellation of reciprocal authority and responsibility, normative independence and dependence, Hegel calls "freedom." As Hegel puts it in the passage I have already cited several times, which closes his introduction to his *Self-Consciousness* chapter:

A self-consciousness exists *for a self-consciousness.* Only so is it in fact self-consciousness; for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness become explicit for it…A self-consciousness, in being an object, is just as much 'I' as 'object'. With this, we already have before us the Notion of *Spirit.* What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'.[243]

What we, the readers of the *Phenomenology*, are to learn is the social metaphysics of genuine normativity—authority, responsibility, self-conscious self-hood, and the normative social substance that is Geist—as presented in the model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes of reciprocal recognition. The form that the argument for this model takes is a rehearsal of the defects of social structures of normative attitudes that do not have the symmetric social structure required by the model for the institution of genuine normative statuses. That is the topic of the next lecture [chapter], which reads the various allegories recounted in the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, beginning with those collected under the rubric of the Master and the Servant ("Herr und Knecht"), in terms of the reciprocal recognition model presented here.

[242] *PhG* [M177].
[243] *PhG* [M177].

VII. The Status-Dependence of Attitudes

At the center of this lecture has been an account of Hegel's successor-conception to Kant's autonomy version of the *attitude-dependence* of some crucial normative statuses, specifically determinately contentful responsibilities, both doxastic and practical (for Kant endorsements in the form of judgments and practical maxims.

Kant combines his development of the characteristic modern idea of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses with an acknowledgment of the traditional idea of the status-dependence of normative attitudes. For Kant, the authority that is autonomy, and the responsibility that is the duty to respect (the precursor of recognition) are statuses that are *not* instituted by attitudes. They are postulated as actual authority and responsibility, that are not promoted from the virtual status of being objects of attitudes that institute them. Hegel's critique of modernity takes the form of a diagnosis of it as opposing a one-sided hypersubjectivity to the one-sided hyper-objectivity of traditional conceptions of normativity. That normative statuses are attitude-dependent is a genuine insight. But it will be understood only one-sidedly if it is not balanced by an appreciation of what was right about the traditional appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the responsibility attitudes owe to statuses, the dimension of authority that statuses exert over attitudes. Kant has one way of combining these insights. Hegel proposes another.

The bulk of the discussion in this lecture [chapter] has been on the side of *pragmatics*: the study of the normative attitudes and statuses that are the bearers of determinate content. To understand the dimension of status-dependence of attitudes, we must look also to the side of *semantics*. For the distinction between *phenomena* and *noumena*, between appearance and reality, between what things are *for consciousness* and what they are *in themselves*, shows up *both* in the form of the pragmatic distinction between attitudes and statuses *and* in the form of the distinction between senses and referents, as that semantic distinction is rendered in Hegel's terms. In pragmatic terms, it takes the form of the distinction between what consciousness is *for* (a) *consciousness* (itself or another) and what (a) consciousness is *in itself*. This is the distinction

between what a normative subject is *really* committed or entitled to, its actual responsibilities and authority, and what responsibilities or authority other subjects attribute to it, or it acknowledges itself. That is just the distinction between statuses and attitudes. Semantically, though, appearances, what things are for consciousness, are the Hegelian analog of Fregean senses. What those senses refer to or represent, how things are in themselves, is the reality that is the Hegelian analog of Fregean referents. Hegel accepts Kant's insight that what a representing (here, a sense, an appearance, what things are *for* consciousness) represents is what exercises a distinctive kind of *authority* over the correctness of the representing. That is what the representing is *responsible* to for its correctness, what provides the normative standard for assessments of its correctness. This is the semantic correlate of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the sense in which what consciousness is *for* consciousness, a subject's normative attitudes, is *responsible to* (dependent upon) what consciousness is *in* itself (what it is *really* committed to or authoritative about), which accordingly exercises *authority over* those attitudes.

The relation between phenomena as representings (Hegelian senses) and noumena as representeds (Hegelian referents) is established by the process of *recollection* (Erinnerung). That is a retrospective rational reconstruction of an expressively progressive process of experience as explicitation: the gradual emergence *for* consciousness of how things are *in* themselves. There is a deep connection between this account of the process by which content is *determined*—viewed prospectively, becoming more determinate, viewed retrospectively, explicitly revealing new aspects of the always-already determinate content that has been implicit—and the relations between normative attitudes and normative statuses according to the recognitive model of the institution of statuses by attitudes. To begin with, the context of those content-determining processes on the side of semantics is provided by the recognitive processes that institute normative statuses on the side of pragmatics. As we saw in the discussion of the *Consciousness* chapters, and will consider further in the discussion of *Reason*, content-determination is the incorporation of immediacy in the mediated form of conceptual content. Specifically, that immediacy takes the form of normative *attitudes* that subjects *actually* adopt in the course of experience, in response to collisions among attitudes they find themselves with, both through perception and through inference. Those collisions of attitudes are the experience of error.

Acknowledging some commitments normatively requires sacrificing others incompatible with them. That phase of the experience of error in turn requires retrospective revisions of one's understanding of the conceptual *contents* of one's commitments: of what is *really* incompatible with what and what *really* follows from what. This final retrospective, rationally reconstructive phase of each cycle of the experience of error enforces *to* consciousness the distinction between noumena and phenomena, between how things really are and how things merely seem or appear. The form that distinction takes on the side of the subject *is* the distinction between normative *statuses*, what one has *really* committed oneself to in claiming, for instance, that the coin is copper, and normative *attitudes*, what one *takes* oneself to be committed to in making such a claim. This pragmatic distinction reflects the distinction between the conceptual contents that are Hegelian referents and those that are Hegelian senses: the appearances of those referents, what they are *for* consciousness.

Thought of from the point of view of the subject, the process of content-determination, by which noumena (referents, representeds) become something *to* consciousness distinct from the phenomena (senses, representings) that the experience of error unmasks as what things are *for* consciousness, is the emergence of the distinction between what *is* right (with respect to the relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence that articulate conceptual contents) and what *seems* right to the subject whose contentful commitments are at issue. This is just the distinction between normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes*. As Wittgenstein puts the point: "If whatever seems right to me is right, then there is no question of right or wrong."[244] Pragmatically, the question of how to understand noumena in terms of phenomena, which we have been addressing semantically, shows up precisely as the question of how it is that *attitudes* (how things seem to the subject) can institute genuine *statuses*, which are binding on and beyond the attitudes of the subject. How can mere attitudes be transcended? (Compare: How can referents become something *to* consciousness beyond mere senses, what things are *for* consciousness?) Here we have seen that the key insight motivating the recognitive model is that we can make sense of the distinction between status and attitude only if in *acknowledging* a *responsibility* (committing oneself) one is at the same time *authorizing others* to *hold* one responsible, by *attributing* that responsibility (commitment). They then can be understood as

[244] [ref.] [from *AII* 2.]

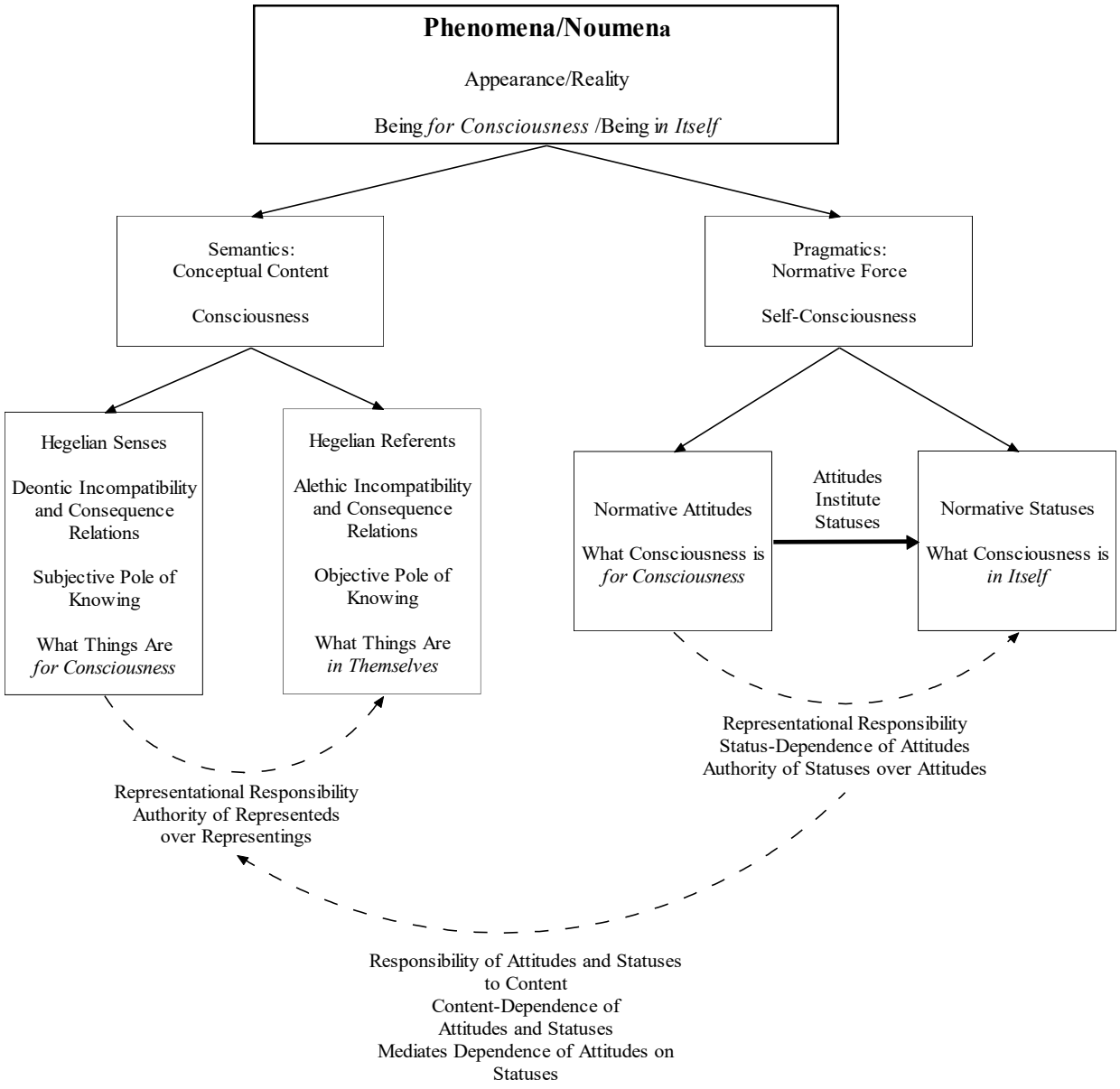
administering a *content* one has committed oneself to—a content that is *not* determined just by the attitudes of the acknowledger. To see *acknowledging* a *responsibility* and *attributing authority* (to hold one responsible) as two sides of one coin *both* articulates the distinction between mere attitudes and genuine statuses, *and* brings into play the notion of *determinate content* as what one makes oneself responsible *for*. This is what the requirement that attitudes be *suitably complemented* in order to institute genuine statuses does. It makes available determinate contents, and thereby articulates the dimension along which attitudes are dependent upon statuses, in the sense of being responsible to them for assessments of their correctness: senses as answering for their correctness to referents. The status-dependence of attitudes shows up in the recognitive model as a sense in which *pragmatics* (the theory of normative *force*) is constrained by *semantics* (the theory of conceptual *content*).

Statuses are normative *noumena* (what consciousness is *in* itself), and attitudes are normative *phenomena* (what consciousness is *for* itself or for others). The story about noumena/phenomena in terms of recollection is accordingly the form of the story about the status-dependence of attitudes. Kant, having top-level *general* statuses, had this aspect of status-dependence of attitudes as well as attitude-dependence of statuses, since both autonomy and the duty of respect (the precursor of recognition) are statuses, but what autonomy is the authority to *do* is to institute statuses by attitudes, which is a form of the attitude-dependence of the resulting *specific* statuses. So Kant divided the labor: status-dependence of *general* attitudes (including the precursor of recognition—autonomy being the precursor of "suitably complementation", as a notion of *constitutiveness* of attitudes) and attitude-dependence of *specific* statuses.

The statuses and their contents are determined by what is represented. The attitudes are can be thought of as senses, which inherit this crucial dimension of content from their referents. The *content* determines what one is *really* responsible *for*: the status to which the attitudes answer for their correctness, even though they instituted the status. That responsibility is administered by those one has made oneself responsible *to* in endorsing or acknowledging a responsibility, those to whom one has thereby ceded the *authority* to determine what one is *really* responsible for. If there is no responsibility *to* others, then in exercising one's authority to commit oneself, one has not succeeded in making oneself responsible *for* any determinate content. *That* is the cost of not

having responsibility to others, authority of others, correlative with one's own authority (to undertake responsibility).

In claiming that the coin is copper, the commitment I undertake, the responsibility I acknowledge, is not determined just by my attitudes. I have made myself responsible to the actual content of the concept copper I have applied. I have authorized others to hold me responsible, not just according to my conception of copper (what I take to follow from or be incompatible with such a commitment, a matter of my attitudes), but according to the real content of the counter I have played in the public language-game. That is what determines what I have really committed myself to, the status I have actually acquired by my performance. The essentially *social* relations between normative attitudes and normative statuses—*both* the institution of statuses by attitudes *and* the dependence of attitudes on statuses (their responsibility to statuses for their correctness)—on the pragmatic side of force, and the essentially *historical* relations between what the contents are for consciousness (phenomena, senses, representing) and what they are in themselves (noumena, referents, represented) on the semantic side of conceptual content are two sides of one coin, recognitive and experiential aspects of one sort of developmental process. A rough diagram of the story so far is this:



The retrospective, rational-reconstructive *historical* phase of the process of experience, Hegel's "Erinnerung", explains how, on the semantic side, objective conceptual contents (referents, noumena) articulated as laws, facts, and objects with properties both are to be understood in terms of and serve as standards for assessments of the correctness of the process of manipulating subjective conceptual contents (senses) by applying rules, propositions, and singular terms and predicates in adopting doxastic (and, as we'll see further along, practical) attitudes. The *social* character of the recognitive process that institutes both normative subjects and their communities

explains, on the pragmatic side, both how normative statuses (noumena, what self-conscious subjects are in themselves) are instituted by (and in that strong sense dependent upon) normative attitudes (phenomena, what self-conscious subjects are for themselves) and how those statuses have authority over those attitudes in serving as standards for assessment of their correctness. This is the dimension of status-dependence of normative attitudes, the responsibility of those attitudes to (Hegel's "dependence on") statuses that balances the attitude-dependence of normative statuses.

VIII. Conclusion

The recognitive model is Hegel's way of synthesizing two crucial insights. First is what he sees as the founding insight of modernity, the idea that normative statuses are attitude-dependent, as boiled down and purified in the Kant-Rousseau idea of autonomy into the idea that at least some normative statuses are *instituted by* normative attitudes. The second is what was right about the traditional idea (one-sidedly overemphasized by premodern thought) of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the idea that our attributions and acknowledgments (or claimings) of responsibility and authority answer for their correctness to facts about what people really are committed and entitled to. The complex social-historical recognitive model of normativity is Hegel's way of performing the Eiertanz required to make simultaneous sense both of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes and of the role of normative statuses as standards for assessments of the correctness of normative attitudes. At its base is the idea that to undertake a responsibility must always also be to acknowledge the authority of others to hold one responsible—implicitly to attribute that authority. And explicitly to attribute determinately contentful authority to someone is also always to attribute implicit responsibilities defined by that content, administered on its behalf by others to whom one has made oneself responsible by the original assertion of the authority to make oneself responsible. In the case of the attribution of authority that is general recognition, this includes acknowledging one's own responsibility to respect exercises of that authority. In Hegel's terms, there is no independence without a correlative dependence, and *vice versa*. And consciousness is essentially self-consciousness, in the sense that one cannot make sense of what consciousness is in itself apart from concern with what it is for itself. Further, it is of the essence of the recognitive model of

self-conscious normative subjects that “what consciousness is for itself” is always a matter of the constellation of attitudes comprising what *a* self-consciousness, an individual normative subject, is both *for itself* and *for others* in the recognitive community that is necessarily simultaneously synthesized by reciprocal recognitive attitudes along with individual self-consciousnesses.

Handout for Lecture 11

The Allegory of Mastery: Pragmatic and Semantic Lessons

Hegel agrees with Kant that we are both creators and creatures of our *commitments*. What is most fundamental to us, as the essentially normative creatures we are, is our capacity to commit ourselves. This is the authority to undertake responsibilities. It is the authority to make ourselves responsible by taking ourselves to be responsible. In this way, we institute statuses by our attitudes. In the previous lecture I was particularly concerned to highlight how Hegel's *social* recognitive model develops out of Kant's *individual* autonomy model by making explicit what can be seen to be implicit in Kant's invocation of the other-regarding duty to *respect* beings that are autonomous in the sense of having the authority to make themselves responsible, that is, to commit themselves. *Respecting* autonomous others in this sense is the core of Hegel's practical attitude of *recognizing* them. It is *attributing* the authority to institute normative statuses by one's normative attitudes, *making* oneself responsible by *taking* oneself to be responsible. The principal difference is that Hegel sees such recognition as an essential component in *instituting* the distinctive authority in question, not merely as an attitude normatively required as a *consequence* of the antecedently intelligible possession by another of that kind of authority.

Hegel's speculative retrospective rational reconstruction (Erinnerung) of the advent of the subordination-obedience structure of recognition takes the form of an allegory. What emerges from the life-and-death struggle is a distinctive constellation of recognitive relations between superior and subordinate, personified as Master and Servant [Herr und Knecht]. Each party practically understands himself and the other according to the categories of Mastery. This is a practical normative conception that understands the Master as a locus of *pure independence*, authority without responsibility, and the Servant as a locus of *pure dependence*, responsibility without authority. Hegel thinks a practical recognitive conception embodying this social division of normative role is implicit in any practices exhibiting the traditional asymmetric superior-subordinate structure of normativity.

Hegel argues that this practical recognitive conception is radically defective—and so, accordingly, are the self-conscious normative selves or subjects it shapes. At base, what is wrong with the subordination-obedience model is that it systematically mistakes *power* for *authority*. This is a fundamental mistake about the metaphysics of normativity. But the mistake is not merely theoretical. It is practical, as well. It leads to deformed social institutions and deformed self-conscious individual selves. Those institutions are deformed in fact, not just in their self-understandings. This mistaking of power for authority has a relatively intricate fine-structure, according to Hegel. That is what he is teaching us about with the allegory of Mastery.

One key feature of the life-and-death struggle is precisely that it *is* a matter of life and death. An essential element of the transition from being a living organism, belonging to the realm of Nature, to being a denizen of the realm of Spirit is willingness to risk one's biological life.

"It is only through staking one's life that freedom is won; only thus is it proved that for self-consciousness, its essential being is not [just] being, not the immediate form in which it appears, not its submergence in the expanse of life, but rather that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as vanishing moments, that it is only pure being-for-self. The individual who has not risked his life may well be recognized as a person, but he has not attained to the truth of this recognition as an independent self-consciousness." [*PhG* §187].

I argued in my first lecture that the new element that is introduced here is the idea that in risking one's life one *identifies* with what one risks one's life *for*, rather than identifying oneself with the biological

existence that one risks. By being willing to risk one's life for something, one makes it the case that the life one risks is *not* an *essential* element of the self one is thereby constituting, while that for which one risks it is. What mattered for the transition from Natur to Geist were the cases where what one was willing to risk one's natural life for was a *commitment*, something *normative*: a normative status or attitude. This is risking something *actual* for something *ideal*.

Self-consciousness can be thought of to begin with as consciousness of one's self—a matter of being *for* oneself what one is *in* oneself. In the idiom I have been recommending, this is to have one's normative *statuses* appropriately reflected in one's normative *attitudes*. It is to acknowledge the responsibility and authority one actually has. We might think of this as *theoretical* self-consciousness. The self-constitutive achievement of existential identification makes visible a complementary dimension of *practical* self-consciousness. For in this case, statuses reflect attitudes, rather than the other way around. It is by practically *taking* oneself to be a certain kind of self, identifying with one rather than another element of one's statuses and attitudes, that one *makes* oneself into a different kind of self, alters one's status. What one is *in* oneself is *responsible to* (in Hegel's terms, dependent on) what one is *for* oneself, one's practical attitude of identification. Each of the theoretical and the practical dimensions of self-consciousness yield something that the self is *in and for itself*.

Implicit in desire, by its nature, is a second-order desire: the desire that things should be *in* themselves, just what they are *for* the desirer. That is the desire that one's desires be satisfied, just because they *are* one's desires. To see that such a second-order desire is implicit in what it is to be a (first-order) desire it suffices to reflect that it is as correct to say that all particular *desires* are united in their common aim at *satisfaction* as it is to say that all particular *beliefs* are united in their common aim at *truth*. That ideal of pure independence implicit in desire as such is the orectic origin of the normative self-conception of Mastery. For this implicit ideal is a practical conception of oneself as an *immediately, transparently constitutive taker*. To be a constitutive taker is to be such that *taking* things to have a certain practical significance succeeds in *making* them have that significance.

In the account in my first lecture of the tripartite structure of desire, that structure was epitomized by the relations between hunger, food, and eating: a desire, an activity motivated by that desire, and a practical significance things could have with respect to the desire. The desire then provides a standard of assessment of the success of the activity it motivates, accordingly as the desire is or is not satisfied. For that induces a distinction with respect to the practical significance, between what has that significance *for* the desirer (is treated as food by being eaten) and what *really* has that significance, *in* itself (is in fact food in that it satisfies the hunger that motivated the eating). This orectic structure accordingly makes possible the sort of *experience of error* that the *Introduction* identifies as underlying the representational character of consciousness. This analysis encourages us to inquire into the *activity* that corresponds to the second-order desire that everything be *in* itself just whatever it is *for* the desirer. What stands to *that* desire as eating stands to hunger? I think the answer Hegel offers is that that activity is engaging in a life-and-death struggle with any and every other subject of that same desire. That is struggling to make it be *in* itself what it is *for* the sovereign desirer: an object for whom and in whom only the sovereign desirer's desires are efficacious.

The first phase of Hegel's allegorical story is the life-and-death struggle. Hegel says the result of the struggle is "two opposed shapes of consciousness; one is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is master, the other is servant." [*PhG* §189] The second phase is the normative relationship of subordination and obedience that obtains between the victor and the vanquished in that struggle. This is the relationship between Master and Servant.

The first point to understand in reading this phase of the story, in order to understand the self-conception of Mastery, is that the victor takes it that his victory indicates *success* in satisfying the desire that motivated the struggle in the first place. That second-order desire was the desire that one's desires be immediately and transparently constitutive. It is the desire that one have the power (being transformed, as we will see, into the normative shape of authority) to make things so by taking them to be so. The victor takes it that by *taking* himself to be an immediately and transparently constitutive taker in the way he has, that is by existentially identifying with his claiming that status, and by having come through the life-and-death struggle victorious, he has immediately and transparently *made* himself be such a taker, and so has successfully instituted that status. That is what the master is *for* himself, and he takes his victory to have successfully transformed that status from being the merely *virtual* object of his attitude (the original second-order desire) to being *actualized* as the status that is what he is *in* himself.

Though he is wrong about what he has achieved, the victor in the life-and-death struggle is not *simply* deluded. He *has* substantially transformed himself by staking his life, by existentially identifying with his practical self-conception. In so doing he raised himself above being in himself simply a desiring living being. For he succeeded in making himself *essentially self-conscious*, someone such that what he is *for* himself is an essential component of what he is *in* himself. As such, he is subject to a distinctive new kind of self-development. For changing what he is *for* himself changes what he is *in* himself. As an essentially self-conscious being, he is now an essentially *historical* being. The act of practical self-identification, he performed was *constitutive*. It was a self-taking that was a self-making. In this sense, the master is right to think of himself as a constitutive taker.

In understanding the significance of his victory in terms of Mastery, the victor in the life-and-death struggle has misunderstood what he has actually succeeded in doing. He has overgeneralized his genuine achievement, which was making himself essentially self-conscious in himself by his practical attitude of existentially identifying with what he is for himself. What he successfully made himself be in himself—the status his attitudes instituted—is not all of, but only a part of, what he was for himself. He has immediately instituted a status by adopting an attitude. But that falls far short of the sort of sovereignty he desired his attitudes to have. In misunderstanding his achievement, the master misunderstands himself.

Here is the irony of Mastery: the master has not only made himself essentially self-conscious, he has achieved a genuinely *normative* status—crossing the boundary between the merely living and the genuinely normative. The master-servant relation is a genuinely normative structure of subordination and obedience. And it is so *because* it *is* what the master denies: a *recognitive* relation, in which (asymmetric) recognitive attitudes are suitably complemented (albeit asymmetrically), so as to institute genuine (if defective) normative statuses. In fact the master is the master only insofar as he is recognized *as* the master by the servant. The servant exercises recognitive authority over the master, who is normatively dependent upon, responsible to, the servant for his status—which is a *normative* status just because and insofar as it is instituted by recognition. But the master does not recognize the recognitive authority of the servant.

What happens to the Master is the metaphysical version of what happens psychologically to someone who aspires to celebrity, acquiring along the way a contempt for the mass of admirers whose acknowledgement constitutes that celebrity. Self-respect is difficult to achieve by regarding oneself as reflected in a mirror of morons. The Master is who he is insofar as he is recognized as Master by those whom the Master is committed to regarding only with contempt. He is no more than they can make him. His low opinion of them is in fact a low opinion of himself.

The institution of self-conscious normative subjects who are for themselves what they are in themselves requires that recognitive authority and recognitive responsibility be co-ordinate and commensurate. It

requires two such normative subjects exercising reciprocal recognitive authority over each other and holding each other recognitively responsible. Asymmetric claims of authority without corresponding responsibility institutes only virtual statuses, statuses actual only as the objects of those attitudes, not genuine normative statuses. And claims of authority unaccompanied by grants of authority to hold one responsible for the exercise of that authority are asymmetric in that sense. A principal symptom of the defect inherent in exercises of Mastery, claims of pure independence, is the structural failure of self-consciousness that consists in what the Master is in himself, his actual normative statuses, being massively divergent from what he is for himself, the virtual statuses that are the objects of his attitudes. And it is not just that what the Master is for gets wrong what he is in himself. Being that *for* himself *deforms* what he is *in* himself, precisely because of what his act of essential identification has made him: an essentially self-conscious self—a self such that what it is for itself is an essential structure defining what he is in himself. This metaphysical irony is the efficacy of fate.

The labor the Servant is obliged to do is the practical version of what showed up for us already in the *Introduction* as the *experience of error*. That process, in which the disparity between what things are for consciousness (appearance) and what they are in themselves (reality) is the motor of change of attitude, was identified there as the locus of the *representational* dimension of conceptual content, the objective purport (their directedness at what things are in themselves) of commitments expressing what things are for consciousness. The experience of error is the normative, conceptually articulated, hence geistig, development of orectic proto-consciousness. For we saw how the tripartite structure of desire allows that merely natural state not only to institute practical signficances (e.g. things treated as food by being responded to by eating) expressing what things are *for* the desiring animal, but to provide standards of correctness and error regarding what things are *in* themselves, accordingly as eating what is taken as food does or does not satisfy the motivating hunger. The distinction between appearance and reality that shows up naturally, concretely, and immediately in that setting is transformed into something normative, abstract, and mediated where the desire that motivates the Servant's activities and assesses the correctness or error of their results is something only the Master *feels*.

We are now in a position to see that there is a *recognitive* version of this sort of experience on the side of *self*-consciousness that exhibits a generic structure of authority and responsibility corresponding to the specific *cognitive* experience of error characteristic of *consciousness*. Mastery's ideology of pure independence corresponds, on the recognitive side of self-consciousness, to a form of cognitive consciousness that takes whatever *seems* right to it to *be* right, and so fails to adopt determinately contentful attitudes.

In recognizing other subjects, that is, in attributing recognitive authority to them, I make myself vulnerable, in the sense that my actual status depends not only on my attitudes, but also on the attitudes of those I recognize. Just so, in representing something, in attributing to it the representational authority constitutive of being represented, I make myself vulnerable to error, in the sense that the correctness of my representing depends not only on how I represent things, but on how it actually is with what only thereby counts as represented. This vulnerability to the other, whether on the side of subjects or of objects, this acknowledging one's responsibility to and the authority of the other, opens up the possibility of *discordance* between one's commitments. On the recognitive side, the discordance is incompatibility between the virtual statuses one acknowledges or claims and those that are attributed by those one recognizes. On the cognitive side, the discordance is between the contents of one's own attitudes.

Part Three ***Norms, Self-Consciousness, and Recognition***

Lecture 11

The Allegory of Mastery:

Pragmatic and Semantic Lessons

I. Introduction

In my third lecture, I presented an analytic apparatus for thinking about the distinctive constellations of normative attitudes that are taken to institute normative statuses in the Kantian autonomy model and the Hegelian reciprocal recognition model. These configurations relate statuses of authority and responsibility and attitudes of attributing such statuses to others and acknowledging or claiming them for oneself. I use these terms to model what Hegel talks about under the headings of practical "independence" and "dependence", on the side of normative statuses or what consciousness is *in* itself, and what practical consciousness is for *another* consciousness and what it is for *itself*, on the side of normative attitudes or what practical consciousness is *for* consciousness.

Hegel agrees with Kant that we are both creators and creatures of our *commitments*. What is most fundamental to us, as the essentially normative creatures we are, is our capacity to commit ourselves. This is the authority to undertake responsibilities. It is the authority to make ourselves responsible by taking ourselves to be responsible. In this way, we institute statuses by

our attitudes. I was particularly concerned to highlight how Hegel's *social* recognitive model develops out of Kant's *individual* autonomy model by making explicit what can be seen to be implicit in Kant's invocation of the other-regarding duty to *respect* beings that are autonomous in the sense of having the authority to make themselves responsible, that is, to commit themselves. *Respecting* autonomous others in this sense is the core of Hegel's practical attitude of *recognizing* them. It is *attributing* the authority to institute normative statuses by one's normative attitudes, *making* oneself responsible by *taking* oneself to be responsible. The principal difference is that Hegel sees such recognition as an essential component in *instituting* the distinctive authority in question, not merely as an attitude normatively required as a *consequence* of the antecedently intelligible possession by another of that kind of authority.

The story he actually *tells* in the *Self-Consciousness* chapter is not about this small intramural difference between individual autonomy and reciprocal recognition. What we get in that text is rather a speculative retrospective rational reconstruction of the advent of the traditional practical structure in which normativity and normative selfhood first shows up and is understood historically: the structure of subordination and obedience. This model divides and relates authority and responsibility very differently than its modern successors.

The first index episode in the allegory Hegel presents in the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, the "Kampf auf Leben und Tod," the life-and-death struggle, illuminates this transition from the organic space of living beings to the normative space of responsible selves. This transition relates the structure where the distinction between independence and dependence shows up in the form of the at most protonormative distinction between desir*ing* animal and what is desir*ed* to the structure where the distinction between independence and dependence shows up in the form of the genuinely normative, because recognitively articulated distinction between authority and responsibility. This is the contrast Hegel invokes in describing the confrontation of two desiring animals:

> Each is indeed certain of its own self, but not of the other, and therefore its own self-certainty still has no truth…according to the Notion of recognition this is possible only when each is for the other what the other is for it, only when each in its own self through its own action, and again through the action of the other, achieves this pure abstraction of being-for-self. [186]

These orectic and recognitive structures correspond to two forms that the distinction between what things are *for* consciousness and what things are *in* themselves—on the normative side, that is the distinction between *attitudes* and *statuses*—can take.

My concern here is to look closely at the role the life-and-death struggle plays allegorically in Hegel's speculative retrospective rational reconstruction (Erinnerung) of the advent of the subordination-obedience structure of recognition. In the allegory, what emerges from the life-and-death struggle is a distinctive constellation of recognitive relations between superior and subordinate, personified as Master and Servant [Herr und Knecht]. Each party practically understands himself and the other according to the categories of Mastery. This is a practical normative conception that understands the Master as a locus of *pure independence*, authority without responsibility, and the Servant as a locus of *pure dependence*, responsibility without authority. Hegel thinks a practical recognitive conception embodying this social division of normative role is implicit in any practices exhibiting the asymmetric superior-subordinate structure.

Further, he argues that this practical recognitive conception is radically defective—and so, accordingly, are the self-conscious normative selves or subjects it shapes. At base, what is wrong with the subordination-obedience model is that it systematically mistakes *power* for *authority*. This is, to be sure, a fundamental mistake about the metaphysics of normativity. But the mistake is not merely theoretical. It is practical, as well. It leads to deformed social institutions and deformed self-conscious individual selves. Those institutions are deformed in fact, not just in their self-understandings. This mistaking of power for authority has a relatively intricate fine-structure, according to Hegel. That is what he is teaching us about with the allegory of Mastery. The basic task of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter is to diagnose the distinctive

recognitive pathologies of the practical normative self-conception of Mastery, and trace them through various characteristic forms they take.

II. Identification

One key feature of the life-and-death struggle is precisely that it *is* a matter of life and death. We already saw that an essential element of the transition from being a living organism, belonging to the realm of Nature, to being a denizen of the realm of Spirit is willingness to risk one's biological life.

> It is only through staking one's life that freedom is won; only thus is it proved that for self-consciousness, its essential being is not [just] being, not the immediate form in which it appears, not its submergence in the expanse of life, but rather that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as vanishing moments, that it is only pure being-for-self. The individual who has not risked his life may well be recognized as a person, but he has not attained to the truth of this recognition as an independent self-consciousness. [§187]

I argued in my first lecture that the new element that is introduced here is the idea that in risking one's life one *identifies* with what one risks one's life *for*, rather than identifying oneself with the biological existence that one risks. By being willing to risk one's life for something, one makes it the case that the life one risks is *not* an *essential* element of the self one is thereby constituting, while that for which one risks it is. What mattered for the transition from Natur to Geist were the cases where what one was willing to risk one's natural life for was a *commitment*, something *normative*: a normative status or attitude. This is risking something *actual* for something *ideal*.

Being willing to risk one's life for something is adopting a distinctive kind of practical attitude toward it. I have suggested thinking of that attitude as *identifying with* what one is willing to risk and if need be sacrifice one's life for. The claim is that adopting that attitude has a particular effect. It changes one's status, making what one risks or sacrifices *for* an *essential*

element of what one really is. That is to say that identification is a kind of *taking* oneself to be something that is also a *making* of oneself to be something. In the case of identification, what one is *for* oneself affects what one is *in* oneself. It is an attitude that is *self-constitutive*. The self that is constituted by what I will call "existential identification" (we'll see that there are other varieties) is an *essentially self-conscious* self, in the sense that its attitudes—at least its existentially identificatory attitudes—are an essential component of what it is in itself. Those attitudes institute a special kind of normative status.

Self-consciousness can be thought of to begin with as consciousness of one's self—a matter of being *for* oneself what one is *in* oneself. In the idiom I have been recommending, this is to have one's normative *statuses* appropriately reflected in one's normative *attitudes*. It is to acknowledge the responsibility and authority one actually has. We might think of this as *theoretical* self-consciousness. The self-constitutive achievement of existential identification makes visible a complementary dimension of *practical* self-consciousness. For in this case, statuses reflect attitudes, rather than the other way around. It is by practically *taking* oneself to be a certain kind of self, identifying with one rather than another element of one's statuses and attitudes, that one *makes* oneself into a different kind of self, alters one's status. What one is *in* oneself is *responsible to* (in Hegel's terms, dependent on) what one is *for* oneself, one's practical attitude of identification. Each of the theoretical and the practical dimensions of self-consciousness yield something that the self is *in and for itself.*

III. The Practical Conception of Pure Independence

It is practical self-consciousness in this sense, beginning with existential identification, that makes one *essentially* self-conscious, makes what one is *for* oneself an essential element of what one is *in* oneself. This achievement of self-constitution through existential identification—being willing to risk one's life, and so everything one already actually is *in* oneself for something

one is to begin with only ideally, *for* oneself—is the beginning of human history. Through this practical attitude of identification, a living being *makes* itself more than merely a desiring animal simply by *taking* itself to be more, in its practical willingness to risk its animal existence.

Hegel claims that this identification with a normative attitude (and hence with the virtual status that is its object, the responsibility one acknowledges or the authority one claims) happens in a particular context, and for that reason has a particular effect. That context is the *social* context of a life-and-death struggle with another self-consciousness. Risking one's life for something else (a normative status or attitude) is one crucial element in the life-and-death struggle, but it is not *all* there is to that phenomenon. The surplus beyond existential identification through risk of life that the social practical context of the life-and-death struggle supplies is the result of the particular practical attitude for which each party risks its life in the life-and-death struggle. It is when subjects of this attitude collide, as Hegel puts it, "they *must* engage in this struggle."[245]

The combatants are living, and so desiring beings. Implicit in desire, by its nature, is a second-order desire: the desire that things should be *in* themselves, just what they are *for* the desirer. That is the desire that one's desires be satisfied, just because they *are* one's desires. To see that such a second-order desire is implicit in what it is to be a (first-order) desire it suffices to reflect that it is as correct to say that all particular *desires* are united in their common aim at *satisfaction* as it is to say that all particular *beliefs* are united in their common aim at *truth*. Hegel says in discussing the antecedents of the struggle "life is the natural setting of consciousness, independence without absolute negativity" [188]. Independence is the sought-for natural authority of desire. The absence of negativity is the implicit ideal of lack of resistance to that authority by a recalcitrant world. That ideal of pure independence implicit in desire as such is the orectic origin of the normative self-conception of Mastery.

[245] [187], emphasis added.

For this implicit ideal is a practical conception of oneself as an *immediately, transparently constitutive taker*. To be a constitutive taker is to be such that *taking* things to have a certain practical significance succeeds in *making* them have that significance. This is things being in themselves what they are for the sovereign desirer. This constitution is taken to be *immediate* in that it does not depend on being suitably complemented by any other attitudes, in particular, by anyone else's attitudes. The constitutive power or authority one takes one's desires to have is taken to be *transparent* in that the virtual status that is object of one's desire and the actual status achieved are taken to coincide: one succeeds in doing just what one was trying to do.

Practical consciousness that understands itself as purely independent consciousness, then, insists on the *sovereignty* of its takings. Descartes formulated and developed an old tradition that finds the boundaries of the self by tracing the extent of cognitive and practical sovereignty. For him, the mind consists of that which we cannot mis-take. Cognitive mental activity (cognition) is that which is whatever it is for the mind i.e. whatever it seems or is taken to be. Practical mental activity (volition) is that over which we have total dominion, where no means are necessary to satisfy one's desires. As there is no gap between seeming and being in our cognitive sovereignty over our mental states (seemings or takings), there is no gap between trying and succeeding in our practical sovereignty over our volitions (minimal tryings). (Hegel explicitly argues against the practical part of this theory in his discussion of action in the *Reason* section.) In this context the independent consciousness can be seen as extending sovereignty over self to sovereignty over everything, to be expanding in its self-conception the boundaries of itself until they are all-inclusive.

IV. The Struggle

The struggle that transforms the second-order desire implicit in desire as such into a *commitment* the Master existentially identifies with inevitably results when two such desirers confront one another. Desiring that every*thing* be in itself what it is for oneself is desiring that every*one* be in itself what it is for one. Subjects cannot show up as other subjects from the point of view of this desire, because what things are for them cannot make any difference to what things are in themselves. A kind of orectic solipsism is enforced: each sovereign subject confronts a world consisting of what for it are only objects, not other subjects.

In the account in my first lecture of the tripartite structure of desire, that structure was epitomized by the relations between hunger, food, and eating: a desire, an activity motivated by that desire, and a practical significance things could have with respect to the desire. The desire then provides a standard of assessment of the success of the activity it motivates, accordingly as the desire is or is not satisfied. For that induces a distinction with respect to the practical significance, between what has that significance *for* the desirer (is treated as food by being eaten) and what *really* has that significance, *in* itself (is in fact food in that it satisfies the hunger that motivated the eating). This orectic structure accordingly makes possible the sort of *experience of error* that the *Introduction* identifies as underlying the representational character of consciousness.

This analysis encourages us to inquire into the *activity* that corresponds to the second-order desire that everything be *in* itself just whatever it is *for* the desirer. What stands to *that* desire as eating stands to hunger? I think the answer Hegel offers is that that activity is engaging in a life-and-death struggle with any and every other subject of that same desire. That is struggling to make it be *in* itself what it is *for* the sovereign desirer: an object for whom and in whom only the sovereign desirer's desires are efficacious.

What makes the second-order desire for immediate constitutive power the motive for the struggle? It becomes so when it confronts, and so conflicts with *another* such desire: the second-order desire of *another* desirer. Here there are two questions: why does confrontation with

another such desirer lead inevitably to conflict, and why does such conflict matter more than any other conflict of desires of two desirers?

The independence of consciousness construing itself as purely independent is not compatible with the existence of other beings that are independent in the same sense. The insistence on being a ***constitutive s***ubject (a sovereign taker) precludes the recognition of others as being subjects in the sense one is oneself. This is imperial rather than pluralistic independence, where everything else must depend upon the sovereign subject. This ultimately unworkable demand follows inexorably from the self-concept by which purely independent consciousness understands and defines itself (unto death). If purely independent consciousness took itself to be just a taker rather than a constitutive taker, something things are *for* without the addition that things are *in themselves* just whatever they are *for* that taker, then that consciousness could be what it takes itself to be compatibly with others taking, and correctly taking, themselves to be subjects of the same kind, and with objects retaining some independence in the form of resistance to desire. But for a consciousness conceiving itself as constitutive this is not possible

What is new about the life-and-death struggle is not that two desirers come into conflict. Two predators might covet the same carcass, and so fight over it, without victory instituting a Master/Servant relationship. What is distinctive about the case in Hegel's allegory is that the parties to the struggle each practically *existentially identifies with* the second-order desire that everything be in itself just whatever it is for the desirer. *This* desire cannot be satisfied by wresting a carcass from a rival and feasting on it. It requires the subjection of the rival. Second, it matters that what they are struggling and risking their lives over is a kind of *self-conception*: that provided by the second-order desire that one's desires be immediately satisfied, that is, that everything be, in itself, what it is for oneself. Finally, the particular second-order desire to be an immediately, transparently constitutive desirer is unlike other, first-order desires, in that *de jure*, necessarily, in principle, and universally, as opposed to *de facto*, contingently, in practice, and in particular cases, second-order desires of *this* particular kind are incompatible with and opposed to one another. That is why the parties *must* struggle.

V. The Significance of Victory

The first phase of Hegel's allegorical story is the life-and-death struggle. Hegel says the result of the struggle is

> two opposed shapes of consciousness; one is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is master, the other is servant. [189]

The second phase is the normative relationship of subordination and obedience that obtains between the victor and the vanquished in that struggle. This is the relationship between Master and Servant. In this structure, the master shows up as purely independent, that is, authoritative, and the servant as purely dependent, that is, responsible. And what the master is *for* himself is his essential nature, part of what he is *in* himself. He has made himself in that sense essentially self-conscious.

The first point to understand in reading this phase of the story, in order to understand the self-conception of Mastery, is that the victor takes it that his victory indicates *success* in satisfying the desire that motivated the struggle in the first place. That second-order desire was the desire that one's desires be immediately and transparently constitutive. It is the desire that one have the power (being transformed, as we will see, into the normative shape of authority) to make things so by taking them to be so. This is the desire to have a certain kind of status. Engaging in the activity motivated by the desire, in this case, engaging in the struggle, is taking or treating oneself as having that status: the practical significance induced by this distinctive sort of desire. Besides motivating its characteristic sort of activity and defining its characteristic sort of practical significance, according to its tripartite structure desires also provide a practical standard

for assessing the *success* of the activity. To succeed, by satisfying the desire, is to establish that what had the significance corresponding to the desire and the activity *for* the desiring subject also *actually* has that significance, *in* itself—that it really is as it was taken to be. In the paradigmatic case, what a hungry animal practically treats as food by eating it counts as *really* being food, being food *in* itself, and not just *for* the animal, in case it actually satisfies the hunger that motivated eating it.

In this more complicated case, the victor takes it that by *taking* himself to be an immediately and transparently constitutive taker in the way he has, that is by existentially identifying with his claiming that status, and by having come through the life-and-death struggle victorious, he has immediately and transparently *made* himself be such a taker, and so has successfully instituted that status. That is what the master is *for* himself, and he takes his victory to have successfully transformed that status from being the merely *virtual* object of his attitude (the original second-order desire) to being *actualized* as the status that is what he is *in* himself. Here it is important clearly to distinguish three different descriptions of the status of the victor in the life-and-death struggle: the status the victor takes himself to have achieved, the genuine achievement that prompts him to conceive himself so, and the defective normative status that is actually instituted thereby. These are the three essential dimensions of Mastery.

The first is what I have just been addressing. The life-and-death struggle was motivated by the desire, implicit in the nature of desire itself, to be an immediately, transparently, *constitutive* desirer—to have everything be in itself just what it for the desirer, that is, just as it is desired to be. The victor in the life-and-death struggle takes it that the struggle, the activity motivated by that desire, has been successful, has resulted in the satisfaction of that desire, that is, in his having the status he desired. Now, he is wrong about that. He has not in fact achieved that status. It is what he is *for* himself, but not what he is *in* himself. His practical self-consciousness is defective—indeed, massively, structurally defective. For that reason the kind of self, the normative subject, the self-defining status that he has in fact instituted, is deformed in a characteristic way. Selves conceiving themselves according to the categories of Mastery cannot be what they take themselves to be, and in important ways have made themselves the opposite of

what they take themselves to be: dependent where they see pure independence. That is the third dimension catalogued above. Diagnosing the pathologies of this sort of practical self-conception is the principal achievement of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter.

Though he is wrong about what he has achieved, the victor in the life-and-death struggle is not *simply* deluded. He *has* substantially transformed himself by staking his life, by existentially identifying with his practical self-conception. In so doing he raised himself above being in himself simply a desiring living being. For he succeeded in making himself essentially self-conscious, someone such that what he is *for* himself is an essential component of what he is *in* himself. As such, he is subject to a distinctive new kind of self-development. For changing what he is *for* himself changes what he is *in* himself. As an essentially self-conscious being, he is now an essentially *historical* being. The act of practical self-identification, he performed was *constitutive*. It was a self-taking that was a self-making. In this sense, the master is right to think of himself as a constitutive taker.

Furthermore, and crucially, his existential identification with his practical self-conception as an immediately, transparently constitutive taker was not only constitutive, it was in a sense *immediately* constitutive. For its effect of making him into an essentially self-conscious creature—a distinctive kind of self-creation as a self-creator—did not depend on his self-recognitive attitude being suitably complemented (hence mediated) by the attitudes of others. It is something he did, a status he achieved, all on his own, independently, as an exercise of his power (on its way to being his authority). By his practical identificatory attitude alone, by his being willing to risk and if need be sacrifice his life rather than relinquish his desire that his desires be constitutively sovereign, he pulled himself up by his own bootstraps from the swamp of merely biological being into a nobler status.

But his self-constitutive attitude was not *transparently* constitutive. For the status he actually achieved, being essentially self-conscious, is *not* the virtual status that was the object of his desire. What he desired to be was not essentially self-conscious, but immediately, transparently

constitutive: for what things actually are, in themselves, to be just whatever they are for him, what he desires them to be: to have the status he desires them to have, simply *because* he so desires, simply *because* of his attitudes. In making himself essentially conscious he has *not* made himself into such a transparently constitutive taker—one who can *make* things so simply by *taking* them to be so. Though he succeeded in doing *something*, making himself essentially self-conscious, the master is wrong to think that his victory succeeded in satisfying the desire with which he identified, the desire that motivated the struggle in which he risked his life.

In effect, in understanding the significance of his victory in terms of Mastery, the victor in the life-and-death struggle has misunderstood what he has actually succeeded in doing. He has overgeneralized his genuine achievement, which was making himself essentially self-conscious *in* himself by his practical attitude of existentially identifying with what he is *for* himself. What he successfully made himself be in himself—the status his attitudes instituted—is not all of, but only a part of, what he was for himself. He *has* immediately instituted a status by adopting an attitude. But that status falls far short of the sort of sovereignty he desired his attitudes to have. In misunderstanding his achievement, the master misunderstands himself.

VI. The Master-Servant Relationship

The master's self-misunderstanding, the sense and extent to which he is opaque to himself, emerges even more pointedly if we consider his actual achievement from a different point of view. For through his practical attitude of identification with the desire that his desires be sovereign over objectivity, through risking his life and emerging victorious from the life-and-death struggle, the master has succeeded in transforming his original desire into constellation of genuinely *normative* statuses and attitudes. For Mastery is a *normative* self-conception, a form

of self-consciousness, however fundamentally mistaken it might be. The victor in the struggle has transmuted his second-order desire to be a sovereign desirer into subordination and obedience as a form of normative attitude, whose virtual object is a normative status construed according to the categories of Mastery. Indeed, the first large lesson we are to learn by properly reading Hegel's allegory of Mastery is how normativity as traditionally structured by subordination and obedience is an immediate translation of the basic structure of desire, epitomized in the implicit second-order desire to have one's desires immediately satisfied, into the recognitive medium of Geist.

The master's self-conception, which he will not relinquish short of death, requires that he recognize no others but himself (that is, take no one else to be a taker or subject) and that he cancel in actuality the independence of objects which he has already cancelled in his conception of himself and them. For no-one else can be *for* the consciousness understanding itself as sovereign in the sense of being a constitutive taker, what that consciousness is for itself: namely a *constitutive* taker. Recognizing someone in this sense would be relinquishing the authority the master insists on (unto death): that things, including oneself and others, are *in themselves* whatever *he* takes them to be, what they are for *him*, *not* what anyone else (any other candidate constitutive taker) takes them to be.

The servitude of the servant is meant to be a single solution to the challenge of the master's constitutiveness, both on the side of recalcitrant subjects and of recalcitrant objects, permitting the master to realize his self-conception and be in himself what he is for himself, namely a constitutive taker who makes everything (himself included) be in itself whatever it is for him. The problem of the other as subject is solved by turning him into an object. The problem of the recalcitrance of objects is solved by using obedient servants as objects to subdue objects which are less immediately obedient than the servant (whose will is his master's though his work is his own and only for the master). These may be other objects, or they may be human beings not yet subdued.[246]

[246] The lord is the consciousness that exists for itself, but no longer merely the Notion of such a consciousness. Rather, it is a consciousness existing for itself which is mediated with itself through another consciousness, i.e.

The servant becomes an object for himself and for the master by recognizing the master under the same concept under which the master recognizes himself, namely as constitutive taker. Since the master takes the servant to be an object (without the willingness to risk life required for humanity) and the servant takes the master's takings as constitutive of what things are in themselves, the servant can conceive of himself only as object, not as subject. To be even potentially a normative subject, one must at least conceive of oneself as a subject, so that one may acquire the courage to risk one's life for that conception. What things are for the servant is not determined by the servant's desires, but by the master's. So what they are for the servant is whatever they are for the master. The servant is not a separate taker, either of self or of other things. For himself, he is what he is for the master, an object. Both he and the master take this to be what the servant is in himself as well, though they are both wrong.

VII. The Metaphysical Irony at the Heart of Mastery

Here is the irony of Mastery: the master has not only made himself essentially self-conscious, he has achieved a genuinely *normative* status—crossing the boundary between the merely living and the genuinely normative. The master-servant relation is a genuinely normative structure of subordination and obedience. And it is so *because* it *is* what the master denies it is: a *recognitive* relation, in which (asymmetric) recognitive attitudes are suitably complemented (albeit asymmetrically), so as to institute genuine (if defective) normative statuses. The master

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through a consciousness whose nature it is to be bound up with an existence that is independent, or thinghood in general. The lord puts himself into relation with both of these moments, to a thing as such, the object of desire, and to the consciousness for which thinghood is the essential characteristic. [190]

and the servant agree on what each one is. That is the suitable complementation. They are both wrong, about each other and about themselves. That is the defect.

In fact the master is the master only insofar as he is recognized *as* the master by the servant. The servant exercises recognitive authority over the master, who is normatively dependent upon, responsible to, the servant for his status—which is a *normative* status just because and insofar as it is instituted by recognition. But the master does not recognize the recognitive authority of the servant. His self-conception is one of pure independence, in which all authority is vested in him. The servant is practically conceived as purely dependent, merely responsible. A basic point of Hegel's allegory is to contrast this asymmetric constellation of normative attitudes and statuses, in which *for* both the master and the servant the social division of normative labor locates authority solely in one of the parties and responsibility solely in the other, on the one hand, with the symmetric constellation of normative attitudes and statuses of subjects who reciprocally recognize each other, each both exercising recognitive authority over the other and being recognitively responsible for his normative status to the attitudes of the other, whose authority he acknowledges, on the other hand. We are here introduced to the lesson that will be explored throughout the rest of the *Phenomenology*: how the traditional subordination-obedience structure of normativity institutes defective normative statuses and normative subjects. That asymmetric social normative structure, whose implicit practical ideology is Mastery—the glittering but spurious ideal of pure independence, authority without corresponding responsibility—persists into modernity even in its most developed reflection in the Kantian model of autonomy as the constellation of normative attitudes that institutes normative statuses. The allegory of the normative relation of master and servant emerging from the primal power relations between victor and vanquished in a life-and-death struggle presents this normative structure in its rudest, rawest form.

A vivid example of the pathology at work in the form of self-consciousness that consists in practically conceiving of oneself according to the categories of Mastery is a kind of psychological distress that is a common affliction of celebrities, for instance in entertainment or politics. It is compounded of these elements. First, such subjects revel in the feeling of

superiority over ordinary, non-celebrated people that they take their status to establish and consist in. Their celebrity status is understood both as epistemically witnessing or testifying to that superiority and as ontologically constituting or instituting it. Second, they identify with that status. They take that superior, distinguished status to be essential to what and who they really are, in themselves. It is the basis of their self-esteem, articulating what they are for themselves. Third, they despise the mass of inferior, undistinguished, talentless ordinary people, by contrast to whose lesser status their own is defined. An integral part of the status the celebrity identifies with is the right to look down on those of lesser status.

Even slightly self-reflective celebrities adopting these attitudes towards the status they identify with are liable to detect the tension those attitudes stand in with the fact that it is precisely the attitudes of those despised, inferior masses that *make* them celebrities in the first place. That status is conferred precisely by the masses' admiration or trust, their *recognition*, their *celebration* of the celebrated ones. It is instituted by their practical attitudes of buying tickets, devoting leisure hours to reading about and appreciating, voting for, the celebrities in question. So one is made what one is by being so-taken by people one has no respect for, whose judgment one dismisses, whose *authority* one in no sense acknowledges. In short, one is made what one is by being thought wonderful by people one doesn't believe can tell what is wonderful, people to whose opinions one attributes no weight, people one takes to have no *right* to assess such things.

What happens to the Master is the metaphysical version of what happens psychologically to someone who aspires to celebrity, acquiring along the way a contempt for the mass of admirers whose acknowledgement constitutes that celebrity. Self-respect is difficult to achieve by regarding oneself as reflected in a mirror of morons. The Master is who he is insofar as he is recognized as Master by those whom the Master is committed to regarding only with contempt. He is no more than they can make him. His low opinion of them is in fact a low opinion of himself.

We can contrast this situation with one in which Hegel would think *non*defective normative statuses can be instituted by normative attitudes. Consider the status of being a good chess player. Achieving that status is not something I can do simply be coming subjectively to adopt a certain attitude toward myself. It is, in a certain sense, up to me whom I regard as good chess-players: whether I count any woodpusher who can play a legal game, only formidable club players, Masters, or Grand Masters. That is, it is up to me whom I recognize as good chess-players, in the sense in which I aspire to be one. But it is not then in the same sense up to me whether I qualify as one of them. To earn their recognition in turn, I must be able to play up to their standards. To *be*, say, a formidable club player, I must be recognized as such by those I recognize as such. My recognitive attitudes can define a virtual community, but only the reciprocal recognition by those I recognize can make me actually a member of it, accord me the status for which I have implicitly petitioned by recognizing them. My attitudes exercise recognitive authority in determining whose recognitive attitudes I am responsible to for my actual normative status.

I can make things hard on myself or easy on myself. I can make it very easy to earn the recognition (in this respect) of those I recognize as good chess players, if I am prepared to set my standards low enough. If I count as a good chess player anyone who can play a legal game, I won't have to learn much in order to earn the recognition of those who can play a legal game of my capacity to play a legal game. The cost is, of course, that what I achieve is only to be entitled to classify myself as a member of this not at all exclusive community. On the other hand, if I want to be entitled to look up to myself, I can exercise my independence and set my standards high, recognizing only Grandmasters as good chess players. To be entitled to class oneself with them, be aware of oneself as exhibiting the property they give concrete determinate content to, would be an accomplishment indeed. But it is not easy to earn their recognition as a good chess player. The difference in the determinate contents of these self-conceptions, and of the chances of realizing them and becoming in oneself what one is for oneself, illustrates one dimension along which are arrayed different constellations of self-consciousness that is determinately independent as recognizing, and determinately dependent as recognized.

The Master is in the position of aiming to be entitled to regard himself as a good chess player at the level of Grand Master on the basis of his recognition as a good chess player by players who struggle to play legal games. His self-consciousness is defective, and so is the self he becomes in himself by having that self-consciousness as what he is for himself. The less worthy those are whom one recognizes, the less worth does their recognition in turn establish. It is combining this simple feature of mediated self-recognition with the peculiar structure of domination and submission that is metaphysically ironic, turning both the dominating and the submissive consciousness in themselves into the opposite of what they are for themselves. What is metaphysically required to constitute a *non-defective* self-consciousness is to be recognized (respected, admired) by those one recognizes (respects, admires).

VIII. From Subjects to Objects

The central idea in play here is what I called the "metaphysical irony" of Mastery. Conceiving of himself, unto death, as purely independent, as exercising immediate, transparently constitutive authority without any correlative responsibility, the one who has existentially constituted himself as superior *makes* himself wholly dependent, for who he really is, on the one he has constituted as subordinate. He is recognitively responsible to the recognitive authority of that subordinate. In an earlier discussion (in the fragment on the "Spirit of Christianity"), Hegel discusses a precursor reversal like this under the heading of the "Wirkung des Schicksals": the efficacy or causality of fate.[247] It is the revenge of the normative ideal on defective actuality. It is what determines that the Master cannot get what he wants, cannot be who he aspires to be and takes himself in fact to be.

[247] "The Spirit of Christianity" in T.M. Knox (trans.) *Friedrich Hegel on Christianity: Early Theological Writings* [Harper Torchbooks, 1961], pp. 224-252.

The institution of self-conscious normative subjects who are for themselves what they are in themselves requires that recognitive authority and recognitive responsibility be co-ordinate and commensurate. It requires two such normative subjects exercising reciprocal recognitive authority over each other and holding each other recognitively responsible. Asymmetric claims of authority without corresponding responsibility institutes only virtual statuses, statuses actual only as the objects of those attitudes, not genuine normative statuses. And claims of authority unaccompanied by grants of authority to hold one responsible for the exercise of that authority are asymmetric in that sense. A principal symptom of the defect inherent in exercises of Mastery, claims of pure independence, is the structural failure of self-consciousness that consists in what the Master is in himself, his actual normative statuses, being massively divergent from what he is for himself, the virtual statuses that are the objects of his attitudes. And it is not just that what the Master is for gets wrong what he is in himself. Being that for himself *deforms* what he is in himself, precisely because of what his act of essential identification has made him: an essentially self-conscious self—a self such that what it is for itself is an essential structure defining what he is in himself. This metaphysical irony is the efficacy of fate.

The defect in the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes that Hegel is diagnosing allegorically in the structure of subordination and obedience afflicts the subordinate no less than the superior. But the ironic reversal of fates works to the advantage of the coerced subordinate. It manifests principally in the asymmetry of their relations to objects of desire.

Mastery essentially practically understands itself as consisting of attitudes that are immediately and transparently constitutive of the statuses that are the virtual objects of those attitudes. To actualize the virtual objects of attitudes of desire is to satisfy those desires. To do so immediately is to have those desires immediately gratified. The Servant is construed as the instrument of such gratification. In the allegory, it is his job to overcome the stubborn resistance of objective reality to the Master's desires: to fetch the inconveniently distant foodstuff, to coax it from inedibility to palatability, and to serve it as and when desired. The Servant is responsible for seeing to it that the objective sources of recalcitrance to the Master's desires remain invisible

to the Master. Of course it is part of the irony that the supposed immediacy of gratification of the Master's desires is achieved precisely by the mediating labor of the Servant.

What the Master is spared is *labor*: the concrete practical overcoming of the stubbornness of objective reality that consists in its recalcitrance to desire: the object's not being in itself just whatever it is for the desiring consciousness. The Servant expends the effort to transform the merely virtual status of being the object of an attitude of desire into the actual status of a satisfier of that desire. The Master's relationship to his desire is if anything even more immediate than that of nonsapient desiring animals, who do at least confront the recalcitrance to desire that is objectivity. The Servant's relationship to desire is abstract, mediated by his social relation to the desiring Master. For the Servant acts on desires he does not feel, since they are not his desires but the Master's. They show up to the Servant in the *normative* form of commands, obligations, exercises of authority, to which he is responsible. That is why it is the Servants who become the true normative subjects of subsequent human history, leaving the Masters behind as evolutionary dead ends. It is a further dimension of the metaphysical irony of Mastery that normative subjectivity, having been initiated by the Master's existential identification with his practical conception of himself as Master, as purely independent, is continued and brought to fruition only by the Servants whose labor the Master compels. By obliging him by force to work, the Master lifts up the Servant to a new form of normative subjectivity.

Two narrative paths are opened up by the ironic reversal of fortunes occasioned by the in this sense normatively emancipatory labor forced upon the Servant by the Master. One is consideration of the practical dimension of self-consciousness represented by work. This is "reason as purposive action"[248], addressed in the subsequent *Reason* chapter. The other is the subtler, more conceptually articulated forms of the ideology of Mastery that become available to the subordinates in traditional recognitively asymmetric constellations of power and normativity. Hegel discusses these in the second half of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, under the headings of Stoicism, Skepticism, and the Unhappy Consciousness.

[248] [22].

The key to understanding these is the realization that the labor the Servant is obliged to do is the practical version of what showed up for us already in the *Introduction* as the *experience of error*. That process, in which the disparity between what things are for consciousness (appearance) and what they are in themselves (reality) is the motor of change of attitude, was identified there as the locus of the *representational* dimension of conceptual content, the objective purport (their directedness at what things are in themselves) of commitments expressing what things are for consciousness. The experience of error is the normative, conceptually articulated, hence geistig, development of orectic proto-consciousness. For we saw how the tripartite structure of desire allows that merely natural state not only to institute practical signficances (e.g. things treated as food by being responded to by eating) expressing what things are *for* the desiring animal, but to provide standards of correctness and error regarding what things are *in* themselves, accordingly as eating what is taken as food does or does not satisfy the motivating hunger. The distinction between appearance and reality that shows up naturally, concretely, and immediately in that setting is transformed into something normative, abstract, and mediated where the desire that motivates the Servant's activities and assesses the correctness or error of their results is something only the Master feels. In this sense, the Master mediates the Servant's relation to the objects, issuing commands and assessing obedience, that is, exercising authority and holding responsible.

This process is the one that at once *institutes* and *determines* conceptual contents, in the sense of making them more determinate. Conceptual contents are articulated by relations of incompatibility and consequence (determinate negation and mediation) that they stand in to other such contents. Each experience of error, of the disparity of what things are for an acting subject and what they turn out to be in themselves, incorporates into the practical classifications the

agent is making some of the objective relations of incompatibility (and hence consequence) that articulate the properties of the objects being acted on. In this way the concrete aspects of the stubbornness of the objective world are incorporated into the contents of subjectively deployed concepts. An agent might have a concept of oak tree that identifies a certain leaf-shape as sufficient circumstances of application and includes among the consequences of application that boiling animal skins in water together with the bark of that tree will soften, tan, and preserve them. Experience might then teach that the consequences of application actually follow only if the tree with leaves of that shape whose bark is used is a certain minimum age or height. Experience is an exercise in vulnerability to how things actually are. In altering its conception of oaks in the course of such an experience of error, the agent acknowledges the authority of how things are in themselves, and the responsibility of how things are for the agent to that actuality.

We are now in a position to see that there is a *recognitive* version of this sort of experience on the side of *self*-consciousness that exhibits a generic structure of authority and responsibility corresponding to the specific *cognitive* experience of error characteristic of *consciousness*. It is a basic Kantian insight that the notion of representational purport is a normative one. To understand something as a represent*ing* is to take it to be *responsible* for its correctness to what counts as represent*ed* just insofar as it is understood as exercising that sort of *authority*. The same normative structure that governs the relation between representings and representeds on the cognitive side of relations to objects governs the relation between normative attitudes and normative statuses on the recognitive side of relations to other subjects. If whatever seems right to me is right, if there is no room for error, for a distinction between how I take them to be and how they really are, then there is no way I am taking things to actually to be, in themselves. And if I and others have whatever statuses I take them to have, if my attitudes immediately institute those statuses, if the notion of claiming authority or responsibility I don't have or attributing authority or responsibility another doesn't have goes missing, then there are no statuses of authority and responsibility that are the objects of my attitudes—not even virtual ones. Absent the normative structure that makes intelligible the possibility of error, representings are not intelligible *as* representings, which must have distinct representeds as their objects, and normative attitudes are not intelligible as attitudes, which must have distinct statuses

as their objects. Mastery's ideology of pure independence corresponds, on the recognitive side of self-consciousness, to a form of cognitive consciousness that takes whatever *seems* right to it to *be* right, and so fails to adopt determinately contentful attitudes.

In recognizing other subjects, that is, in attributing recognitive authority to them, I make myself vulnerable, in the sense that my actual status depends not only on my attitudes, but also on the attitudes of those I recognize. Just so, in representing something, in attributing to it the representational authority constitutive of being represented, I make myself vulnerable to error, in the sense that the correctness of my representing depends not only on how I represent things, but on how it actually is with what only thereby counts as represented. This vulnerability to the other, whether on the side of subjects or of objects, this acknowledging one's responsibility to and the authority of the other, opens up the possibility of *discordance* between one's commitments. On the recognitive side, the discordance is incompatibility between the virtual statuses one acknowledges or claims and those that are attributed by those one recognizes. On the cognitive side, the discordance is between the contents of one's own attitudes. What a subject must *do* in order to count as registering such discordance is practically acknowledge the normative obligation to *repair* it, by changing some of the discordant attitudes. Such normative discordance and its practical repair are familiar as two stages of the experience of error, from our discussion of Hegel's *Introduction* [in Chapters 1 through 3].

When a cognitive consciousness responds to repair discordant commitments by taking the semi-submerged stick to *be* straight (in itself), and only to *look* bent (for consciousness), what it is doing is a version of what a self-constituting *self*-consciousness does in *identifying with* some of its attitudes and *sacrificing* others. It was pointed out earlier that not all self-constitutive identification need be *existential* identification, where what is risked or sacrificed is the actual existence of the self in question. What is risked and if need be sacrificed in identifying with one attitude (and so with the virtual status that is its object) can be other substantial statuses, such as an office, a job, or some other respect in which one is recognized. ("I could not love thee so, my dear, loved I not honor more.") In sacrificing one commitment for another, one is identifying with the one

rather than the other. And that process, so crucial for the recognitive constitution of self-consciousness, is exactly what happens in the experience of cognitive error.

Consciousness is always self-consciousness because cognitive commitments are *commitments*, that is normative statuses recognitively instituted by the attitudes not only of the knowing subject but of those other normative selves recognized by and recognizing that one: those playing suitable roles in the constellation of statuses of reciprocal authority and responsibility that constitute a recognitive community. The metaphysical irony afflicting Mastery shows that even self-constitutive identification, whether existential or not, turns out indirectly to depend on recognition by others, because the *content* of the commitment one identifies with is not entirely up to the one identifying with it. One is not in general committed to exactly whatever one *takes* oneself to be committed to. This distinction between status (what one normatively is in oneself) and attitude (what one normatively is for oneself) is recognitively constituted by the whole community, because it is that community that administers the determinate conceptual contents of those statuses and attitudes. It is up to each cognitive subject whether or not to be committed to the coin's being copper. But it is not in the same way up to that individual subject what commitment to its being copper entails or is incompatible with. It is up to each individual normative subject whether or not to identify existentially (so, to the death) with commitment to the samurai code of Bushido. But the content of that code is not subject to being cut and trimmed by the attitudes of each individual samurai who commits to it. It is not the case that whatever seems to them to accord with the code really does. The *content* of the status their attitudes have given normative *force* to for them swings free of the individual attitudes that brought that content to bear (made it normatively binding) on those subjects.

Already in the discussion of Hegel's *Introduction*, where the experience of error is introduced, we saw that the notion of <u>conceptual content</u>, thought of as functionally determined by relations of material incompatibility and (so) consequence (Hegel's "determinate negation" and "mediation"), is Janus-faced. On the side of the objects of cognitive processes and practices, <u>incompatibility</u> and <u>consequence</u> are alethic modal notions: a matter of objective *compossibility* and *necessitation* of the sort driving the unfolding of the implicit aristotelian object/property

structure of facts in the *Perception* chapter. On the side of the normative statuses that are the objects of normative attitudes in recognitive processes and practices, incompatibility and consequence are deontic normative notions: a matter of the subject's *entitlements* and *obligations* to adopt various attitudes. The *Self-Consciousness* chapter gives us the (meta)conceptual raw materials needed to see these as two sides of one coin, two aspects of one notion of conceptual content. It does that by introducing the *recognitive* framework on the side of *self*-consciousness within which normative attitudes and the statuses that are their objects are intelligible as having *deontically* articulated conceptual contents that on the *cognitive* side of *consciousness* are representationally responsible to the *alethic modally* articulated objective world they are intelligible as representing just in virtue of the subject's normative acknowledgement of that authority. The assembling of those raw materials into a finished story limning the fine-structure of the relations between representings and representeds on the side of consciousness and normative attitudes and statuses on the side of self-consciousness will not be completed until the discussion of the final, fully adequate form of reciprocal recognition, confession and forgiveness, late in the *Spirit* chapter. That will fulfill the promise, proferred already in the *Introduction*, of explaining how prospective and retrospective perspectives on the process of experience of cognitive error and recognitive disparity make intelligible the successful institution by those processes of both determinate conceptual contents and determinate discursive self-consciousnesses.

X. Conclusion

I cannot here follow out how Hegel pursues the critique of Mastery in the second half of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, entitled "The Freedom of Self-Consciousness." But the general strategy pursued there confirms the diagnosis of the ills of the ideology of Mastery offered here. His allegorical Stoic and Sceptic understand themselves as purely independent in the sense of Mastery, but their mastery is taken to be exercised over the objects of thought rather than over its

subjects. They both mistake the freedom of thought for a sort of constitutive authority over things, in virtue of which the thinker is wholly independent and the things are wholly dependent upon it.

Stoicism and Scepticism ignore both of the paired dimensions along which otherness determines conceptual content by being incorporated in it. They try to conceive of determinately contentful thought in abstraction from the cognitive *process of experiencing error* that engenders and informs it. And they ignore the *social* perspectival recognitive distinction between the point of view of a performer who is being assessed and that from which the performance is assessed, which the *Reason* chapter will show to be essential to the concept of determinate commitment, of being bound by a determinately contentful norm. There is no content without constraint along these two dimensions. The Stoic idea is that since consciousness has sovereign authority over what things are *for* it, the distinction between that and what things are *in* themselves can be enforced by experience only insofar as consciousness permits it to do so. But not allowing itself to be normatively compelled by incompatibilities in acknowledging error is fatal to the institution of determinate conceptual content. The Sceptical self-consciousness practically expresses its conception of itself as purely independent by refusing to endorse or commit itself to anything, refusing to authorize or take responsibility for any claim. Its independence consists in its refusal to allow its consent to be compelled. Error is impossible in the absence of commitment—but by the same token, experience infusing concepts with determinate content becomes unintelligible.

Hegel's allegory of Mastery addresses conceptions of subjectivity as pure independence, as constitutive authority to make things so by taking them to be so. Hegel sees this practical conception to be the animating soul of the traditional subordination-obedience model of normativity. And he sees that conception as still active in its modern successor models, including Kantian autonomy. Reading his allegory, we see him diagnosing this practical conception as resulting from an intelligible, though mistaken, one-sided emphasis and overgeneralization of a kind of authority genuinely exercised by essentially self-conscious normative subjects, who actually can change what they are in themselves by changing what they

are for themselves. Selves understanding themselves according to the categories of Mastery, and the norms they institute by their practical attitudes, are fundamentally structurally defective. Metaphysical irony, the "efficacy of fate" ensures not only that they themselves and the norms they practically institute, even the contents of their own thoughts and commands, are opaque to them, but that they turn themselves by their own attitudes into the opposite of what they take themselves to be. Pure independence is revealed as concealing abject dependence, in its relation both to other subjects and to objects. The co-ordination of authority and responsibility in reciprocal recognition required to institute nondefective norms and self-conscious normative selves has its revenge on the asymmetric normative model in which all authority is understood to be exercised by superiors and all responsibility to fall on their subordinates. The reality is the opposite of the appearance. Mastery is Servitude. As Rousseau says in the second sentence of his *Social Contract*: "One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater servant than they."

Part Four

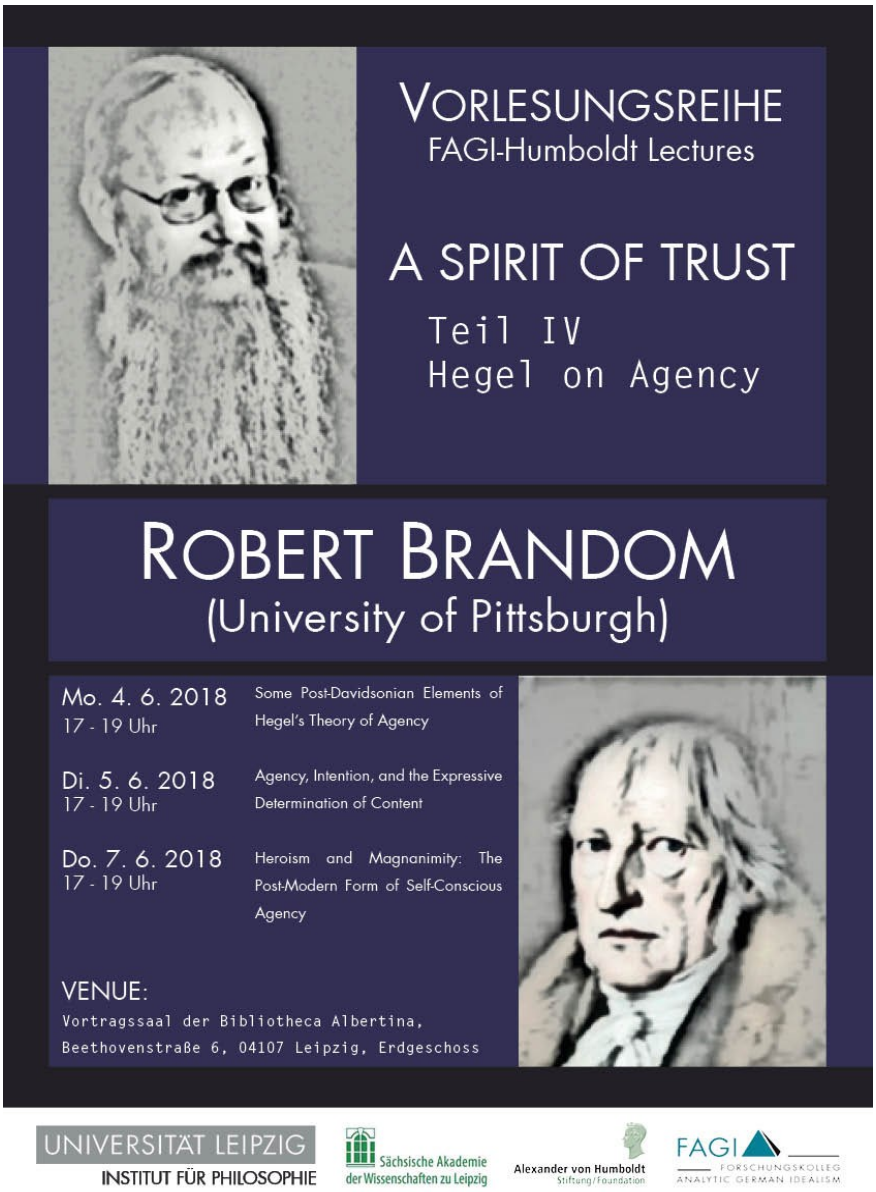
Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency

Lecture 12: Some Post-Davidsonian Elements of Hegel's Theory of Agency

Lecture 13: Agency, Intention, and the Expressive Determination of Content

Lecture 14: Heroism and Magnanimity:

The Post-Modern Form of Self-Conscious Agency



Part Four **Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency**

Handout for Lecture 12

Some Post-Davidsonian Elements of Hegel's Theory of Agency

1. 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]
2. The deed [Tat] is the actual self, [PG§464]
3. The agent "only gets to know…his End, from the deed. [PG§401]
4. The deed does away with the inexpressibility of what is 'meant'. [PG§322]
5. 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]
6. 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]
7. 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]
8. 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]
9. It is the right of the 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]
10. 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]

11. 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]

12. 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*.

13. Hegel's 'Tat' refers to the deed done, with *all* of its accordioned 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.

14. 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]

15. 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]

16. Absicht : Vorsatz :: Tat : Handlung

17. 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]

18. 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]

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

20. 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]

21. 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.

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

23. 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]

24. 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]

25. 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]

26. 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]

27. 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]

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

29. 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]

30. 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]

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

32. 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 natureor the means. [PG§400]

This unity is the true work. [PG§409]

33. 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]

34. 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]

35. 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).

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

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

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

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

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

41. The basic elements of the story I have told here about how to reconcile the two aspects of unity and disparity that Hegelian agency essentially involves are these:

- The story is *hylomorphic*: the "distinction that action necessarily involves" is that between two forms of one content. The forms are diverse, the content is common and unitary.
- Both aspects (forms) are essential to the identity of the content, i.e., it is essential to it, and not just accidental, that the content (the Sache selbst) takes *both* these forms.
- The two forms are different *specifications* of the one content.
- A place to start in understanding this distinction is Davidson's distinction between *intentional* and *consequential* specifications of a single agentive event.

- The two "forms" are generated by different social perspectives on the action: that of the agent, and that of the other community members.
- These social perspectives are different loci of *authority*. They are generated by the context of deliberation and the context of assessment. This is the first deepening of the Davidsonian distinction between intentional and consequential specifications.
- The one content *must* have these two "forms" because it must be assessable from *both* perspectives.
- They correspond to *de dicto* and *de re* specifications.
- It must be assessable from both perspectives because normative *statuses* are instituted by *reciprocal* recognitive *attitudes*.
- In addition to being *socially* perspectival, the recognitive process that institutes the complex normative status of **action** is *historically* perspectival. It is of its essence to be articulated into *pro*spective and *retro*spective perspectives, which provide additional fine structure to Hegel's deepening of Davidson's distinction between intentional and consequential specifications.

Part Four **Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency**

Lecture 12

Some Post-Davidsonian Elements of Hegel's Theory of Agency

1. Hegel offers us strong statements of two views about action that starkly contrast and stand in at least apparent tension with one another: a broadly behaviorist, externalist view, which identifies and individuates actions according to what is actually done, the performance that is produced (cf. Anscombe's: "I do what happens,"), and an intentionalist, internalist view, which identifies and individuates actions by the agent's intention or purpose in undertaking them. According to the first view, the inner can only be understood in terms of its outer expression, so that it makes no sense to think of intentions as states whose content is related only contingently to, and so can diverge radically from, that of the performances to which they give rise. "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."[249] "The deed [Tat] is the actual self,"[250] the agent "only gets to know…his End, from the deed."[251] "The deed does away with the inexpressibility of what is 'meant'."[252] If the content of the inner intention is settled by what is true of the actual external performance that expresses it, then it is epistemically available, even to the agent, only retrospectively.

> 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*

[249] *Phenomenology* §401.
[250] *Phenomenology* §464.
[251] *Phenomenology* §401.
[252] *Phenomenology* §322.

> from the night of possibility into the daylight of the present, from the *abstract in-itself* into the significance of *actual* being.[253]
>
> 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.[254]

A final index passage expressing this perspective explicitly maintains that the point is not affected by acknowledging the possibility of vulgar failure:

> 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.[255]

Hegel wants to bring into view a sense in which a bad painting, poem, or novel *cannot* be understood as the botched execution of a fine aim or plan, but must be understood rather as showing

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[253] *Phenomenology* §404.
[254] *Phenomenology* §322.
[255] *Encyclopedia* §140.

exactly what its creator actually intended—*however* it might seem to its author.[256] Just how we are to understand this in the light of the acknowledged possibility of such contingencies as slips of the brush remains to be seen. But the perspective Hegel seeks to put in place here is not just a casual literary flourish or a mistake we are eventually to see through. It is an absolutely central and essential feature of the model of *expression*—making the implicit explicit—that plays such a crucial role in structuring his understanding of the relations between the subjective and the objective in both action and cognition.

It is also clear, however, that it is not the whole story. There are "two aspects possessed by the practical consciousness, intention and deed (what is 'meant' or intended by the deed and the deed itself),"[257] and each must be given its due.

> It is the right of the 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*.[258]

Elsewhere[259] Hegel makes the same point under the heading of the "right of intention":

> 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.[260]

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[256] Robert Pippin offers a nice discussion of this perspective in his essay "Hegel's Practical Realism: Rational Agency as Ethical Life" [ref. [presented in Münster, February 2003]].

[257] *Phenomenology* §319.

[258] *Rechtsphilosophie* §117.

[259] *Encyclopedia* §505. See also *Philosophy of Right* §120. For my purposes here the difference between the right of knowledge and the right of intention do not matter.

[260] *Encyclopedia* §504.

Indeed, distinguishing within the action some elements for which the agent is responsible from others for which the agent is not responsible is one of the achievements of modernity:

> 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.[261]

(By the end of the Phenomenology, Hegel will be recommending a re-achievement of this ancient conception of total responsibility--inflected through the lessons of modernity, of course. That story is not my current topic, but I will talk about it in my third lecture.) The distinction between Tat and Handlung is the distinction between what is *done* as an actual event, performance, or (as we'll see is most important to Hegel) *process*—something that *happens*—and those features in virtue of which it is a *doing*—something normatively imputable to the agent. This latter is what Hegel calls "the first determinate characteristic of an action: that "in its externality it must be known to me as my action"[262]

What makes what is done (the deed) *mine*, that is, an *action*, rather than just something that happens, is its relation to a *purpose*. For the concept of action includes "the right that the content of the action as carried out in immediate existence shall be in principle mine, that thus the action shall be the purpose [Vorsatz] of the subjective will."[263] The passages concerning the identity of content of the outer deed and the inner state it expresses rehearsed above invoked the *intention* [Absicht] expressed, rather than the *purpose*. So corresponding (at least roughly) to the Tat/Handlung distinction in Hegel's account is an Absicht/Vorsatz distinction.[264] The content of the feature of an

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[261] *Philosophy of Right* §118Z. [BB: I will later claim that this "contraction strategy" is something that is to be overcome eventually, and replaced by an "expansion strategy", which reinstates the heroic (now edelmütig) sense of responsibility, but with an expanded subject of responsibility. That is why the discussion in the *Philosophy of Right* is explicitly flagged in §117 (and especially its Zusatz) as pertaining to *finite* action. The final story, retailed in the next chapter of ASOT, is about action conceived under the speculative category of *infinity*.]

[262] *Philosophy of Right* §113.

[263] *Philosophy of Right* §114.

[264] The passage from *Philosophy of Right* §114 just quoted continues, laying out the general outlines of the claims that must be interpreted to make sense of the Vorsatz/Absicht distinction, connecting it with the further notions of welfare (das Wohl) and the good (das Gute):

action that Hegel calls its 'purpose' need not extend to everything the developed deed contains, while the content of the feature of an action that Hegel calls its 'intention' does extend to everything the developed deed expressing it contains. The distinction among features of the deed that is induced by the purpose is what determines the deed as the agent's doing, in the *normative* sense of being something the agent is *responsible* for. *What* the agent thereby becomes responsible for (doing) is the whole deed (what is done). And that fully developed deed reveals an *intention* that extends beyond what is merely 'meant' or purposed.

2. So far I have offered a sketch of some of the most general features of the idiom Hegel develops to talk about practical agency. It is not yet an attempt to say how we should understand these distinctions and claims and what might entitle one to talk that way. It will be best to elaborate in stages this complex view of agency as a process of expression, development, and objective actualization, in terms of which we are to understand Hegel's distinctive notion of the content that action expressively 'translates' from a subjective to an objective form. At the most basic level, I think it ought to be understood as having a *Davidsonian* structure.[265] There are five basic elements of Davidson's theory of action that seem to me helpful in beginning to understand Hegel's. Davidson starts by developing a way of talking about events (such as the performances that result from exercises of agency) according to which:

6) One and the same event can be described or specified in many ways.

Further,

7) One important way of identifying or singling out an event is in terms of its *causal consequences*.

Thus moving one's finger, flipping the switch, turning on the light, and alerting the burglar can all count as specifications of one single event. As the effects of an event unfold, each new concentric

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(b) The particular aspect of the action is its inner content (α) as I am aware of it in its general character; my awareness of this general character constitutes the worth of the action and the reason I think good to do it—in short my Intention. (β) Its content is my special aim, the aim of my particular, merely individual, existence, i.e. Welfare.

(c) This content (as something which is inward and which yet at the same time is raised to its universality as to absolute objectivity) is the absolute end of the will, the Good—with the opposition in the sphere of reflection, of subjective universality, which is now wickedness and now conscience.

[265] [ref. from *Actions and Events*, starting with "Actions, Reasons, and Causes"]. Refer to Michael Quante's *Hegel's Concept of Action* and *Hegels Begriff der Handlung*.

ripple surrounding it makes available new ways of specifying it by the causal contribution it made to the occurrence of *those* later events. It is simply not settled yet whether the investment I made yesterday will eventually be identifiable as "the wisest financial decision I ever made", or "the most foolish…", or (more probably), something less dramatic in between. We'll just have to await the results. Davidson calls the way the potential descriptions of an event expand with the passage of time "the accordion effect."

8) Some, but not all, of the descriptions of an action may be privileged in that they are ones under which it is *intentional*.

Flipping the switch and turning on the light were intentional, while alerting the burglar (of whom I was unaware) was not. Buying a bond issued by company XYZ was intentional, while buying a bond issued by a company that would go bankrupt the following week, which might be a description of the very same event, would not have been intentional.

9) What makes an event, performance, or process an *action*, something *done*, is that it is *intentional* under *some* description.

Alerting the burglar and buying the bond of a soon-to-be-bankrupt company are things genuinely *done*, even though they were not intentional under those descriptions. For they *were* intentional under *other* descriptions of the same event: turning on the light and buying an XYZ bond. The performance is an action under *all* its descriptions and specifications, including all the distant, unforeseeable, consequential ones that come in under the accordion principle (an extensional matter). But what *makes* it an action is that it *was* intentional under *some* such specifications (an intensional, that is, specification-relative, matter).

10) What distinguishes some descriptions as ones under which a performance was intentional is their role as conclusions in processes of *practical reasoning*.

Turning on the light and buying an XYZ bond were things I had *reasons* to do, provided by *ends*, *purposes*, or *goals* I endorse, *commitments* I acknowledge, or *values* I embrace. Those reasons in the form of ends, purposes, goals, commitments, or values provide *premises* for potential pieces of practical reasoning justifying the practical conclusion that I ought to bring about an event satisfying a description such as being a turning on of a light or a buying of an XYZ bond—but not being an alerting of a burglar or a buying of a bond of an incipiently bankrupt company. That securing the applicability of *those* descriptions is in this way practically justifiable is what makes them the ones under which what I go on to do is *intentional*, and hence something that counts as an *action*.

The structure of such an account is quite different from one that identifies three distinct kinds of events standing in sequential causal relations: prior internal intentions or states of intending, actions, and consequences of those actions. The place of *distinct* events or occurrences of intendings and consequences has been taken by different descriptions of the *one* thing done: intentional and consequential ways of picking out the same doing. That is why it makes no sense to talk about an intention apart from what was done intentionally.[266] What qualifies an occurrence as an action—something an agent is *responsible* for—is the existence of a privileged subset of specifications. And they are privileged precisely by their *normative* relation to the agent. Specifically, they are *justified* by practical *reasons* whose normative force or validity the agent acknowledges.

3. My first interpretive suggestion is that Hegel's 'Tat' refers to the deed done, with *all* of its accordioned 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, and hence something *done* at all. Here is a crucial passage of Hegel's that puts together a number of the Davidsonian theses:

> 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].[267]

Endorsement of the accordion principle, and so of the Davidsonian principles (1) and (2), is implicit in saying that the action's consequences, the action as an external existence developing in all

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[266] "[W]e ought to will something great. But we must also be able to achieve it, otherwise the willing is nugatory. The laurels of mere willing are dry leaves that never were green." [*Philosophy of Right* §124Z.]

[267] *Philosophy of Right* §118.

directions, are an integral part of the action.[268] This deed is what the action is *in* itself. But what the action is *for* itself (or for the acting consciousness) is determined by the subjectively envisaged end or goal it serves, the purpose for which it is performed. In Davidsonian terms, the purpose settles the specifications under which it is intentional (principle (3), which are the ones in virtue of which the deed is recognizable as the agent's (principle (4)), in the sense that they are the ones in virtue of which the agent is responsible for what is done. (This is the "right of knowledge" distinctive of modern conceptions of agency, by contrast to those presented in ancient tragedy, adverted to in the passages further above.) Thus considerations of responsibility induce a distinction within the consequential specifications of the actual performance produced. The end or purpose endorsed (principle (5)) is translated into the external world in the shape of the deed in the sense that the purpose it justifies provides descriptions of the very same deed that also has consequential descriptions under which it is *not* intentional.

> 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.[269]

The deed is what I do under all its descriptions. I am responsible for it in the sense that it is 'mine': I did it. But it is *imputed* to me only under the *intentional* descriptions: the ones appearing in a specification of my purpose, the descriptions that specify the deed as something I had reason to do.

Indeed, it is just the failure to appreciate this point about the necessary unity of action—the expression (translation) of the inner in the outer as the actualization of the purpose in that intentional specifications and unintentional consequential ones specify the *same* actual deed—that

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[268] Very much the same language is used at *Phenomenology* §642:

> Action, in virtue of the antithesis it essentially contains, is related to a negative of consciousness, to a reality possessing intrinsic being. Contrasted with the simplicity of pure consciousness, with the absolute other or implicit manifoldness, this reality is a plurality of circumstances which breaks up and spreads out endlessly in all directions, backwards into their conditions, sideways into their connections, forwards in their consequences.

[269] *Philosophy of Right* §115 and §115H.

characterizes the defective forms of modern practical self-consciousness rehearsed in the *Reason* chapter:

> 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.[270]

For the consequences of the deeds to be the deeds themselves is just for the accordion principle to apply. For what befalls consciousness (the consequential specifications of its deed under which it is *not* intentional) to be *for* consciousness what practical consciousness is *in* itself is for the specifications under which the deed *is* intentional (specifications in terms of its endorsed purpose, expressing the agent's taking of responsibility for a doing) to be acknowledged as specifications of the *very same* deed that also has external consequential descriptions.

4. Hegel calls the unity that action exhibits as concept and content the "Sache selbst", which Miller translates as "the very heart of the matter".[271] The concept of action, the norm according to which it is assessed as such, when adequately conceived, is the concept of a unified content that is expressed in action, not only *in spite of* the disparity of form between the action as *implicit* in thought or intended and as *explicit* in actuality or accomplished, which is what is meant by the contingency of action, but as itself *consisting* in the relation between those disparate moments. 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.

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[270] *Phenomenology* §365.

[271] For instance:

> This unity is the true work; it is the Sache selbst which completely holds its own and is experienced as that which endures, independently of what is merely the contingent result of an individual action, the result of contingent circumstances, means, and reality. [*Phenomenology* §409]

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. [410]

The unity or identity of content in contingent action that is the Sache selbst is not the identity of something that is what it is independently. It is a unity forged out of moments of independence and moments of dependence. Contingency, the manifestation of the dependence of the action on the circumstances of the performance and the talents and material means available is somehow to be incorporated integrally into the unity that is the Sache selbst.

The "distinction that action implies" is "that between what is purposed and what is accomplished in the realm of existence."[272] More specifically, when we look at the internal articulation of the process that in its unity we identify as an action:

> 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'.[273]

The broadly Davidsonian understanding of this "splitting up" of the action can be exploited so as to explain how the deed, unfolding consequentially beyond the ken or compass of the purpose of the agent, can nevertheless be acknowledged by the agent as the agent's doing—so that the agent does not in its practical activity "become a riddle to itself."

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[272] *Philosophy of Right* §114Z.
[273] *Phenomenology* §400.

5. How does Hegel understand the difference between the different kinds of what I have been calling 'descriptions' or 'specifications' of the deed? The short version of the answer I will offer here is, first, that it is a distinction of *social perspective*, between the agent, who acknowledges a specifically contentful responsibility, and an audience, who attributes and assesses it. Second, 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. Third, the ultimate determinate *identity* (unity) of the content of the action—what we should understand as common to its inner (in the Hegelian sense of implicit, rather than the Cartesian sense of epistemically transparent) form and the outer (in the Hegelian sense of explicit, rather than the Cartesian sense of epistemically opaque) 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. These are all claims in which Hegel moves far beyond anything implicit in Davidson's views.

The distinction that action implies is, on the Davidsonian line being pursued, a distinction between *intentional* and *consequential* characterizations of one and the same deed. We can already see in this way of setting things out the basis for Hegel's claim that ethical theories that assess the rightness of actions exclusively on the basis of the intentions with which they were performed and ethical theories that assess the rightness of actions exclusively on the basis of the consequences to which they give rise are equally 'one-sided'. The two sorts of assessments ought rather to be seen as two sides of one coin, at least in the sense of being reciprocally sense dependent. We are now asking after the nature of the whole that necessarily comprises these two aspects of practical activity.

The essentially *social* character of that distinction shows up if we think about who is in a normative position—who has the authority—to offer specifications of the two sorts. To say that the deed or work is *actual* is to say that it is *public*, available to all.

The *truth* of the performance, what it is *in itself,* is expressed in *all* of the descriptions of what is actually achieved, all the specifications of the content in terms of its consequences. These descriptions are available in principle to anyone in the community to recognize the performance under or to characterize its content. "The work is, i.e. it exists for other individualities."[274] For others, who witness or hear about my action (coming to know about it in any of the various ways we come to know about actual occurrences), what my deed is can be said of it.[275]

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.[276]

The consequential descriptions specify what the action is for others, and for the agent qua other, that is as recognizing and assessing his own action via his empirical consciousness of it as an actuality.

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.[277]

The universal consciousness is that of the community, as opposed to the individual agent. The other members of the community can describe what it is that I have done; they can specify what I have achieved or accomplished. Accordingly, the distinction between what I intended and what I accomplished, between what the performance is for me and what it is in itself, takes the form of the distinction between what it is for me and what it is for others.

The actuality available to all is the explicit form of the commitment the agent has undertaken in acting. But what *makes* the commitment, and so the action, the agent's (the moment of certainty) is his acknowledgment of it as such. And for that the specifications under which the agent endorses it have special authority, not shared by those who merely

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[274] *Phenomenology* §405.
[275] Cf. *Phenomenology* §322.
[276] *Phenomenology* § 417.
[277] *Phenomenology* §405.

observe the results of that endorsement. These are the specifications under which it is intentional. We can look at this notion in terms of its circumstances and consequences of application. What in this distinctive way privileges the association of some descriptions of the deed with the doer is that they are the ones that appear as conclusions of processes of practical reasoning endorsed by the agent. For example:

- It is dark;
- I need to see;
- Turning on the light will enable me to see;
- Flipping the switch will turn on the light;
- So I shall flip the switch.

The agent's endorsement of such practical reasoning may have been explicitly attached to its actual rehearsal as part of an antecedent process of deliberation leading up to the performance, or it may be implicit in a disposition to trot it out when challenged to give reasons for the performance. The consequences of application of the concept description under which the performance is intentional are that these specify the content of the commitment the agent takes herself to be acknowledging in producing the performance. The performance is intentional under those descriptions the agent is prepared to acknowledge herself as responsible for it under, apart from any knowledge of the descriptions that become available only with its being actualized, specifically, descriptions of it in terms of its consequences. These are the descriptions under which the agent is petitioning the community to be specifically recognized as responsible for the performance.

6. Both of these socially distinguished recognitive elements—the descriptions under which the agent specifically recognizes or acknowledges herself as responsible, and those under which the community specifically recognizes the agent as responsible—are essential to the unity and identity of the action. Hegel discusses this sort of identity-in-difference, this socially articulated

reciprocal specific recognitive achievement, under the rubric of the "Sache selbst."[278] The concept of action being invoked is the concept of a unified content that is expressed in action, not only *in spite of* the disparity of form between the action as implicit in thought or intended and as explicit in actuality or accomplished, but as itself *consisting in* the relation between those disparate moments induced by the process of reciprocal specific recognition (acknowledgement and attribution of a determinately contentful commitment).

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.[279]

It is doings that one is responsible for. Something must be done for it to be intentional under any description. (So: no deed, no intention, i.e. nothing intentional. Hegel has no room for pure intentions, that is intentions that have no expression or actualization whatever.) What is done is exposed to the light of day (actualized, expressed, made explicit) in the sense of existing for other consciousnesses, being made manifest to others.

The result is that the agent is specifically recognized by those other subjects. The deed is attributed to the agent under consequential descriptions as the explicit expression of a determinately contentful implicit commitment. "What the deed is can be said of it",

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[278] See for instance *Phenomenology* §409: "This unity is the true work; it is the Sache selbst…" and *Phenomenology* §410:

> 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.

[279] *Phenomenology* §416.

and the ones *for* whom it is something that can be said of it are *others*, *for* whom it is something actual and observable, like any other fact.[280] The *content* is what is both acknowledged by the agent and attributed by the community: the product of a process of reciprocal specific recognition. The content of my action accordingly does not depend on me alone. It is not just what I take it or make it to be, but depends as well on its determinate acknowledgment by others who attribute to me responsibility for the performance specified in ways that go beyond those in terms of which I made it mine. 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.[281]

The spiritual [geistig], in Hegel's usage, is the normative substance that is socially synthesized by a process of reciprocal specific recognition (which shows up not only as 'action' and 'work', but also as 'experience'). The recognitively constituted character of the determinately contentful practical commitments whose intentional and consequential specifications (subjective and objective forms) are said to stand in relations of 'translation', 'actualization', and 'expression' is explicitly acknowledged by (and forms the principal progressive insight of) the phenomenal form of understanding of agency that Hegel discusses under the heading of 'conscience':

> 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*. [640]

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[280] *Phenomenology* §322.
[281] *Phenomenology* §418.

The Sache selbst is a spiritual expression of individuality, compounded out of the moment of independence displayed by the particular deliberating self-consciousness in privileging some specifications of its responsibility as the descriptions under which the performance is *intentional*, and the corresponding moment of dependence on the universal or assessing consciousness in characterizing in *consequential* terms the achievement and so what one has actually accomplished and so is responsible for in that sense. Contingency, the manifestation of the dependence of the action on the circumstances of the performance and the talents and material means available, is to be incorporated integrally into the unity that is the Sache selbst.

7. Hegel's resituating of a generally Davidsonian approach to intentional agency by placing it in the context of a socially perspectival normative process of reciprocal recognition lets us see how to satisfy one of the principal criteria of adequacy he articulates for such an account: bringing together into an intelligible whole two aspects of the concept of intentional action that stand in at least apparent tension with one another. These are the *unity* of an action, as it develops from envisaged purpose to completed performance, and "the *distinction* and *dichotomy* that lie in action as such and so constitute a stubborn actuality confronting action."[282]

The "unity and necessity" of an action are what constitute its identity. "The necessity of the action consists in the fact that purpose is related simply to actuality, and this unity is the Notion of action."[283]

> 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.[284]

"Action simply translates an initially implicit being into a being that is made explicit…."[285]

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[282] *Phenomenology* §793.

[283] *Phenomenology* §408.

[284] *Phenomenology* §396.

[285] *Phenomenology* §401. See also *Philosophy of Right* §109, where "the will is the struggle to transcend this barrier [Schranke], i.e. it is the activity of *translating* this content in some way or other from subjectivity into

> 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.[286]

"This unity is the true work."[287]

On the other hand,

> 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….[288]
>
> 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'.[289]
>
> 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

objectivity. The simple identity of the will with itself in this opposition is the content which remains self-identical in both these opposites and indifferent to this formal distinction of opposition."

[286] *Phenomenology* §400.
[287] *Phenomenology* §409.
[288] *Phenomenology* §406-7.
[289] *Phenomenology* §400.

> 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.[290]

The concept [Begriff—Miller's 'Notion'] of action, as Hegel is presenting it, requires something that persists self-identically through it: what he in these passages calls its 'content' [Inhalt]. It is the content that moves from a state of not being seen to one of being seen, that is initially *implicit* and later translated into something *explicit*, that remains the same without any distinction, unaltered and unopposed, altering only in its *form*. "Action itself is a content only when, in this determination of simplicity, it is contrasted with its character as a transition and a movement."[291] The concept of action is also structured equally essentially by the distinction and difference between not being seen and being seen, being *implicit* as purpose and *explicit* as achievement, and of the transition or movement by which the content develops from one such state or form to the other. The moments of *identity* and *difference*, the *unity* and the *disparity* that action involve, are both crucial aspects of the concept of agency.

8. One natural way to think about the aspects of unity and disparity that action essentially involves is in terms of the distinction between success and failure. Judgment and belief essentially involve the acknowledgment of responsibility to how things actually, objectively are. Apart from their liability to normative assessment as to their correctness in the sense of truth or error, states and performances are not intelligible as *cognitively* significant. Intention exhibits the complementary direction of normative fit. For it essentially involves the assertion of authority over how things actually, objectively are to be. Apart from their liability to normative assessment as to their correctness in the sense of success or failure, states and performances are not intelligible as *practically* significant

Practically sorting performances into successful and unsuccessful doings is implicitly acknowledging the two aspects of the concept of action. The *distinction* that action implies, between purpose and achievement, is in play because these are the elements one must compare in

[290] *Phenomenology* §365.
[291] *Phenomenology* §396.

order to assess success or failure. And the *unity* essential to the concept of action—the fact that endorsing a purpose, adopting it as one's own is committing oneself to a norm according to which the achievement *ought* to be what one intends—is just what sets the normative standard for success.[292] *Disparity* of purpose and achievement is *failure* (in accomplishing what one intended to accomplish); *identity* of purpose and achievement is *success* (in accomplishing what one intended to accomplish). Since one cannot understand what intentional action is without understanding that such actions are essentially, and not just accidentally, subject to assessment as successful or failed, it follows that one cannot grasp the concept of intentional action without implicitly acknowledging the two aspects of that concept that Hegel distinguishes.

On a familiar way of rendering these claims, the relations between the aspects of unity and difference that the concept of action involves has it that the question of whether those aspects are realized is to be answered differently for each particular performance. That is to say that the relation between the aspects is understood as *local*, *contingent,* and *disjunctive*. It is *local* in that the assessment of success or failure is made for *each* action, one by one. It exhibits *identity* of (content of) purpose and achievement in case it *succeeds*, and *difference* of (content of) purpose and achievement in case it *fails*. The *possibility* of disparity and the *ideal* of identity of content between purpose and achievement are universal, but those features are each *actualized* only in *some* actions. It is *contingent* whether any particular action succeeds or fails—for instance, whether, as I intended, the ball goes through the hoop. And the two aspects are *disjunctively* related (indeed, related by *exclusive* disjunction) because for any given action *either* the action succeeds, and so exhibits identity of content of purpose and content of achievement, *or* it fails, and so exhibits their disparity. I'll call this sort of account an "LCD" view of the identity-in-difference that structures the concept of action.

The LCD account is so commonsensical that it can be hard so much as to conceive of an alternative to it. Nonetheless, I do not believe that it is a view of this shape that Hegel is expressing. According to the post-Davidsonian way of thinking about agency I have been attributing to Hegel, the identity-in-difference that structures the concept of action is rather *global*, *necessary*, and

[292] For the moment I will speak indifferently of 'purpose' and 'intention'. When we later look at the details of Hegel's approach, these will need to be distinguished, corresponding to his uses of 'Vorsatz' and 'Absicht' in the *Philosophy of Right* (beginning at §114).

conjunctive. Assessment of success or failure in the ordinary sense—what I'll tendentiously call "vulgar" success or failure—is, if not completely irrelevant to understanding the unity and disparity that action involves[293], at any rate something that comes into the story only much later. According to a GNC account, *every* action ('globally'), *as* an action ('necessarily') *both* ('conjunctively') simply translates something inner or *implicit* into something outer or *explicit*, hence exhibiting the *unity* of action and the identity of content in two different forms, *and* necessarily involves an actual *disparity* between purpose and achievement ("the distinction that action involves").

9. The disparity that action necessarily involves is the social-perspectival distinction of loci of authority that distinguish between Handlung and Tat: the endorsed, acknowledged *purpose* that the agent is authoritative about, in virtue of which what happens is an action at all, and the *consequential* specifications that necessarily outrun any specification of purpose available in advance of the actual doing. This is the distinction between what one intended *that* one do, and what one thereby intended *of,* that one do *that* (the distinction between *de dicto* and *de re* specifications of the doing). The unity that action necessarily involves is the unity of content that takes these two forms. "Action itself is a content only when, in this determination of simplicity, it is contrasted with its character as a transition and a movement."[294] In intending in actual circumstances *that* one make true the claim that *p*, there is always something *of* which one *thereby* intends to do *that*. These are two normative perspectives on *one* action: the intentional and the consequential. (Cf. "the two aspects possessed by the practical consciousness, intention and deed."[295]) The content of the action can be specified either *de dicto* ('that'), in terms of the purpose that authorized it, or *de re* ('of'), in terms of what was thereby in fact authorized. Understanding the concept of action requires understanding actions as unities that necessarily involve this distinction of perspective, and understanding those perspectives as perspectives on *one* content. The content of the *intention*, in Hegel's use of 'Absicht', is the content of the *action*. The intention that, as a norm, governs the process of achieving an end can be thought of as a universal content discernible in *all* phases of that process, from *implicit* initial subjective

[293] The word 'Erfolg' (success) occurs only three times in the *Phenomenology*, never in connection with the theory of action, and of its six occurrences in the *Rechtsphilosophie*, only one is an action-theoretic use (in a comment on a comment on the crucial §118), appearing under the heading "Dramatic Interest".

[294] *Phenomenology* §396.

[295] *Phenomenology* §319

endorsing of the end to its *explicit* objective achievement. The purpose and the accomplished deed are then two perspectives on that content.

> The deed is not, except in the most degenerate cases, a punctiform, momentary event such as a muscle twitch. (And this is not because its consequential descriptions unfold into an indefinite future; that much is so even of achievements that are all there at a single time.) Writing a book, teaching a student, building a house, putting on a dinner party…, these better, more representative, examples of actions are all *processes* with a rich temporal—indeed, more specifically historical—structure. It is the Test-Operate-Test-Exit structure of a *cycle* of action in which the plan in force at any given time (endorsed as the current expression of a practical commitment) *changes* from stage to stage. At each time-slice in the evolution of the action, the then-operative plan stands to the purpose as the concrete, worked-out, contingency-incorporating, determinately contentful practical norm for actualizing that abstractly envisaged end. The content of the intention should then be understood as standing to the whole process, in relation to the guiding purpose, as the plan adopted at any one stage is to that time-slice of the process, in relation to that same purpose. It is the concrete, worked-out, contingency-incorporating, determinately contentful practical norm for actualizing that abstractly envisaged end, regarded as something whose content does *not* change as its instantiation in the form of plans *does* change.[296]

This Vorsatz/Absicht distinction gives Hegel a theoretical way of saying what vulgar success and failure of actions consists in. An action succeeds in this sense if the consequential descriptions that are true of it include the purpose whose achievement is the endorsed end in the service of which all the other elements of the intention-plan function as means. An action fails in this sense if, although some things are done intentionally, i.e. as part of the plan, the purpose is not achieved, because the means adopted do not have the consequences envisaged.

Even an action that fully succeeds in this sense—in which the actual process unfolds through the successive realization of subsidiary ends serving as means to the realization of the final purpose exactly according to plan (i.e. as intended)—still necessarily exhibits "the disparity

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[296] 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'. 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. *Phenomenology* §400.

that action involves". For even in such a case, there remains the distinction between Handlung and Tat: between the plan-structured instrumental constellation of realized descriptions under which what is done is *intentional* and the deed, comprising the whole panoply of *consequential* descriptions, unfolding to the infinite future, which, whether originally envisaged or not, were not elements of the intention structure, but are elements of what one *did* in realizing that intention. So at this point we can see the rationale behind the "GNC" (for global, necessary, conjunctive) reading of the structure of identity-in-difference characteristic of agency on Hegel's view: the claim that that *every* action, whether a success or a failure, in the vulgar sense that the motivating purpose or end aimed at was realized or not, exhibits *both* the unity *and* the disparity that action, by its very concept, involves. For at this point it should be clear how the combination of the Davidsonian reading of the Tat/Handlung distinction and a rendering of the distinction between success and failure in terms of the plan-structure understanding of the Vorsatz/Absicht distinction together underwrite the claim that even fully successful actions necessarily exhibit the "disparity that action involves." Conversely, even an action that fails in the vulgar sense exhibits the socially instituted normative unity of action: the determination of a content.

Regarded *pro*spectively, from the point of view of the initially endorsed purpose, the move from implicit to explicit is one of *change*. The content of the intention evolves and develops, becoming more definite and determinate under the influence of the actual circumstances in which the intention is realized, as plans are formulated, implemented, amended, or replaced. Regarded *retro*spectively, from the point of view of the finally achieved result, the move from implicit to explicit is one of *revelation* of the content of an intention that was all along present, albeit in some sense (visible only retrospectively) implicitly.

In the end, then, how does Hegel reconcile the two aspects, the unity and diversity that agency essentially involves? These are the basic elements of the story I have told:

At base, the story is hylomorphic: the unity and the diversity are two forms of one content. The forms are diverse, the content is common and unitary. Both aspects (forms) are essential to the identity of the content, i.e., it is essential to it, and not just accidental, that the content (the Sache Selbst) takes *both* these forms.. The two forms are different specifications of the one content.

(They will turn out to correspond to de dicto and de re specifications.). The Davidsonian story is the beginning of understanding this.

The post-Davidsonian aspects begin with the thought that the two "forms" are generated by different social perspectives on the action: that of the agent, and that of the other community members. Further, these social perspectives are different loci of *authority*. They are generated by the context of deliberation and the context of assessment (this is the deepening of the Davidsonian distinction between intentional and consequential specifications). The one content *must* have these two " forms" because it must be assessable from *both* perspectives. It must be assessable from both perspectives because normative *statuses* are instituted by *reciprocal* recognitive *attitudes*.

Part Four **Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency**
Handout for Lecture 13

Agency, Intention, and the Expressive Determination of Content

Contrast two kinds of account of the relations between *unity* and *disparity* that action essentially involves: *local*, *contingent,* and *disjunctive* (LCD) and *global*, *necessary*, and *conjunctive* (GNC).

LCD accounts take for granted a notion of *determinate content*, which can be exhibited indifferently by intentions and the performances to which they give rise.

Hegel's overall claim is that that notion of *determinate* conceptual contents is ultimately intelligible only in terms of the *process* of determin*ing* such contents—making them *more* determinate—by seeking the objective fulfillment of subjective practical commitments.

If we are to understand the sense in which subjective commitments and the objective states of affairs they are fallibly responsible to or authoritative over are determinately contentful, we must understand how the processes and practices that are the exercise of intentional agency are intelligible *both*

- as the mere expression, revelation, and translation from subjective to objective form of already fully determinate contents, *and* simultaneously
- as the means by which initially *less* determinate contents *become more* determinate: the process of *determining* conceptual contents.

The difference between an approach that presupposes a notion of determinate content without deploying the resources to make intelligible its nature, origin, or accessibility to finite knowers and agents, on the one hand, and one that concerns itself precisely with explaining determinateness of conceptual content in terms of the processes and practices by which such contents arise, develop, and are deployed by knowers and agents, on the other hand is just the difference between the standpoint of *Verstand* and that of *Vernunft*, as those Hegelian metametaconcepts have been brought into view here.

In the *Reason* chapter Hegel enriches the conception of *Erfahrung* as the experience of error, which he introduced in the *Introduction*. Here we consider the "cycle" of cognition and action: a Test-Operate-Test-Exit (TOTE) "cycle" of cognition and action that develops content through the experience of practical failure as well as cognitive error.

The historical, normative, inferential structure linking unrepeatable demonstrative tokenings and repeatable anaphorically dependent tokenings on the cognitive or *theoretical* side of a subject's activity provides conceptual raw materials that are helpful also for thinking about the maturation of a prior general purpose into a later concrete doing on the *practical* side of a subject's activity. In this case, what matters is the sense in which an earlier description of what is to be done can be thought of as inheriting some of its content from the later demonstrative specification of what it is done, on which it is understood to be anaphorically dependent. In the case of successful actions, the demonstratively specifiable performance that fulfills the purpose or intention can be thought of as what was aimed at all along: "I meant to do *that*," or "*That* is what I intended to do."

The content of the action can be specified either *de dicto* ('that'), in terms of the purpose that authorized it, or *de re* ('of'), in terms of what was thereby in fact authorized. Understanding the concept of action requires

understanding actions as unities that necessarily involve this distinction of perspective, and understanding those perspectives as perspectives on one content. The content of the intention, in Hegel's use of 'Absicht', is the *content* of the action. The purpose and the accomplished deed are then two perspectives on that content, two *forms* that content can take. This is the agentive correlate of the cognitive hylomorphism that appeared already in Hegel's *Introduction*.

The development of an intention by the alteration of a plan involves *sacrificing* some commitments—to the rejected plan, perhaps to some of the sub-goals it endorsed—and thereby *identifying* with others. We saw that the process by which self-conscious individual selves constitute themselves (in a recognitive community) is a process of relinquishing or altering, in general sacrificing some commitments in favor of other, incompatible ones, which one thereby counts as identifying with. We are now in a position to see that intentional action is a process that has just this *self*-constituting structure. The process of carrying through an intention is a process of *self determination* or self-*constitution*: making oneself into a (more) determinately contentful self by identifying with some commitments and rejecting others. That is why "what the subject *is*, *is the series of its actions*," [*RP* §124] "individuality is the cycle of its action," [*PG* §308] and "an individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a reality through action." [*PG* §401] The very same process that is the exercise of intentional agency is at the same time the expression of self-conscious individuality. "[T]he essential nature of the work... is to be a self-expression of... individuality."[*PG* §403]

"The activity of individuality, all that it does, is in its own self an End…the present, real existence of the process of individuality." [*PG* §393]

Self consciousness is "reality in the form of an individuality that directly expresses itself, an individuality which no longer encounters resistance from an actual world, and whose aim and object are only this expressing of itself." [*PG* §359]

The element in which individuality sets forth its shape has the significance solely of putting on the shape of individuality; it is the daylight in which consciousness wants to display itself. [*PG* §396]

From this point of view, objective actuality just is the medium of self-expression. In practical agency, expression is actualization. What one is implicitly *for* oneself becomes explicit as something actual, something with a nature *in* itself, available in that form *for* others, as well as for oneself in this new form.

To see our authority as agents as *opposed, resisted, frustrated* by recalcitrant actuality is to commit to a model of *pure independence* (Mastery): authority is not real unless it is *total*. We need to make the move from *independence* to *freedom* (*Verstand* to *Vernunft*), to understanding *genuine* authority as *always* and *necessarily* coming with correlative *responsibility*, for only so can it be *determinately contentful*. This is the structure of authority and responsibility of reciprocal recognition, here articulated both socially and historically.

Explicating this idiom of expression through actualization by the exercise of intentional agency is to complete the three-stage metaconceptual progression in ways of conceiving how things stand between the subjective idiom of certainty and the objective idiom of truth. It comprises these successive claims:

- *Conceptual realism*: the ontological homogeneity of content between what things are *in* themselves and what they are *for* consciousness. Both are conceptually structured, that is, articulated by incompatibilities and consequences (mediation and determinate exclusive negation). Those

relations are alethic in the objective form of conceptual content, and deontic-normative in the subjective form of conceptual content.

- *Objective idealism*: the reciprocal sense-dependence of the concepts by which we characterize objective relations of incompatibility and consequence, on the one hand, and subjective processes of resolving incompatibilities and drawing inferences, on the other.
- *Conceptual idealism*: the second-order *relations* between what things objectively are *in* themselves and the experiential *processes* in which they show up as something *for* consciousness are to be understood in the first instance in terms of those subject-constitutive empirical-practical processes: *Erfahrung*, now understood as the cycle of action-and-cognition.

The relations between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves are the relations between *phenomena* and *noumena*, *appearance* and *reality*, *sense* and *referent,* as Hegel construes them.

Hegel's understanding of what corresponds to the Fregean notion of <u>sense</u> is in crucial ways quite different from Frege's.

- Hegel is a *holist* about the conceptual contents we grasp in thought and express in speech and action. As we have seen, for Hegel conceptual contents are identified and individuated by their place in a network articulated by relations of material incompatibility and (so) material inference (determinate negation and mediation). By contrast, however it might be with Frege himself, many contemporary neo-Fregean theories are thoroughly atomistic about senses.
- For Frege, senses and referents are different *kinds* of things. For Hegel, though, the way things are *for* consciousness can be just the same as the way they are *in* themselves. Noumena are a kind of phenomena. They are categoreally *homo*geneous: the same kind of thing. For the basic tenet of Hegel's conceptual realism is that both are *conceptually* articulated, that is, stand in relations of material incompatibility and material inference.
- Fregean senses are required to determine classes of referents whose boundaries are *sharp*, *fixed*, and *complete*. This is Fregean determinateness, or determinateness in the Fregean sense.

What one must *do* in order thereby to be taking it that one is talking or thinking *about* something is to perform a <u>*Erinnerung* </u>of the development of one's views. For constructing that sort of expressively progressive genealogy is exhibiting the sequential experiential transformations of what things are for one as governed, guided, and controlled by how things all along were in themselves. Distinguishing in this way between expressively progressive transformations and those alterations in how one applies those very same concepts that were not expressively progressive is treating *all* the prior applications of those concepts as subject to assessment according to the normative standard set by how things have been revealed (so far) really to be: the actual objective facts and intentions, and the material incompatibilities and consequential relations that really articulated their properties and relations. This *is* treating them all as appearances of that one reality, all phenomena presenting one noumenal situation.

On this Hegelian account, the link between sense and reference is in the first instance an *expressive* one: the senses express the reference, making (some aspects of) it explicit. It is a relation established *retrospectively*, by turning a past into a history, an expressive genealogy. It is in terms of this retrospectively discerned expressive relation that the *representational* dimension of concept use is explained. Expressive genealogies rationally reconstruct experiential processes into traditions.

We must reconstrue the concept determinate, so as to think of it in the first instance as a feature of the whole process of *determining* conceptual contents, and only derivatively of the snapshot stages of that process, rather than the other way around. We must distinguish determinate$_{\text{Verstand}}$ from determinate$_{\text{Vernunft}}$.

Determinate$_{\text{Verstand}}$ is what you get if you take *one* of the perspectives—the retrospective, Whiggish one, and understand the relation between the whole process, *including* the prospective shift to a *new* Whiggish story, on the model of how things look from *within* just one of those stories. This is one-sidedly mistaking one *aspect* of the process, one perspective on it, for the whole thing.

The model for the retrospective discernment of the implicit unity of a course of experience—the development of what things are for consciousness in the direction of what they are in themselves—is to be found on the practical side of intentional action. While the initially endorsed purpose, in virtue of which a process counts as intentional (and hence an action, something done) at all, embodies a *de dicto* specification of the intention (and hence at least in a speaker's referring way, the deed), it is only retrospectively, from the point of view of the accomplished deed that a *de re* specification of that intention is available. Retrospectively, we learn something about what we in fact intended. So we can see that very intention as being further *expressed*. Prospectively, since the consequence is not foreseeable (it hadn't happened yet), this same process appears as further *determination* of it.

Telling the right kind of retrospective story is giving the process of development that issues in the final sense (and so determines the referent) the shape of a *plan*.

Doing the *prospective* work of coming up with a new revision and doing the *retrospective* work of coming up with a new recollection that exhibits it as the culmination of an expressively progressive process in which what was implicit is made gradually but cumulatively more explicit are two ways of describing *one* task.

The process by which what Hegel calls "the Concept" develops, as constellations of conceptual contents-and-commitments are found wanting and replaced or revised—which is the same process by which individual self-consciousnesses develop—must be thought of as both a process of ever greater *determination* of conceptual contents and of ever greater *expression* of them**.** Regarded *pro*spectively, the conceptual contents are being *made more determinate*, as features of how things really are in themselves are incorporated into how they are for consciousness by crucial experiential episodes. Regarded *retro*spectively, the conceptual contents are being gradually but inexorably (with retrospective necessity) revealed and expressed: what was all along implicit made more and more explicit.

The key to the Hegelian semantic vision is that talk of the process of sequentially and progressively *determining* (making more determinate) disparate *senses*, and talk of the process of sequentially and progressively *expressing* (making more explicit) *referents* are two ways of talking about the *same* process.

Part Four **Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency**

Lecture 13

Agency, Intention, and the Expressive Determination of Content

I. Introduction

In my previous lecture I characterized one challenge for phenomenal self-consciousness in *Reason* as being able to hold together both the idea that things done are *mine*, exercises of my subjective authority, for which I am responsible, and the idea that things done are objective happenings. Moving up a level, we see this as one of two structural aspects of agency. For besides the *disparity* that action essentially involves, between the *purpose* with which it was performed, which is up to the agent, and its *consequences*, which are not, there is also the *unity* that action involves. Hegel construes this hylomorphically, as a single *content,* which is translated from the form of something implicit in the practical commitment of the agent to the form of something explicit in an objective deed. I suggested that we could think of Hegel's resolution of these challenges to begin with in Davidsonian terms. The disparity is a matter of two different sorts of specification of a single event. It is a *doing* because it has specifications under which it is *intentional* (that is, endorsed by the attitudes of the agent). But that very same event has *consequential* specifications, which, according to Davidson's "accordion principle" are to be understood as specifications of the very same event. The intentional specifications, Hegel's "*Vorsatz*", characterize what Hegel calls the action as "*Handlung*" and the consequential specifications characterize what Hegel calls the action as "*Tat*." For Hegel, these correspond to two different social normative perspectives. The individual agent is authoritative concerning the intentional specifications that make something a doing at all, and the community, which attributes responsibility for the doing, is authoritative about specifications of the doings in terms of its on-going consequences (its being an alerting of the burglar, a killing, the burning down of a

building, the saving of the city…). I want here to address the crucial *historical* dimension of the articulation of the content of intentional doings, which pairs with this underlying *social* dimension of the normative articulation of that content.

We can think about the unity that action involves in terms of the *success* of the individual agent in translating her purpose into the objective doing as available to everyone. On a natural way of rendering these claims, the relations between the aspects of unity and difference that the concept of action involves has it that the question of whether those aspects are realized is to be answered differently for each particular performance. That is to say that the relation between the aspects is understood as ***local*, *contingent,* and *disjunctive***. It is *local* in that the assessment of success or failure is made for *each* action, one by one. It exhibits identity of (content of) purpose and achievement in case it succeeds, and difference of (content of) purpose and achievement in case it fails. The *possibility* of disparity and the *ideal* of identity of content between purpose and achievement are universal, but those features are each *actualized* only in some actions. It is *contingent* whether any particular action succeeds or fails—for instance, whether, as I intended, the ball goes through the hoop. And the two aspects are *disjunctively* related (indeed, related by *exclusive* disjunction) because for any given action *either* the action succeeds, and so exhibits identity of content of purpose and content of achievement, *or* it fails, and so exhibits their disparity. I called this sort of account an "LCD" view of the identity-in-difference that structures the concept of action. The LCD account is so commonsensical that it can be hard so much as to conceive of an alternative to it. But I claimed it is not a view of this shape that Hegel is expressing.

Instead, I claimed that in most general terms Hegel's view of the identity-in-difference that structures the concept of action is rather ***global*, *necessary*, and *conjunctive***. Assessment of success or failure in the ordinary sense—what I'll tendentiously call "vulgar" success or

failure—is, if not completely irrelevant to understanding the unity and disparity that action involves[297], at any rate something that comes into the story only much later.
According to a GNC account, *every* action ('globally'), *as* an action ('necessarily') *both* ('conjunctively') simply translates something inner or implicit into something outer or explicit, hence exhibiting the unity of action and the identity of content in two different forms, *and* necessarily involves an actual disparity between purpose and achievement ("the distinction that action involves"). On this view, *if* exhibiting the identity of content between purpose and achievement that is the unity of action is in some sense *succeeding*, and exhibiting a disparity between them is in some sense *failing*, then in order to understand the GNC approach to the identity-through-disparity of action we must appreciate a sense in which *every* action succeeds and another in which *every* action fails, regardless of its success or failure in the vulgar sense. And we must come to see these as two sides of one coin: as reciprocally sense-dependent concepts playing essential roles in the concept of intentional action.

Distinguishing these two sorts of models raises a number of questions. To begin with, how can we make sense of a model of agency of the GNC sort? What philosophical advantages might motivate adopting an account with the GNC structure rather than one with the LCD structure? What reason there is to think that Hegel actually is recommending a GNC-type account? How are we to understand vulgar success and failure if we construe agency in the GNC way? In particular, in what sense do even actions that succeed in the ordinary sense deserve to count as exhibiting the disparity that action involves? It clearly won't do to say that even though the content of what was intended and the content of what was achieved *actually* coincided, nonetheless they *might*, had things gone differently, have diverged. For even an LCD account says that. And in what sense do even actions that fail in the ordinary sense deserve to count as exhibiting the unity of content that action involves? Again, it clearly won't do to say that even though the content of what was intended and the content of what was achieved *actually* diverged, nonetheless it is their identity that was *aimed* at. For even an LCD account says that.

[297] The word 'Erfolg' (success) occurs only three times in the *Phenomenology*, never in connection with the theory of action, and of its six occurrences in the *Rechtsphilosophie*, only one is an action-theoretic use (in a comment on a comment on the crucial §118), appearing under the heading "Dramatic Interest".

These questions are what I want to address here. The key to the first three—the large philosophical and interpretive questions—is I think contained in the observation that LCD accounts take for granted a notion of *determinate content*, which can be exhibited indifferently by intentions and the performances to which they give rise. Thus I can intend to put the ball through the hoop (intend that I put the ball through the hoop), and I can put the ball through the hoop. The notion of assessments of vulgar *success* and *failure*, in terms of which both the *unity* and the *disparity* of intention and accomplishment are defined in LCD approaches, depends on the possibility of identifying and individuating the *contents* of intentions and achievements *antecedently* to the processes by which they are related in intentional action seeking to *actualize* those intentions in the form of achievements. But Hegel's overall claim is that that notion of *determinate* conceptual contents is ultimately intelligible only in terms of the *process* of determin*ing* such contents—making them *more* determinate—by seeking the objective fulfillment of subjective practical commitments.[298]

If we are to understand the sense in which subjective commitments and the objective states of affairs they are fallibly responsible to or authoritative over are determinately contentful, we must understand how the processes and practices that are the exercise of intentional agency are intelligible *both* as

i. the mere expression, revelation, and translation from subjective to objective form of already fully determinate contents,
and
ii. simultaneously as the means by which initially *less* determinate contents *become more* determinate: the process of *determining* conceptual contents.

The former perspective is that of the *unity* of action and the *identity* of contents realized in it (on an account of the GNC type, in *every* action, whether it succeeds or fails in the ordinary sense), and the latter is that of the *disparity* of action and the *difference* between the content subjectively intended and the content objectively achieved (in *every* action, whether it succeeds or fails in the

[298] In the second chapter of his pathbreaking book *Hegel* [ref.], Charles Taylor insightfully contrasts Hegel's expressive account of the making explicit of what is implicit with Aristotle's account of the actualization of potentials. He emphasizes that for Hegel, the implicit potential that is expressed is not understood as antecedently determinate. It only becomes determinate in the course of the process of expressing or actualizing it. That is the process I will be discussing here.

ordinary sense). The difference between an approach that presupposes a notion of determinate content without deploying the resources to make intelligible its nature, origin, or accessibility to finite knowers and agents, on the one hand, and one that concerns itself precisely with explaining determinateness of conceptual content in terms of the processes and practices by which such contents arise, develop, and are deployed by knowers and agents, on the other hand is just the difference between the standpoint of *Verstand* and that of *Vernunft*, as those Hegelian metametaconcepts have been brought into view here. It is in the treatment of agency that Hegel explains the process by which conceptual *norms* become (are revealed as) *determinate.* In particular, it is here that we see how the *social* and *historical* articulation of the "cycle of action" interact to define a new notion of determinateness, conceived according to the metaconcepts of *Vernunft*.

II. The Identity of Content of Deed and Intention

The difference between the LCD and GNC understandings of the relations between the unity and the disparity that the concept of action involve turns on two different senses in which an action can succeed. An action is successful in the ordinary, non-philosophical sense just in case the purpose for the sake of which it was performed and in virtue of which the performance is *intentional* (and so a doing at all) ends up as one of the c*onsequential* specifications of that doing. The sense of success that Hegel is articulating depends on determining the content of the doing. Success consists in a functional role in the process by which the *Handlung* becomes the *Tat*, and the *Vorsatz* develops into the *Absicht*.

In the *Reason* chapter Hegel enriches the conception of *Erfahrung* as the experience of error, which he introduced in the *Introduction*. Here we consider the "cycle" of cognition and action: a Test-Operate-Test-Exit (TOTE) "cycle" of cognition and action that develops content through the experience of practical failure as well as cognitive error.[299] By contrast to Davidson, for Hegel the paradigmatic examples of doings are not punctiform events such as switch-

[299] [ref.] quote.

flippings and jumpings, but extended processes such as building a house, writing a book, or passing a law. Such processes have a substantial internal historical-developmental structure.

To begin with, the microstructure of any action process reveals a distinctive sort of evolution. Any prior intention that is successfully fulfilled must progress to a demonstratively specifiable performance: "I will raise my arm in one minute," "I will raise my arm in 30 seconds," "I raise my arm *now*." But at this point in the process, the general description can also be replaced by a demonstrative specification: "I do *this* now." The realization of any particular sub-goal (one 'unit' of the extended action for which the intention serves as a norm) must include an evolution of intentional specifications from the less definite to the more definite, from more general descriptions to completely particular demonstrative specifications. I start off with reasons leading me to endorse the purpose of making it true that φ(t), say that the north wall has a doorway in it. But to carry through the intention that governs the process of achieving that end, I must eventually reach a phase in which I intend to do *this*, *here, now*—say, nail *this* board between *these* two *here*, *now*. I cannot *merely* make true the further determinable, abstract, general description that expressed the content of my original commitment, without doing so *by* making true a fully determinate, concrete, demonstrative specification.

We can recall from the discussion of the *Sense Certainty* chapter that an essential feature of observational or perceptual processes was seen to be the transition from unrepeatable *demonstrative* specifications ("Night now," "Tree here,") to repeatable, hence potentially inferentially significant, expressions ("Night then," "Tree there,"). The link between them was *anaphoric*: a matter of picking up the demonstratives by using pronouns having them as antecedents. (Though 'then' and 'there' *also* have demonstrative uses, it is their anaphoric uses that matter for 'recollecting' other demonstrative uses so as to make them subsequently available—in general, after re-demonstration is no longer possible—for use as premises in inferences.) This was the first sort of *recollection* (*Erinnerung*—cf. [PG 808]) mentioned in the body of the *Phenomenology*. The anaphoric link is a matter of the acknowledged *authority* of the antecedent over the content of the anaphoric dependent, the pronoun's *responsibility* to its antecedent for what it expresses.

This historical, normative, inferential structure linking unrepeatable demonstrative tokenings and repeatable anaphorically dependent tokenings on the cognitive or *theoretical* side of a subject's activity provides conceptual raw materials that are helpful also for thinking about the maturation of a prior general purpose into a later concrete doing on the *practical* side of a subject's activity. In this case, what matters is the sense in which an *earlier* description of what is to be done can be thought of as inheriting some of its content from the *later* demonstrative specification of what it is done, on which it is understood to be anaphorically dependent. To begin with, in the case of successful actions, the demonstratively specifiable performance that fulfills the purpose or intention can be thought of as what was aimed at all along: "I meant to do *that*," or "*That* is what I intended to do."

By way of analogy, consider how one might think of the phenomenon of *speaker's reference* in terms of demonstratives and anaphora. (This phenomenon on the theoretical side of cognition is mirrored on the practical side of agency.) The distinction between the success and failure of an action, in the ordinary sense, is underwritten by looking at the *semantic* reference of the descriptions that I would acknowledge as expressions of my purpose. This is the *dictum* that I am trying to make true, the *de dicto* specification of my purpose. And if that same description does *not* occur in the *consequential* characterizations of the deed that encompasses my doing, then I have failed. But there is another sense, in which I whatever I *actually* did determines the content of my intention, under the actual circumstances in which I acted. Under the actual circumstances, having the purpose I did amounted to intending to do *that*—whatever I actually achieved. Intending to turn on the light by flipping the switch *was* under the actual circumstances in which I intended it, though unbeknownst to me, intending *of* a particular burglar-alerting that I do *that*. Compare: my claiming that the man in the corner drinking champagne is an economist was, in the actual circumstances, though unbeknownst to me, claiming *of* a man drinking gingerale that he is an economist.

We can distinguish between what I *meant* and what I *said*. But in fact we are talking about two ways of specifying the content of one saying. I said *that* the man in the corner drinking champagne is an economist. But I said *of* the one drinking gingerale that *he* was an economist.

One of the lessons of *Sense Certainty* is that I cannot *merely* or *immediately* mean one or the other of them. I can do that only with conceptual mediation, by having some other inferentially articulated and significant specification available. And we can see in this case that the distinction between what I said and what I was talking about—in the sense of what my words semantically referred to and what they speaker-referred to—arises only from a third person point of view. I cannot myself at the time of utterance separate my speaker-reference from my semantic reference. That requires adopting the perspective of someone else, someone who has different information than I do, someone who can *attribute* a different responsibility to me than that I acknowledge, by linking my utterance anaphorically to other possible utterances of mine. But, from that third person point of view, there are *two* ways to assess the commitment I have made, the responsibility I have undertaken by my claim.

And this phenomenon on the theoretical side of cognition is mirrored on the practical side of agency. The distinction between the success and failure of an action, in the ordinary sense, is underwritten by looking at the *semantic* reference of the descriptions that I would acknowledge as expressions of my purpose. This is the *dictum* that I am trying to make true, the *de dicto* specification of my purpose. And if that same description does *not* occur in the *consequential* characterizations of the deed that encompasses my doing, then I have failed. But there is another sense, in which I whatever I *actually* did determines the content of my intention, under the actual circumstances in which I acted. Under the actual circumstances, having the purpose I did amounted to intending to do *that*—whatever I actually achieved. Intending to turn on the light by flipping the switch *was* under the actual circumstances in which I intended it, though unbeknownst to me, intending *of* a particular burglar-alerting that I do *that*. Compare: my claiming that the man in the corner drinking champagne is an economist was, in the actual circumstances, though unbeknownst to me, claiming *of* a man drinking gingerale that he is an economist. (Of course, we could also say that, unbeknownst to me, I claimed *of* a man who is not an economist that he is an economist, just as we could say that I intended *of* doing something that would not turn on the light—namely flipping the unbeknownst-to-me-broken switch—to turn on the light by doing that.) A failed action is one where the initial purpose only, as it were, speaker-referred to what I go on to do, but does not semantically refer to it.

In this sense, the content of the responsibility I have undertaken in the form of my intention is inherited from the actual deed. Here the thought is that it is the very same intention that matures from being describable in the most general terms, "turning on the light by flipping the switch" to being specifiable in the most immediate demonstrative terms "doing *this now*." From this point of view—not available to the agent *ab initio*—the final demonstrative picks out what we were all along referring to. Prospectively, the agent can only pick it out by descriptions that may or may not semantically refer to it. But retrospectively we can tell what the actual content of the intention was, given the possibly unknown circumstances in which it was to be actualized. Responsibility in this sense is attributed by discerning a kind of forward anaphora: where the expression uttered earlier in a discourse inherits its content from an antecedent uttered only later in the discourse.

The content of the action can be specified either *de dicto* ('that'), in terms of the purpose that authorized it, or *de re* ('of'), in terms of what was thereby in fact authorized. Understanding the concept of action requires understanding actions as unities that necessarily involve this distinction of perspective, and understanding those perspectives as perspectives on one content. The content of the intention, in Hegel's use of 'Absicht', is the *content* of the action. The purpose and the accomplished deed are then two perspectives on that content, two *forms* that content can take. This is the agentive correlate of the cognitive hylomorphism that appeared already in Hegel's *Introduction*.

III. Further Structure of the Expressive Process by which the Intention Develops Into the Deed

The intention that, as a norm, governs the process of achieving an end can be thought of as a universal content discernible in all phases of that process, from implicit initial subjective endorsing of the end to its explicit objective achievement. One way in which such an intention can develop so as to culminate in the successful actualization of its purpose is as the gradual, sequential realization of a tree-structured plan, in which various means are envisaged as

sufficient for the achievement of (say) sub-sub-goals, collections of those as sufficient for the achievement of sub-goals, and the sub-goals as sufficient to achieve the endorsed end**.** If the plan is a good one, and nothing goes wrong, then all the various sub-sub-goals will be achieved, and by their means, in sequence, the sub-goals, and so in the final phase, the ultimate aim.

This is not the only way an initial plan can lead to a successful conclusion, however. For the fact that under the actual, initially incompletely known, circumstances some sub-goal is not achievable (or not achievable within the limits of time and other resources allotted by the plan), or that realizing all the sub-sub-goals thought to be sufficient to accomplish some sub-goal turned out not to do the trick, need not be fatal to the success of the overall enterprise—need not lead to failure to fulfill the intention or achieve the ultimate end. Failure to achieve a sub-goal need not be fatal to the whole enterprise. For the internal details of the plan may be adjusted, depending on how things turn out in actuality, so as to find another path to the same ultimate goal.

Just as failure to achieve a sub-goal need not be sufficient for failure to achieve the goal to which it is plan-related as a means, so success in achieving a sub-goal need not be sufficient for success in achieving the goal to which it is plan-related as a means. Here we see a substantial transformation and development of the conception of *Erfahrung***,** from the experience of error to what Hegel talks about as "the cycle of action" in which individuality "exhibits itself simply and solely as the unity of the world as *given* and the world it has *made*" [PG 308]. Fulfilling a complex intention is a cyclical process of intervention according to a plan aimed at a goal, observation of the results of the intervention, adjustment of the plan, further intervention, further observation of its results, and so on. It has the dynamic structure of a Test-Operate-Test-Exit (TOTE) loop. This is the form of processes by which necessity is incorporated into contingent actuality, that is, an endorsed end is actualized ("the world it has *made*"). It is also through processes with this structure that contingency is incorporated in necessity, in that the norm (plan) governing the process changes in response to actual circumstances and achievements ("the world as *given*"). If we compare the plans operative at different times during such a process, they are liable to be different. This is the "character of action as a transition and a movement."[PG308]

Each of these purposes and plans—some subordinate to or nested in others, some adopted at different times during the process of realizing others—provides a context within which we can assess the *functional* success or failure of a the project of achieving a sub-goal. Hegel says that, in contrast to the purpose or end, the "particular aspect which gives the action its subjective value and interest for me," when the local, particular purpose is put into a larger context:

> the immediate character of an action in its further content is reduced to a means. In so far as such an end is a finite one, it may in turn be reduced to a means to some further intention, and so on in an infinite progression.[*Philosophy of Right* §122]

Each larger, or newly adopted goal provides a new context with respect to which the instrumental contribution, and so the functional success or failure, of each prior achievement can be assessed. These assessments are essentially retrospective, as indeed are assessments of ordinary success or failure at achieving the most local purpose. But because there is no end in principle to the progression to larger or later purposes, it is never too late for a new context to arise within which a previously failed (in the vulgar or the functional-instrumental sense) project can count as successfully contributing to the realization of a plan.

Even the abandonment of previously endorsed end—perhaps as a result of persistent failure to achieve it—can, when later suitably recontexted, come to have the significance merely of a change of plan for achieving a larger or later purpose. The development of an intention by the alteration of a plan involves *sacrificing* some commitments—to the rejected plan, perhaps to some of the sub-goals it endorsed—and thereby *identifying* with others. We saw that the process by which self-conscious individual selves constitute themselves (in a recognitive community) is a process of relinquishing or altering, in general sacrificing some commitments in favor of other, incompatible ones, which one thereby counts as identifying with. We are now in a position to see that intentional action is a process that has just this *self*-constituting structure. The process of carrying through an intention is a process of *self determination* or self-*constitution*: making oneself into a (more) determinately contentful self by identifying with some commitments and rejecting others. That is why "what the subject *is*, *is the series of its actions*,"[300] "individuality is the cycle of its action,"[301] and "an individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a

[300] *Philosophy of Right* §124.
[301] *Phenomenology* §308.

reality through action."[302] The very same process that is the exercise of intentional agency is at the same time the expression of self-conscious individuality. "[T]he essential nature of the work... is to be a self-expression of... individuality."[303]

IV. Self-*expression* and self-*determination* as overarching goals, always achieved

One place to start is with the observation that once agency is understood as necessarily being the expression of self-conscious individuality, that the individual self-consciousness express itself by working to fulfill its practical commitments can itself be thought of as a kind of overarching end or purpose, to which one is implicitly committed simply by exercising intentional agency.

> The activity of individuality, all that it does, is in its own self an End…the present, real existence of the process of individuality.[304]

Individuality in its setting-forth or expression is, in relation to action, the End in and for itself.[305] The important point is that if we think of *this* as an overarching aim, to which whatever one does is instrumentally subordinate, then it has the distinctive feature that in realizing *this* goal the agent "encounters no resistance from the actual world." For from this point of view, self consciousness is

> reality in the form of an individuality that directly expresses itself, an individuality which no longer encounters resistance from an actual world, and whose aim and object are only this expressing of itself. [*PG* §359].

For *expressing self-conscious individuality* is not something one can try to do and fail. It is part of the concept of agency that *whatever* one does *is* the explicit expression of what the individual agent implicitly is. From the point of view of *Verstand*'s focus on the vulgar, *finite* conception of success and failure, actuality shows up in the form of stubborn recalcitrance: opacity to knowledge of contingent consequences and resistance to the realization of determinate purposes.

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[302] *Phenomenology* §401.

[303] *Phenomenology* §403.

[304] *Phenomenology* §393.

[305] *Phenomenology* §394. See also §419, which talks about the "positive meaning" of "the originally determinate nature of the individual" as "being in itself the element and purpose of its activity."

The distinction that action involves is to the fore. By contrast, from the perspective afforded by treating the expression of individual self-consciousness in its work and deeds as a purpose with respect to which the instrumental contribution of determinate purposes can be assessed, actuality shows up as a *transparent medium* of self-expression.

> The element in which individuality sets forth its shape has the significance solely of putting on the shape of individuality; it is the daylight in which consciousness wants to display itself. [*PG* §396.]

From this point of view, then, objective actuality just is the medium of self-expression. In practical agency, expression is actualization. What one is implicitly *for* oneself becomes explicit as something actual, something with a nature *in* itself, available in that form *for* others, as well as for oneself in this new form.

To see our authority as agents as *opposed, resisted, frustrated* by recalcitrant actuality is to commit to a model of *pure independence* (Mastery): authority is not real unless it is *total*. We need to make the move from *independence* to *freedom* (*Verstand* to *Vernunft*), to understanding *genuine* authority as *always* and *necessarily* coming with correlative *responsibility*, for only so can it be *determinately contentful*. This is the structure of authority and responsibility of reciprocal recognition, here articulated both socially and historically.

One way of thinking about what the Master gets wrong is that he is still working with a one-sorted notion of normativity, not a two-sorted one. (Correct/incorrect, appropriate/inappropriate really are one-sorted normative categories.) Talk of "independence/dependence" connives at this. For these can seem like exclusive alternatives: either something is independent or it is dependent. It cannot be both (at least not in the same regard). That is understanding independence as pure independence, as unmixed with any co-ordinate dependence. But if we think of independence as authority, and dependence as responsibility, corresponding to a two-sorted categorization of normative statuses, then we make room for the possibility that authority always comes with a correlative responsibility—not just in the sense that if X has authority over Y, Y has responsibility to X, for that is the one-sorted, Master's conception, and independence and dependence could be understood to stand in this relation one-sortedly (compare active/passive)—in the sense that if X is authoritative, X is also always responsible, and if Y is responsible, Y is also always authoritative. My Hegel takes that sort of reciprocity to be essential to determinate contentfulness.

This is a normative articulation of determinate contentfulness of a sort that applies in the first instance to sentence-like things. It should be compared and contrasted with that concerning the normative relations between representings and representeds. I claim Kant first conceived things this way. But it is possible that he had a one-sorted normative conception of representational relations: Representeds determine the correctness of representings. Then it would be part of Hegel's innovative development of that normative conception of representation to construe it in two-sorted normative terms of the representing exercising *authority* over representeds, representeds being *responsible* to representeds.

Explicitly expressing in the medium of actuality what an individual self-consciousness implicitly is is not just one more determinate purpose, which an agent might or might not endorse, at the same level as writing a phenomenology of Spirit, building a house, or putting on a dinner party. It is clearly a second-order phenomenon, in this way like the 'purpose' of accomplishing one's purposes. That one, too, is one that any intentional agent could be said implicitly to endorse, though unlike self-expression, it is not one that is guaranteed to be satisfied. Both are really ways of talking about the structure of agency as such, rather than something peculiar to any particular exercise of it.

But is there any *point* to thinking of self-expression as self-actualization as itself an end, especially given its immunity to failed attempts to realize it? Why isn't it just a misleading *façon de parler*? The point for Hegel seems to be the way of thinking about the objective realm of how things actually, concretely, contingently are, in themselves that he sees this expressive idiom opening up: as the artist's raw materials, the medium, the theatre of self-expression and self-realization. Explicating this idiom of expression through actualization by the exercise of intentional agency is to complete the three-stage metaconceptual progression in ways of conceiving how things stand between the subjective idiom of certainty and the objective idiom of truth. This is conceptual idealism.

Explicating this idiom of expression through actualization by the exercise of intentional agency is to complete the three-stage metaconceptual progression in ways of conceiving how things stand between the subjective idiom of certainty and the objective idiom of truth. It comprises these successive claims:

- *Conceptual realism*: the ontological homogeneity of content between what things are *in* themselves and what they are *for* consciousness. Both are conceptually structured, that is, articulated by incompatibilities and consequences (mediation and determinate exclusive negation). (Notice that since conceptual content can take these two different forms, things are not by this thesis identified with ideas.)
- *Objective idealism*: the reciprocal sense-dependence of the concepts by which we characterize objective relations of incompatibility and consequence, on the one hand, and subjective processes of resolving incompatibilities and drawing inferences, on the other. (Notice that since sense-dependence does not entail reference-dependence, the objective world is not taken to depend for is existence, for instance, causally, on the existence of processes of thinking.)
- *Conceptual idealism*: the constellation of objective, conceptually articulating relations and subjective, conceptually articulating processes should be understood in the first instance in terms of the *process* that is the cycle of intentional action (perception-thought-action-perception), and only derivatively in terms of the relations induced by that process.

V. **Hegelian vs. Fregean Understandings of Sense and Reference**

According to the claim I have been calling "conceptual idealism", the second-order *relations* between what things objectively are *in* themselves and the experiential *processes* in which they show up as something *for* consciousness are to be understood in the first instance in terms of those subject-constitutive empirical-practical processes. Hegel's name for those processes is "*Erfahrung*," experience, now understood more broadly as the cycle of action-and-cognition. This thesis is the assertion of an *asymmetric* explanatory priority of subjective processes over objective relations, downstream from (added to, built on top of) the *symmetric* reciprocal sense-dependence relations discussed under the heading of "objective idealism". The relations between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves are the relations between *phenomena* and *noumena*, *appearance* and *reality*, as Hegel construes them.

Frege's notions of sense and reference are his theoretical renderings of two semantic dimensions that are familiar already from our ordinary, presystematic ways of talking and

thinking about our talking and thinking. For we distinguish *what* we are saying or thinking from what we are talking or thinking *about*. Talk of *phenomena*, the way things *appear to* us, what they are *for* us, is talk about the kind of understanding of them we exhibit by applying concepts to them in judgment and action. In broadly Fregean terms, what we grasp that presents objects and their relations to us (makes them something *for* us) is *senses*. In virtue of grasping those senses, having Fregean thoughts, we come to stand in *referential* relations to the objects and relations that are thereby presented to us. The *referents* determined by and presented to us by those senses are the objective things and relations our thoughts and (so) judgments are *about*. To say that the referents are what we are talking and thinking *about*, what we are acting on, is to say that it is those things and their relations that set standards for the normative assessment of the *truth* of our judgments, the material *correctness* of our inferences, and the *success* of our actions. Just so, how things are *in* themselves (noumena, reality) determines how they *ought* to be *for* consciousness (phenomena, appearance). A suitable mapping of Hegel's semantic vocabulary onto a more contemporary neo-Fregean one will enable us to see Hegel as offering a novel, interesting, and potentially valuable account of the relations between the concepts sense and reference.

For Frege, words *express* senses, which is what we in the first instance *understand.* The senses of declarative sentences are thoughts: things that can be assessed as true or false. By expressing a sense, words *represent* referents: the things one is thereby talking or thinking *about*. The senses *semantically* fix or determine the referents. In virtue of that semantic relation, senses have the *cognitive* significance of being *modes of presentation* of their referents. They are accordingly *representings* of those *representeds*.

Of course, Hegel's understanding of what corresponds to the Fregean notion of sense is in crucial ways quite different from Frege's. To begin with, Hegel is a *holist* about the conceptual contents we grasp in thought and express in speech and action. As we have seen, for Hegel conceptual contents are identified and individuated by their place in a network articulated by relations of material incompatibility and (so) material inference (determinate negation and mediation). Grasp of them consists in the capacity to move around in that network according to

those relations, acknowledging their normative force in the experiential process of resolving incompatible commitments, both practical and cognitive, extracting inferential consequences of both sorts, and elaborating, pursuing, and adjusting plans in the cycle of action and judgment. The conceptual contents of judgments and intentions (cf. "What the deed is can be said of it."), ways things can be *for* consciousness, are not intelligible one by one or in a static snapshot—apart from their roles in such relational networks and processes of practically acknowledging error and failure. By contrast, however it might be with Frege himself, many contemporary neo-Fregean theories are thoroughly atomistic about senses.

Another significant difference is that Frege discusses senses exclusively in the context of *theoretical* or *cognitive* activity: paradigmatically, judging. However, as we have seen in this chapter, Hegel is at least equally interested in the relations between how things are *for* consciousness and how they are *in* themselves that are instituted by *practical* activity. In that case, what the deed is *for* the agent (the analogue of sense) is a matter of the agent's *acknowledging* of responsibility by endorsement of *purposes* in virtue of which the deed has specifications under which it is *intentional*. And what the deed is *in* itself (the analogue of referent) is a matter of potential audiences *attributing* of responsibility for the deed subsequently specifiable in *consequential* terms. That the very same deed can be picked out both in terms of what it is *for* the agent and what it is *for* others, both *pro*spectively in intention and *retro*spectively in consequences—that these two senses can pick out the same referent—is the basis of the identity-in-difference that is the process of experience, which in the *Reason* chapter becomes visible as having the structure of a cycle of action-and-cognition. The fact that some consequential specification can be at once an aspect of what the deed is *in* itself *and* what it is *for* others—indeed, *for* the agent herself—points to another important and distinctive feature of Hegel's construal.

Another axial divergence between Fregean and Hegelian construals of sense and reference concerns their categoreal heterogeneity or homogeneity. For Frege, senses and referents are different *kinds* of things. Senses are not like the crystals, carrots, and cats (and complex numbers and truth values) that make up the world we talk about. Thoughts and other

expression-senses occupy a distinct "realm of sense", a third world of directly graspable or intelligible items to be identified neither with subjective ideas nor with objective occupants of the actual (causal) or logical orders. We are not told a lot about what sort of thing senses are—though they evidently can stand in inferential and incompatibility relations with each other. But Frege is explicit that they are ontologically *sui generis* and that their realm is (largely) disjoint from the realm of reference.[306]

For Hegel, though, the way things are *for* consciousness can be just the same as the way they are *in* themselves. Noumena are a kind of phenomena. They are categoreally *homo*geneous: the same kind of thing. For the basic tenet of Hegel's conceptual realism is that both are *conceptually* articulated, that is, stand in relations of material incompatibility and material inference. Hegel warns us in the *Introduction* against construing the subjective realm of certainty and the objective realm of truth in ways that excavate an ultimately unbridgeable gulf between them—one that would, in Fregean terms, make unintelligible how senses could be cognitive modes of presentation of objects to subjects and could semantically determine what representeds they are representings of. His first move is to come up with a notion of conceptual articulation that applies equally to the world we act in and on and know about, on the one hand, and to our thoughts about it, on the other. Both sorts of thing are accordingly the sort of thing that are in the right shape to be grasped or understood—not *immediately*, but the mediation is a matter of material inferential and incompatibility relations to other graspables of just the same sort: the holist point.

A further significant point of difference between Hegel's and Frege's versions of the sense/reference distinction—besides the issue of semantic holism vs. atomism concerning senses, inclusion vs. exclusion of the practical role of senses in intentional agency, and the categoreal homogeneity vs. heterogeneity of senses and referents, with its consequences for how one can think about what grasp of senses consists in—concerns the *determinateness* of senses. Fregean

[306] Only 'largely' because on his account, the customary senses of expressions become their referents, when the expressions occur in the context of indirect discourse.

senses are required to determine classes of referents whose boundaries are *sharp*, *fixed*, and *complete*. To say they are *sharp* is to say that it is impossible for any possible object to fall *partially* in the class determined by the sense, or both to fall in it and to fall outside it (noncontradiction). To say that the referents are *fixed* is to say that the boundaries of the class of referents determined by the sense do not change. (Which sense a given sign expresses may change, if the use of the sign changes, but the senses themselves do not change.) To say that the boundaries of the class of referents is *complete* is to say that the sense determines a *partition* of the possible candidates: *every* particular is classified by the sense either as falling under the concept it determines, or as not falling under it (excluded middle). This is Fregean determinateness, or determinateness in the Fregean sense.

VI. Retrospective and Prospective Perspectives on the Development of Conceptual Contents

In taking it that acknowledging the *incompatibility* of one's commitments obliges one to *change* them, one is taking how things are *for* one to answer to a standard of how they are *in* themselves. That *is* taking them to be *about* something, to be appearances of a reality, phenomena presenting some noumena, senses presenting referents, in short, ways things are *for* a subject, rather than *merely* states *of* a subject. This is the shape of a normative story about *referential purport* in general: what it is for a conceptual content (a sense) so much as to seem to be, or be put forward as, to function practically for the subject as being, *about* or *representing* how things objectively are. One must in practice take or treat the referent, what is represented, as authoritative, as normatively governing senses, representings of it, which count as representings of it just insofar as they are responsible to it. They are responsible in the dual sense (alethic and deontic) that how it is with the represented referent serves as a standard for normative assessments of correctness of the representing sense, and that applications of that sense must be subjunctively sensitive to how it is with what is represented.

What one must *do* in order thereby to be taking it that one is talking or thinking *about* something is to perform a *Erinnerung* of the development of one's views. Constructing that sort of expressively progressive genealogy is exhibiting the sequential experiential transformations of

what things are for one as governed, guided, and controlled by how things all along were in themselves. Distinguishing in this way between expressively progressive transformations and those alterations in how one applies those very same concepts that were not expressively progressive is treating *all* the prior applications of those concepts as subject to assessment according to the normative standard set by how things have been revealed (so far) really to be: the actual objective facts and intentions, and the material incompatibilities and consequential relations that really articulated their properties and relations. This *is* treating them all as appearances of that one reality, all phenomena presenting one noumenal situation. That is to say that performing such an *Erinnerung* is treating all the senses as *cognitively presenting* the referent, in that they actually *produce* it as the culmination of the reconstructed trajectory through the actual course of development. And those same senses *semantically determine* the referent in that they are exhibited as having been all along imperfect and incomplete *expressions* of it, in the sense that that referent, the way things are in themselves, sets the norm that distinguishes expressively progressive from expressively retrogressive experiential steps: the difference between more and less revelatory appearances.

On this Hegelian account, the link between sense and reference is in the first instance an *expressive* one: the senses express the reference, making (some aspects of) it explicit. It is a relation established *retrospectively*, by turning a past into a history, an expressive genealogy. And it is in terms of this retrospectively discerned expressive relation that the *representational* dimension of concept use is explained. Expressive genealogies reconstruct experiential processes into expressively progressive traditions.

So it is the retrospectively discerned reconstruction of a *rational*, in the sense of expressively progressive, tradition that ties together senses and referent. Where for Frege it was a truth *relation* (making true) that connects them, for Hegel it is this truth *process* (progressively expressing more truly) that secures the cognitive and semantic relations between senses and their referents. This structure is what supports the *a*symmetric sense-dependence relation asserted by the thesis of conceptual idealism.

We must reconstrue the concept <u>determinate</u>, so as to think of it in the first instance as a feature of the whole process of *determining* conceptual contents, and only derivatively of the

snapshot stages of that process, rather than the other way around. We must distinguish determinate$_{Verstand}$ from determinate$_{Vernunft}$. The metaconcept of concepts that are determinate$_{Verstand}$ is the idea of a universal that settles, for every particular, whether or not the particular falls under the universal, independently of any consideration of the process of *determining* the boundaries of that universal. This is the Kantian-Fregean idea that Hegel thinks is incoherent. There are no determinate$_{Verstand}$ concepts that really (never mind finally or fully) articulate the world. There *are* determinate$_{Vernunft}$ ones that do so, finally and fully. They are the very concepts we are deploying now. But they articulate the world only via the *process* of refining them—a process that in principle has no end point. It is the *process* that is the truth. Thinking that it must have an endpoint, on pain of leaving an unconceptualizable residue is looking for determinateness$_{Verstand}$. Determinate$_{Verstand}$ is what you get if you take *one* of the perspectives—the retrospective, Whiggish one, and understand the relation between the whole process, *including* the prospective shift to a *new* Whiggish story, on the model of how things look from *within* just one of those stories. This is one-sidedly mistaking one *aspect* of the process, one perspective on it, for the whole thing. The only way to ask whether one *concept-slice* is correct or not is to ask about whether the *content* of the concept it is a temporal slice of is correct or not. That is to ask about the whole unfolding (becoming-more-explicit) *process*.

VII. **Intentional Agency as a Model for the Development of Senses**

The home language game of Frege's distinction between sense and reference is empirical, cognitive, or theoretical discourse. But by the time we have reached the discussion of *Reason*, we know that the process Hegel calls 'Erfahrung' in general has the structure of a Test-Operate-Test-Exit cycle of action *and* cognition. In the cognitive phases of such a cycle what is revealed by an expressively progressive process of transformation of what it is *for* consciousness is what the world is *in* itself. But there are also the practical phases, in which what is revealed by an expressively progressive process of transformation of what it is for consciousness is what the *self* is.

In fact, the model for the retrospective discernment of the implicit unity of a course of experience—the development of what things are for consciousness in the direction of what they are in themselves—is to be found on the practical side of intentional action. While the initially endorsed purpose, in virtue of which a process counts as intentional (and hence an action, something done) at all, embodies a *de dicto* specification of the intention (and hence at least in a speaker's referring way, the deed), it is only retrospectively, from the point of view of the accomplished deed that a *de re* specification of that intention is available. (Of course, further consequential specifications of the deed, and hence *de re* specifications of the intention, never cease to become available, as the causal consequences of what is done ripple outward.) We are to understand the way the *referent* attributed by a retrospective recollection (*Erinnerung*, *Wiederholung*) of a course of experience on the cognitive side furnishes a standard for the normative assessment of the variously revised and transformed senses that are thereby taken to express it, in terms of how the *intention* attributed by a retrospective *Erinnerung* of an extended action process from the point of the deed accomplished furnishes a standard for the normative assessment of the variously revised and transformed plans that are thereby taken to express it. The reason one can only tell the intention from the deed is that the intention is primarily manifested in the whole evolving plan, and only secondarily in any individual time-slice of it. Thus it is only retrospectively available**.** Intentions in this sense are the guiding norms on the practical side that we are to use as the model of *facts* which guide the development of concepts on the theoretical side.

Experience necessarily involves *reflection* on one's concepts and commitments—an active taking of responsibility for them and exercise of authority over them, identifying with some by sacrificing others. Those choices and endorsements, normative identifications and sacrifices, are phases of the ongoing experiential process by which on the one hand self-conscious individual *selves* are determined, and on the other the subjective constellation of concepts-and-commitments, how things are for the subject, is further determined by incorporating aspects of how things are in themselves. This is why "the individual human being *is* what the *deed is*," and why "Individuality

is what *its* world is, the world that is its *own*. Individuality is itself the cycle of its action in what has exhibited itself as an actual world."[307]

The model for this on the side of practical agency is the way the *de re* specification of the content of an intention (a kind of sense) changes when a new consequence occurs, so that new consequential descriptions become available. Retrospectively, we learn something about what we in fact intended. So we can see that very intention as being further *expressed*. Prospectively, since the consequence is not foreseeable (it hadn't happened yet), this same process appears as further *determination* of it. The prior sense or intention appears indeterminate in the snapshot Fregean sense, since it has not yet been settled whether *that* consequential description is a specification of *it*. Thus what appears from a retrospective point of view as *change* of Fregeanly determinate but not wholly correct senses—one giving rise to another with each experiential episode—from the prospective point of view shows up as the filling-in of an intention or sense, as the process of action develops. One can see that various consequential descriptions might or might not contingently turn out to be true of what one is doing. One can see that applications of concepts to novel particulars *could* turn out to be either appropriate or inappropriate**.** Determination and expression are two ways of looking at one kind of process; they are prospective and retrospective perspectives, respectively.

Telling the right kind of retrospective story is giving the process of development that issues in the final sense (and so determines the referent) the shape of a *plan*. Doing that also involves making choices among alternatives, and formulating a plan to secure a result. The purpose is to pick out of the actual developmental trajectory of appearances elements structured in what could be called an "*expressive* plan". This is a *de re* specification of an *intention* retrospectively discernible from the *achievement* of the currently endorsed sense. Only revision moves get included in it that contribute to the goal—that can be seen retrospectively to have been *functionally successful* in realizing the purpose, achieving the goal. The sub-goals of an

[307] *Phenomenology* §322 and §308.

expressive plan are expressively progressive revisions: ones whose resulting sense is a move in the direction of the referent-sense that retrospectively serves as the normative standard for assessing the expressive success of all the senses that arose earlier in the process.

It is entirely compatible with being a functional *expressive success* in this sense that a revision move be a *local failure* in the vulgar or ordinary sense, in that it immediately led to a further incompatibility, just as in ordinary cases of intentional agency, vulgar success or failure to achieve an immediate purpose does not settle the question of functional success or failure in contributing to the execution of a plan aimed at a larger or more distant purpose.

And in any case, *every* revision will be found *eventually* to occasion a further experience of incompatibility, requiring a further revision. Stability of conception is for Hegel at best a temporary achievement, one that is in principle not just fragile but doomed to disruption. The movement of experience is what incorporates concrete particularity into the content of universals, what gives matter-of-factual contingency the form of normative necessity, what mediates immediacy. *All* the particular, contingent immediacy of things has *never* been and will never be *already* expressed or expressible in a constellation of determinate concepts-and-commitments.

This fact about the permanent *pro*spective empirical-practical inadequacy of any set of conceptual commitments means that each currently endorsed constellation that provides the reality standard for extracting an expressive genealogy from what then show up as its antecedent appearances will itself eventually be unmasked as an appearance of some other reality—perhaps only somewhat different, but in some cases significantly and substantially so.

But in fact, doing the *prospective* work of coming up with a new revision and doing the *retrospective* work of coming up with a new recollection that exhibits it as the culmination of an expressively progressive process in which what was implicit is made gradually but cumulatively more explicit are two ways of describing *one* task. The second phase of each experiential episode can then be thought in two essential, and essentially complementary ways, from two different points of view.

- Regarded prospectively, from the point of view of practical deliberation, the subject/agent is obliged by the acknowledgment of commitments standing in relations of incompatibility to do something to the concepts-and-commitments he has inherited, to alter them so as to remove the incompatibility. In a broad sense, this is further determining the contents of those concepts-and-commitments by incorporating into how things are for one the empirical-practical information that is provided by the fact that applying the conceptual norms one currently endorses has led to contradicting oneself. That constellation of concepts-and-commitments must then, according to its own implicit norms, be revised, refashioned, re*made*. It is a criterion of adequacy on succeeding at this practical task that one can tell a retrospective story about how, if things are as the revised constellation of concepts-and-commitments takes them to be in themselves, one found that out by a privileged sub-sequence of the actual experiential episodes one underwent.
- Regarded retrospectively, from the point of view of assessment of the experiential transformation, that remaking must be exhibited as the culmination of a process by which what was all along implicit in the concepts one endorsed and the commitments one undertook in applying them becomes gradually more explicit. That is, one must exhibit the result of one's revision as *finding out* how things all along already were in themselves, what one was really talking and thinking *about*, what one was referring to by deploying the earlier, variously defective senses, the reality that was all along appearing, though in some aspects incompletely or incorrectly.

The *disparity* of the *senses* (appearances, phenomena, ways things are *for* consciousness) that is manifest prospectively in the need to revise yet again the contents-and-commitments one currently endorses, and the *unity* of *referents* (reality, noumena, ways things are *in* themselves) that is manifest retrospectively in their gradual emergence into explicitness as revealed by an expressive genealogy of the contents-and-commitments one currently endorses, are two sides of one coin, each intelligible only in a context that contains the other. Thus the sense in which many alternatives are *pro*spectively open to the subject-agent of experience in the second phase of an experiential episode is just that many different revisions could be *retro*spectively rationalized by different expressive genealogies. Hence there are many different referents those

senses could be taken to determine semantically and present cognitively. On the other hand, the actual applications of concepts that lead to experiential choices of revision—*identification* with some features of a constellation of concepts-and-commitments through *sacrifice* of others—provide the raw materials that must be selected and arranged into expressively progressive, rationally reconstructed traditions vindicating the current conceptual constellation *as* the reference both semantically determined and cognitively presented by all the senses from which the expressively privileged trajectory is drawn.

The process by which what Hegel calls "the Concept" develops, as constellations of conceptual contents-and-commitments are found wanting and replaced or revised—which is the same process by which individual self-consciousnesses develop—must be thought of as both a process of ever greater *determination* of conceptual contents and of ever greater *expression* of them**.** Regarded *pro*spectively, the conceptual contents are being *made more determinate*, as features of how things really are in themselves are incorporated into how they are for consciousness by crucial experiential episodes. Regarded *retro*spectively, the conceptual contents are being gradually but inexorably (with retrospective necessity) revealed and expressed: what was all along implicit made more and more explicit.

The key to the Hegelian semantic vision is that talk of the process of sequentially and progressively *determining* (making more determinate) disparate senses, and talk of the process of sequentially and progressively *expressing* (making more explicit) referents are two ways of talking about the *same* process.

Part Four **Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency**
Handout for Lecture 14

Heroism and Magnanimity: The Post-Modern Form of Self-Conscious Agency

Hegel thinks that the most important event in human history—the single biggest thing that ever happened to us—is the extended transition from long-standing traditional forms of life to distinctively modern ones.

He introduces and develops an original conception of the subject of this great sea-change: what he calls "*Geist*," Spirit. *Geist* is us, knowers and doers, and all of our thinkings, sayings, doings, practices, and institutions, and all of their products.

The principle defining traditional *sittlich* forms of *Geist* is commitment to the *norm-governedness* or *status-dependence of normative attitudes*.

The contrasting core modern insight is the idea of the *attitude-dependence of normative statuses.*

There is a tension between the claim (central to modernity) that normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes and the claim (central to premodern understanding) that normative statuses provide the standards for assessment of the correctness of attitudes. How can we both make the norms and be genuinely governed by them?

The third, postmodern stage of *Geist* is defined by its reconciliation of these opposed insights.

Our *past* attitudes institute norms that provide the normative standards of assessment for our *current* attitudes. We institute norms that govern our attitudes by engaging in a special kind of process: *recollection* [*Erinnerung*]. Recollection retrospectively rationally reconstructs the prior applications of a concept, picking out an expressively progressive trajectory through them.
It is this process that turns a mere *past* into a *history*, something with the edifying narrative structure of a tradition: a past as *comprehended*.

Hegel calls the traditional *sittlich* practical understanding of intentional agency "heroic." By this he means that agents take responsibility for their doings under all the descriptions true of those doings. On the traditional, heroic conception it is the normative statuses that matter, not the agent's attitudes. The "ought-to-*do*"s governing attitudes are just to be read off of the "ought-to-*be*"s that articulate statuses.

The traditional *heroic* practical conception of agency is also a *tragic* conception. Tragedy is the submission of the heroic agent to *fate.* The idea of fate invokes not some sort of determinism or antecedent necessitation of outcome, but just those dark (because unknowable and uncontrollable) forces that engulf and overwhelm what is launched by one's limited knowledge and intention, transforming it into deeds that reach far beyond those attitudes into unforeseeable culpability. Shouldering the responsibility that fate in this sense brings down upon one who acts is tragic heroism.

By contrast to this tragic practical conception of agency in terms of heroic identification with and submission to one's fate, the modern conception of agency is distinguished precisely by the idea that agents are genuinely responsible for, and so should be held responsible for, only what they intended to do and knew they were doing. This conception of responsibility as proportioned to intention and knowledge is the application to the practical understanding of intentional agency of the distinctively modern appreciation of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses.

It is the right of the 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.

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.

[T]hough 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.

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.

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.

I have been using a particular regimented normative metavocabulary to render the terms Hegel uses to set out the contrast between the categories of *Verstand* and those of *Vernunft*. It translates Hegel's talk of what subjects are *in* themselves and what they are *for* themselves and for others into talk of normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes*. Under the heading of normative statuses, Hegel's talk of *independence* and *dependence* is translated into talk about *authority* and *responsibility*. Under the heading of normative attitudes, his talk of what subjects are for *themselves* and for *others* is translated into talk about *acknowledging* responsibility and *claiming* authority oneself, and *attributing* those statuses to others.

In place of Kant's *individualistic autonomy* model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes Hegel proposes a *social recognition* model. According to that model, normative statuses are instituted by *reciprocal recognition*. To *be* responsible one must, as Kant already insisted, in the first instance *acknowledge* that responsibility. But one must also be *held* responsible by others, to whom one attributes the authority to adopt such authoritative attitudes. To attribute to someone the authority to hold one responsible, that is, to attribute commitments in a partly constitutive way, is to recognize that other subject. Hegelian recognitive attitudes, like Kantian autonomous attitudes, institute normative statuses. But they do so only when suitably socially complemented. The recognitive authority of individual normative subjects and of their recognitive communities are complementary and reciprocally dependent, that is, responsible to each other as well as authoritative over each other.

The norm-instituting constellation of attitudes is one in which, as Hegel puts it:
Each is for the other the middle term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself; and each is for itself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own account, which at the same time is such only through this mediation. **They *recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another**. *PhG* §184.

No man is a hero to his valet; not, however, because the man is not a hero, but because the valet—is a valet…. *PG* § 665.

The valet views what the hero does genealogically, in resolutely naturalistic, nonnormative, reductive terms, and so
"…explains [the action] as resulting…from selfish motives. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]…. If the action is accompanied by fame, then it knows this inner aspect to be a desire for fame……..[T]he inner aspect is judged to be an urge to secure his own happiness, even though this were to consist merely in an inner moral conceit, in the enjoyment of being conscious of his own superiority and in the foretaste of a hope of future happiness. No action can escape such judgement, for duty for duty's sake, this pure purpose, is an unreality; it becomes a reality in the deed of an individuality, and the action is thereby charged with the aspect of particularity."
The Kammerdiener stands for a view that explains all attitudes in terms of other attitudes, without needing to appeal to governing norms that they are attitudes towards and acknowledgments of.

Normative governance of attitudes by norms has two dimensions, deontic and alethic. First, the norms (normative statuses) serve as *standards for assessment of the correctness of attitudes*. Second, the attitudes must be *subjunctively sensitive* to the normative statuses they acknowledge and attribute. This is to say that the norms are efficacious, in that *if* the content of the norm being acknowledged or attributed *were* (or *had been*) different, the attitude *would be* different.

Unlike the Kammerdiener allegory, the allegory of the hard-hearted judge is extended to provide a path forward to a proper understanding of the status-dependence of normative attitudes. Hegel presents the structural transition from modern to post-modern conceptions of agency in the form of a parable, a narrative recounting sequential stages in the relationship between an "evil consciousness" [*PG* 661] and a "hard-hearted judge" [*PG* 669-70]: evil [*PG* 661-62], judgment [*PG* 662-66], confession [*PG* 666], refusal of reciprocal confession [*PG* 667-68], the breaking of the hard heart and confession by the judge [*PG* 669], forgiveness [*PG* 669-71], and the achievement of a new kind of community ("The reconciling Yea, in which the two 'I's let go their antithetical existence, is the existence of the 'I' which has expanded into a duality." [*PG* 671]). This is the final, *vernunftlich*, post-modern form of reciprocal recognition, and so, of normativity and *Geist*, structured by the normativity instituted by that newly self-conscious form of recognition.

The blaming, hard-hearted, Kantian rigorist judge plays the "role of the moral valet" to the penitent agent:
The consciousness that judges in this way is itself base, because it divides up the action, producing and holding fast to the disparity of the action with itself. Further, it is hypocrisy, because it passes off such judging, not as another manner of being wicked, but as the correct consciousness of the action, setting itself up in this unreality and conceit of knowing well and better above the deeds it discredits, and wanting its words without deeds to be taken for a superior kind of reality. *PG* § 666.

The responsibility the assessing consciousness undertakes for what is done is complementary to the responsibility the deliberating consciousness undertakes for its act, rather than identical with it. It has two dimensions: reparative and recollective.

Recollective forgiveness is the key to understanding norm-governedness in general. Taking recollective responsibility for another's doing is practically acknowledging the obligation to tell a certain kind of retrospective story about that doing. That is the responsibility to rationally reconstruct it *as* norm-governed. The forgiving recollector must discern an implicit norm that governs the development of the deed. This is the intention [*Absicht*], which stands to the consequentially extended *Tat* as the agent's initial *Vorsatz* stands to the *Handlung*, which is the narrower action specified only under the descriptions explicitly licensed by the purpose for which it was performed.

The meta-norm that governs recollective performances (and the practical attitudes they express) is that the norm one reconstructively discerns or imputes must normatively govern *all* the consequential specifications of attitudes downstream of the *Handlung*. That includes the practical-reparative and hermeneutic-recollective attitudes the assessing judge adopts. So the forgiving agent must endorse the norm being attributed as governing the deed—must acknowledge its authority. That is part of taking co-responsibility for it.

Forgiving, on this account, is hard work. It cannot be brought off with a single, sweeping, abstractly general gesture: "I forgive you for what you did."

Any actual recollective story will involve strains: elements of what is actually done, at *every* stage in the developing process, that can*not* be smoothly, successfully, or convincingly given such a norm-responsive explanation.

As an edelmütig, forgiving assessor of another's doing, one *confesses* that it is (also) one's *own* fault, that one is not good enough at forgiving. And one must *trust* that this failure, too—like the failure of the original, inadequately forgiven doer—will be more successfully forgiven by future assessors (who know more and are better at it). The content of the shared recognitive attitudes with which all parties identify is "*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass before us*."

It is of the essence of both the reparative ameliorating dimension and the hermeneutic recollecting dimension of the recognitive attitude of forgiveness that they address a performance that expresses a *prior* practical attitude. The doing being forgiven must already be underway. For this reason, the final, *vernunftlich* form of reciprocal recognition as confession and forgiveness is essentially *historical*. The attitude-governing norms it institutes and acknowledges have the rich diachronic recognitive form of *traditions*.

The claim that is crucial for understanding the third age of *Geist* as retaining the progress made by modernity while overcoming its structural alienation is that recognition understood as including the recollective institution of traditions acknowledges both the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and the status-dependence of normative attitudes.

Agency as understood and practiced within the magnanimous recognitive structure of confession and forgiveness combines these two heroic aspects of the pre-modern conception: *sittlich* appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes and acknowledging total responsibility for the deed as consequentially extended beyond the knowledge and control of the agent.

The burdens of tragic subjection to fate are replaced by the tasks of concrete magnanimous forgiveness. Where our normative digestion of immediacy, contingency, and particularity shows its limitations, when (as in each case at some point they must) they outrun our recollective capacity to incorporate them into the mediated, normative conceptual form of universals, that failure of ours is properly acknowledged by confession and trust in the forgiveness of that failure to fulfill our responsibilities, by more capable future recollectors.

"The wounds of the Spirit heal, and leave no scars behind. The deed is not imperishable; it is taken back by Spirit into itself, and the aspect of individuality present in it, whether as intention or as an existent negativity and limitation, straightway vanishes. The self that carries out the action, the form of its act, is only a moment of the whole, and so likewise is the knowledge, that by its judgement determines and establishes the distinction between the individual and universal aspects of the action." *PG* §669.

The responsibility the individual tragic heroic agent takes on himself is accordingly spread out and shared. The doing of each (in one sense) is now in a real sense the doing of all (in another, recognitively complementary sense). For all share responsibility for each action. The temporally extended, historically structured recognitive community of those who are alike in all confessing the extent of their failure to be norm-governed,

acknowledging their responsibility to forgive those failures in others, confessing the extent of their efforts at recollective and reparative forgiveness, and trusting that a way will be found to forgive their failures is one in which each member identifies with all the others, taking co-responsibility for their practical attitudes. It is the "'I' that is 'we', the 'we' that is 'I'." *PG* §177.

Part Four **Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency**

Lecture 14

Heroism and Magnanimity: The Post-Modern Form of Self-Conscious Agency

I. Introduction: Three Ages of Spirit

Hegel thinks that the most important event in human history—the single biggest thing that ever happened to us—is the extended transition from long-standing traditional forms of life to distinctively modern ones. The great thinkers of the Enlightenment, and in particular the philosophers in the tradition that leads from Descartes to Kant, worked out ideas that articulate the characteristically modern understanding both of our cognitive, practical, and political activity, and of the world we know about and act in and on. But Hegel was the first to see modernity whole, the first to see those new Enlightenment modes of understanding as of a piece with the massive rolling changes in social, political, and economic institutions that gave rise to them and to which they gave voice, the first to see the Enlightenment as the form of consciousness and self-consciousness appropriate to a new world and a new way of being in the world.

He introduces and develops an original conception of the subject of this great sea-change: what he calls "*Geist*," Spirit. *Geist* is us as discursive beings, knowers and doers, and it includes all of our norm-governed doings, thinkings, sayings, practices, and institutions, and all of their products.

Prelapsarian traditional understanding took normative statuses to be features of the objective world. How it is proper to behave, how things ought to be done, what things are "fitting," proper relations of subordination and superiority are all thought of as central features of how things anyway are, like the weight of stones or the color of the sky. The stations and duties are construed as being what they are antecedently to and independently of the practical attitudes of those whose stations and duties they are. It is the job of individual subjects to reflect those self-standing normative statuses in their attitudes, to shape their acknowledgements and attributions of authority and responsibility so that they fit the normative facts. The principle

defining traditional *sittlich* forms of *Geist* is commitment to the *norm-governedness* or *status-dependence* of *normative attitudes*.

The contrasting core modern idea, articulated and developed by Enlightenment thinkers, is that there were no normative statuses of subordination and superiority, no authority and responsibility, until people started practically taking or treating each other *as* subordinates and superiors, authoritative and responsible. It is the idea of the *attitude-dependence of normative statuses*. This idea takes a particularly clear and explicit form in social contract theories of political obligation. For there, attitudes of consent by the governed are treated as essential to the legitimate authority of those who govern, epitomized in the model of instituting normative statuses of reciprocal obligation by attitudes of intending to be bound, manifested practically by entering into an explicit contract or compact. On this model, norms are not found, but made. Normative statuses are instituted by social normative practical attitudes such as promising, agreeing, or contracting.

It can seem that there is more involved in saying normative statuses are *instituted* by attitudes than there is in saying just that normative statuses are attitude-*dependent*. That is so only if one misunderstands what is involved in such institution. But the particular misunderstanding involved is part and parcel of modernity's self-understanding. It is just what needs to be overcome to move to the third, post-modern age of *Geist*. As I read Hegel's idiom, dependence on the side of subjects is responsibility. The attitude-dependence of normative statuses is the responsibility of normative statuses to normative attitudes, or, equivalently, the authority of attitudes over statuses. Talk of "institution" makes it sound as though that authority were *total*, involving no reciprocal responsibility of attitudes to statuses. That would be a mistake: the mistaken conception of *pure* independence, which Hegel allegorizes under the heading of "Mastery." That attitudes institute statuses does not mean that the statuses just are whatever the attitudes take them to be (whatever is acknowledged or attributed)—any more than the *Tat* set in motion by a *Vorsatz* is just whatever that attitude envisages. The problem for modernity is precisely coming to understand how its institution of statuses by attitudes involves reciprocal responsibility of attitudes, including the instituting ones, to statuses. This difficulty is resolved by construing thing according to the categories of *Vernunft* rather than those of *Verstand*. Genuine reciprocity between statuses and attitudes is re-achieved in the third age of *Geist*, and its *vernunftlich* self-understanding shows us what was right about the apparently over-reaching interpretation of attitude-dependence of statuses as the institution of statuses by attitudes.

Hegel both sees the replacement of traditional thought, institutions, and selves by modern ones as a decisive, irrevocable advance, and also diagnoses it as a disruption that inevitably incurs substantial costs. The cover-term he coins to characterize that unavoidable loss is "alienation," *Entfremdung*. The largest philosophical lesson he thinks we can learn from thinking about the great structural shift of *Geist* from its pre-modern to its modern form is the result of the detailed interplay of gain and loss, advance and retreat that characterize that transition. The right understanding of how these interwoven strands are related points the way, he thinks, towards the *third* stage in the development of *Geist*.

Such a third structure of *Geist* must retain the irreversible progress in self-consciousness of ourselves as free that consists in realizing the attitude-dependence of normative statuses, while re-achieving practical *sittlich* appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the way in which normative attitudes are obliged to respect and reflect norms that serve as standards of assessment for the correctness of those attitudes. *Sittlichkeit* is practically appreciating and responding to the obligation to conform our attitudes to the actual normative statuses those attitudes acknowledge and attribute. This is to aim at acknowledging and attributing what we and others are *really* committed to, our actual responsibilities. It is the loss of this *sittlich* practical appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes that Hegel denominates the "alienation" he takes to be a hallmark of modernity. What we are alienated from is the norms that we have made, and that make us what we are.

So there is a tension between the claim (central to modernity) that normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes and the claim (central to premodern understanding) that normative statuses provide the standards for assessment of the correctness of attitudes. How can we both make the norms and be genuinely governed by them? (Here one might think of Wittgenstein's observation that if "whatever is going to seem right to me is right…that only means that here we can't talk about 'right.'[308]) The third, postmodern stage of *Geist* is defined by its reconciliation of these opposed insights. How does Hegel propose that these two criteria

[308] *PI* §258.

of adequacy on an account of the relation between normative attitudes and normative statuses can both be satisfied? The short answer, I think, is that our *past* attitudes institute norms that provide the normative standards of assessment for our *current* attitudes.

He thinks that we institute norms that govern our attitudes by engaging in a special kind of process: *recollection* [*Erinnerung*]. Recollection retrospectively rationally reconstructs the prior applications of a concept, picking out an expressively progressive trajectory through them. To say that the rationally reconstructed tradition is "expressively progressive" is to say that it takes the form of the gradual emergence into explicitness of a determinate conceptual content, which provides a norm governing applications of that concept. That content is exhibited as having been all along implicit. Each application reveals some contour of the concept.

The process of recollection adopts an essentially *retrospective* perspective: "The owl of Minerva flies only at dusk…." It is this process that turns a mere *past* into a *history*, something with the edifying narrative structure of a tradition: a past as *comprehended*.[309] It is "Reason's march through history." The idea of recollective rationality is one of Hegel's Big Ideas.

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[309] Hegel concludes the *Phenomenology* by emphasizing the constitutive significance of recollection for the higher sort of self-consciousness working through the book is supposed to make accessible to us [*PG* §808] :

> As 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**. Thus absorbed in itself, it is sunk in the night of its self-consciousness; but in that night its vanished outer existence is preserved, and this transformed existence—the former one, but now reborn of the Spirit's knowledge—is the new existence, a new world and a new shape of Spirit. In the immediacy of this new existence the Spirit has to start afresh to bring itself to maturity as if, for it, all that preceded were lost and it had learned nothing from the experience of the earlier Spirits. But **recollection**, the inwardizing, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance.
>
> …
>
> 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.

II. Traditional and Modern Practical Conceptions of Agency

In the rest of this talk I want to drill down by looking at a special case of that recollective reconciliation of traditional and modern structures of norm-governed and norm-instituting practices and the sort of understanding of them that is enabled by the metaconcepts of Hegelian *Vernunft*. The particular dimension of our *geistig* activities I will address is *intentional agency* and the self-conscious understanding of it, both theoretical and practical, that is an essential aspect of it.

Hegel calls the traditional *sittlich* practical understanding of intentional agency "heroic." By this he means that agents take responsibility for their doings under all the descriptions true of those doings. No normative distinction is made between what was done intentionally, or what the agent knew he was doing, on the one hand, and what he did unintentionally and without realizing that that is what he was doing. Thus Oedipus is held responsible for killing his father and marrying his mother, even though he did not intend to do those things and was not aware that that is what he was doing. For those are still things he *did*, not just things that *happened*. (Anscombe: "I do what happens.") Oedipus did intend to, and did, kill *that man* and marry *that woman*. On the traditional, heroic conception it is the normative statuses that matter, not the agent's attitudes. Parricide and incest *ought not to be*. One should not act so as to incur the normative status of father-killer and mother-fucker. The "ought-to-*do*"s governing attitudes are just to be read off of the "ought-to-*be*"s that articulate statuses. Attitudes of knowing and intending matter only in determining *that* one is responsible for a deed, not for determining *what* one thereby did. The *status* one acquires by doing something is not itself construed as mitigated by or otherwise relativized in any way to the *attitudes* of intending and knowing in virtue of which it counts as one's doing in the first place. That one did not mean to do what one did can engender sympathy, but it cannot diminish responsibility.

It is for this reason, Hegel thinks, that the traditional *heroic* practical conception of agency is inevitably always also a *tragic* conception. The tragedy does not consist in the badness of the outcome. It consists in the fact that in acting at all one puts oneself at the mercy of forces outside of one's knowledge and control. Those alien forces determine the content of one's actual deed, what one turns out to have done and to be responsible for having done. (Hegel quotes in this connection a medieval European proverb "When a flung stone leaves the hand, it belongs to the devil.") Tragedy is the submission of the heroic agent to *fate.* The idea of fate invokes not some sort of determinism or antecedent necessitation of outcome, but just those dark (because unknowable and uncontrollable) forces that engulf and overwhelm what is launched by one's limited knowledge and intention, transforming it into deeds that reach far beyond those attitudes into unforeseeable culpability. Shouldering the responsibility that fate in this sense brings down upon one who acts is tragic heroism. This is the intimate, mutually presupposing relation between *tragedy*, *fate*, and *heroism*.

By contrast to this tragic practical conception of agency in terms of heroic identification with and submission to one's fate, the modern conception of agency is distinguished precisely by the idea that agents are genuinely responsible for, and so should be held responsible for, only what they *intended* to do and *knew* they were doing. Davidson well articulates the distinction at the core of the modern conception when he distinguishes, among the specifications of things one has genuinely *done*, between descriptions under which what one did is *intentional* (turning on the light) and descriptions of what one did that are merely *consequential* (alerting the burglar, of whom one was unaware). What makes an event a doing at all, something that is imputable to an agent, is that it is intentional under *some* description. But that event then counts as a doing under *all* its specifications, including those that pick it out by consequences that were not intended or foreseen by the agent. It is of the essence of the modern idea of practical responsibility that acknowledgments and attributions of the normative *status* of responsibility are conditioned by and proportional to the agent's *attitudes* of intending and believing. It is now seen to be unjust to condemn or blame someone for what they did because it satisfies consequential descriptions under which the agent did not intend it and could not foresee it. Those *attitudes* of agents, what they intend and believe, are taken to play constitutive roles in determining their normative *status*

as culpable or admirable. This conception of responsibility as proportioned to intention and knowledge is the application to the practical understanding of intentional agency of the distinctively modern appreciation of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses.

The core of distinctively modern practical self-consciousness is for Hegel a special way of understanding "The "distinction that action implies": "that between what is purposed and what is accomplished in the realm of existence."[310] It is to distinguish two senses in which agents do things, a narrower and a wider one, and to restrict responsibility to what is done in the narrow sense.

> It is the right of the 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*.[311]
>
> There are "two aspects possessed by the practical consciousness, intention and deed (what is 'meant' or intended by the deed and the deed itself).[312]
>
> [T]hough 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.[313]

He explicitly appeals to this distinction as marking the decisive difference from traditional practical conceptions of agency;

> 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

[310] *RP*§114Z.
[311] *RP*§117.
[312] *PG*§319.
[313] *Encyclopedia* §504.

> purpose and knowledge of the circumstances, or to analyse the consequences minutely, but accepts responsibility for the deed in its entirety. [RP§118Z]

Hegel takes it that making this distinction between *Tat* and *Handlung* is a decisive advance in our understanding of ourselves as agents. But this new level of practical self-consciousness courts the danger of a distinctive kind of alienation from its deeds.

> 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.[314]

[314] *PG*§365. The ideal Hegel contrasts with this alienated practical conception of agency—intentional doings being the alteration of form of a common content, the translation of what is implicit into what is explicit—is the analogue on the practical side of what shows up on the cognitive side as conceptual realism, discussed here in connection with Hegel's *Introduction*.

III. Postmodern Heroism: Recognition as Recollection

I have been using a particular regimented normative metavocabulary to render the terms Hegel uses to set out the contrast between the categories of *Verstand* and those of *Vernunft*. It translates Hegel's talk of what subjects are *in* themselves and what they are *for* themselves and for others into talk of normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes*. Under the heading of normative statuses, Hegel's talk of *independence* and *dependence* is translated into talk about *authority* and *responsibility*. Under the heading of normative attitudes, his talk of what subjects are for *themselves* and for *others* is translated into talk about *acknowledging* responsibility and *claiming* authority oneself, and *attributing* those statuses to others.

In these terms, the conception of *Vernunft* is what explains the reciprocity of the normative statuses of authority and responsibility (the sense in which they are always two sides of one coin), the reciprocity of normative recognitive attitudes of acknowledging and attributing authority and responsibility, and the reciprocal dependences between these reciprocal relations among statuses and among attitudes. In doing so, it reconciles the distinctively modern insight into the attitude-dependence of normative statuses—the sense in which statuses authority and responsibility are instituted by reciprocal recognitive attitudes—with the traditional appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the dimension along which attributions and acknowledgments of commitments (responsibilities undertaken by exercising one's authority to do so) answer for their correctness to what agents are really committed to. The alienation that is the worm in the shining apple of modernity is the practical incapacity to see how normative statuses can *both* be instituted by normative attitudes *and* transcend those attitudes so as genuinely to govern and constrain them.

Kant's autonomy version of the Enlightenment idea that normative statuses are instituted by normative attitudes takes it that knowing and acting subjects are distinguished from merely natural creatures by a distinctive sort of *authority* they have. That is the authority to commit themselves—the normative capacity of *making* themselves responsible by *taking* themselves to be responsible. Hegel applauds both the idea that the basic normative status is the authority to

adopt normative attitudes (for Kant, to acknowledge commitments), and the idea that normative statuses (commitments, that is, responsibilities) are instituted by normative attitudes. Hegel objects to the idea that any individual's attitudes can *immediately constitute* normative statuses. That sort of authority he sees as an instance of the practical conception of normativity in terms of pure independence (authority without commensurate responsibility) characteristic of the Master, whose commands unilaterally institute obligations (responsibilities) for the Slave. And from Hegel's point of view it is a flaw in the Kantian autonomy account that *this* foundational normative status—the distinctive kind of authority to commit oneself, in virtue of which one is a discursive subject of cognitive commitments as to how things are and practical commitments as to how things shall be—is *not* construed by Kant as itself instituted by normative attitudes. It is treated just as a metaphysical fact.

Hegel's idea is that we should understand the commitments of normative subjects as instituted not by their own attitudes of acknowledgement alone (as Kant's autonomy model has it), but only by those attitudes when suitable complemented by attributions of those commitments to them by others, who attribute to them the authority so to commit themselves, and so *hold* them responsible. That is, the authority to commit *oneself* is itself instituted in part by the attitudes of *others*, who attribute it. (Kant's being responsible for respecting the dignity of others is being responsible for attributing autonomy to them.) Hegel's term for the attitude of attributing the basic Kantian normative status that is the authority to adopt a status by adopting an attitude—making oneself responsible by taking oneself to be responsible—is "recognition" [*Anerkennung*]. In place of Kant's *individualistic autonomy* model of the institution of normative statuses by normative attitudes he proposes a *social recognition* model. According to that model, normative statuses are instituted by *reciprocal recognition*. To *be* responsible one must, as Kant already insisted, in the first instance *acknowledge* that responsibility.[315] But one must also be *held*

[315] I say "in the first instance" because in addition to the ground-level cognitive and practical commitments that are Kantian judgments and endorsements of practical maxims, Kant also is concerned with *categorial* commitments. These are commitments that are implicit in and explicative of judging and acting intentionally. These categorial responsibilities are not attitude-dependent in the same way the ground-level cognitive and practical commitments are. They are implicit in adopting normative attitudes at all. The discovery of this sort of background commitment, and the concepts that articulate this kind of discursive commitment, is hugely important to Kant, and, following him, to Hegel. But I suppress consideration of it here. (I discuss the subsequent development of this idea in a preliminary way in the first chapter of *From Empiricism to Expressivism*.)

responsible by others, to whom one attributes the authority to adopt such authoritative attitudes. To attribute to someone the authority to hold one responsible, that is, to attribute commitments in a partly constitutive way, is to recognize that other subject. Hegelian recognitive attitudes, like Kantian autonomous attitudes, institute normative statuses. But they do so only when suitably socially complemented. The recognitive authority of individual normative subjects and of their recognitive communities are complementary and reciprocally dependent, that is, *responsible to* each other as well as *authoritative over* each other.

On the recognitive picture, normative statuses are all instituted by normative attitudes, but only when those attitudes exhibit a particular structure: the structure of reciprocal recognition. Normative attitudes of acknowledging oneself and attributing responsibilities to others, and of claiming or exercising authority for oneself and acknowledging the authority of or attributing authority to others, must be complementary to be efficacious. And in such a structure the normative statuses of authority and responsibility those recognitive attitudes institute are also always reciprocal and co-ordinate.

The most basic Hegelian social normative status is being recognized as having that status by those one recognizes as having it. It is wholly up to me whom I recognize. But then it is not in the same way up to me whether they recognize me in turn, and so institute the status. Recognizing them is adopting the attitude of attributing to them the authority to determine, by their attitudes of attribution, my possession of the status in question. Apart from my recognitive attitude, they have no such authority over me. Apart from their exercise of that authority, I do not have the status in question. Our attitudes are constitutive, sufficient to institute the status, only when suitably complemented by each others' attitudes. Only *reciprocal* recognitive attitudes, recognition by those one recognizes, is constitutive of basic Hegelian normative statuses. The norm-instituting constellation of attitudes is one in which, as Hegel puts it:

Each is for the other the middle term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself; and each is for itself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own account, which at the same time is such only through this mediation. **They *recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing* one another**.[316]

The *authority* to undertake commitments or responsibilities, which is the basis of Kant's autonomy model, is now seen to involve a co-ordinate *responsibility* to others, to whom one has granted the authority to *hold* one responsible. Others do not have that authority until and unless they are granted it by the recognitive attitudes of the knowing and acting subject. But the authority of that subject to undertake responsibilities or commitments regarding how things

[316] *PhG* [§184]. Emphasis added.

are or are to be equally involves responsibility to, recognition of, the co-equal authority of those others in determining both what the subject is responsible for and the extent to which that responsibility is fulfilled. On the recognitive model, both the *statuses* of authority and responsibility, and the *attitudes* of acknowledging and attributing responsibility and authority, are co-ordinate, commensurate, and inextricably reflective of each other.

One might (I think one clearly ought) to grant that there is *a* sense of "normative status," paradigmatically of "responsibility" and "authority," that is sensibly construed as socially instituted by reciprocal recognitive attitudes in the way required for what I have called "basic Hegelian normative statuses." Even so, one might want to object that there are normative statuses that are more objective than these intersubjectively constituted ones. What is left out of the picture of normative statuses as instituted by reciprocal recognitive attitudes, one wants to say, is the fact that some normative statuses are objective in a sense that lets them serve as normative standards for assessment of the correctness of attitudes of attributing or claiming them.

Just so. The attitude-dependence of normative statuses, which motivates the models both of the basic Kantian normative meta-status of autonomy and of the basic Hegelian normative meta-status of reciprocal recognition, must somehow be balanced by acknowledgment of the status-dependence of normative attitudes: the sense in which those attitudes of acknowledging and attributing normative statuses are responsible to the statuses that subjects actually have, the sense in which those attitudes are themselves norm-governed. Understanding that aspect of the relations between normative attitudes and normative statuses, and incorporating that understanding in our practices and institutions is what is required to move *Geist* from its modern to its post-modern phase. We are to do that by moving from practically construing ourselves and our discursive activities according to metaconcepts exhibiting the structure of *Verstand* to construing ourselves and our discursive activities according to metaconcepts exhibiting the structure of *Vernunft*.

The key to understanding the way Hegel moves beyond the *basic* Hegelian normative statuses socially instituted by *synchronic* reciprocal *relations* of recognitive attitudes consists in appreciating the orthogonal *diachronic* historical dimension of recognitive *processes*. It is in particular the *recollective* phase of diachronic recognitive processes that explains the attitude-

transcendence of normative statuses. That includes the special cognitive representational norms according to which representing attitudes are responsible for their correctness to standards set by what counts as represent*ed* by those represent*ings* just in virtue of exercising that distinctive kind of authority over them. Discursive norms, both practical and cognitive, are understood according to the categories of *Vernunft* as features of essentially social and historical recognitive processes, developing in tandem with the attitudes that articulate them. Understanding operating according to the categories of *Verstand* is blind to both the social and the historical dimensions of conceptual norms.

IV. Ushering in the Third Age of Spirit by the Breaking of the Hard Heart: From Niederträchtig Blaming to Edelmütig Confession and Forgiveness

Let us look more closely at how the transition to the third age of *Geist* is described and motivated. The *Spirit* chapter of the *Phenomenology* rehearses the progressive development from the traditional to the modern structure of *Geist*, so as to prepare us readers for the epiphany in which that development culminates: the envisaged transition to the third, post-modern stage, the age of trust. Hegel introduces this newly self-conscious form of normativity (and hence subjectivity) in the rhetorical form of a pair of allegories: the allegory of the hero and his valet, and the allegory of the penitent confessing his transgression to the hard-hearted, unforgiving judge.

Hegel introduces the first with a well-known slogan of his day:

> "No man is a hero to his valet;

followed by his own twist on it:

> not, however, because the man is not a hero, but because the valet—is a valet…."[317]

The hero is allegorical for one who acts out of appreciation of his duty, one who fulfills his responsibilities, one who acts as he ought, as he is committed to act, one who in his practical attitudes and actions acknowledges the bindingness or authority of norms. "Valet" is the English translation of the German "Kammerdiener," literally, room-servant. The valet in the allegory sees the attitudes of the hero not as governed by and expressive of the acknowledgment of norms, but as the product of immediate sensuous desires and contingent particular inclinations. The valet views what the hero does genealogically, in resolutely naturalistic, nonnormative, reductive terms, and so

[317] *PG* [665].

> …explains [the action] as resulting…from selfish motives. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]…. If the action is accompanied by fame, then it knows this inner aspect to be a desire for fame……..[T]he inner aspect is judged to be an urge to secure his own happiness, even though this were to consist merely in an inner moral conceit, in the enjoyment of being conscious of his own superiority and in the foretaste of a hope of future happiness. No action can escape such judgement, for duty for duty's sake, this pure purpose, is an unreality; it becomes a reality in the deed of an individuality, and the action is thereby charged with the aspect of particularity.

The *Kammerdiener* stands for a view that explains all attitudes in terms of other attitudes, without needing to appeal to governing norms that they are attitudes towards and acknowledgments of. Hegel does not deny that this sort of explanation in terms of attitudes alone can be done. The norm-blind reductive naturalist perspective is an available perspective.

But we can ask: what sort of disagreement is it that divides the *Kammerdiener* and the "friend of the norms" for whom some heroes really are heroes? Is it a cognitive, matter-of-factual disagreement about what there is in the objective world? After all, for Hegel, modernity was right that normative statuses are attitude-dependent. Hegel diagnoses the issue as a difference in meta-attitude. Hegel denominates the norm-blind reductive naturalism, for which the *Kammerdiener* stands, "*niederträchtig*." The contrasting, norm-sensitive, hero-aware meta-attitude that takes some attitudes to be themselves genuinely norm-sensitive and norm-acknowledging he calls "edelmütig." So perhaps there is just a subjective practical choice to be made, depending on one's preference for tough-minded, skeptical *Niederträchtigkeit* or tender-minded, generous *Edelmütigkeit*? That is not Hegel's view either. Those two possibilities—matter of objective fact or subjective preference—exhaust the possibilities that modern *Verstand* admits. He thinks rather that in being discursive beings at all, in believing and acting, we have already implicitly committed ourselves to an *edelmütig* meta-attitude. This is a possibility afforded by *Vernunft*, which, when it comes to explicit self-consciousness, ushers in the post-modern structure of *Geist*.

The issue addressed by the allegory of the *Kammerdiener* concerns the intelligibility of the traditional idea of the status-dependence of normative attitudes in the face of the modern insight into the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. The *Kammerdiener* stands for the self-sufficiency, the explanatory sovereignty, of attitudes. But then what room is there for the authority and efficacy of norms—for the idea that normative statuses of authority and responsibility, what one is really entitled or committed to, make a real difference to attitudes that accordingly deserve to be thought of as *acknowledgments of* those norms? Normative governance of attitudes by norms has two dimensions, deontic and alethic. First, the norms (normative statuses) serve as *standards for assessment of the correctness of attitudes*. My attitudes of acknowledging a commitment myself, or attributing a commitment to others, are correct just in case we really are committed, in case those attitudes properly reflect the statuses they are attitudes towards. This is what it is for the attitudes in question to be *normative* attitudes: attitudes towards norms, attitudes of acknowledging or attributing normative statuses. Second, the norms they are attitudes towards should make a difference to the adoption of those attitudes. The attitudes must be *subjunctively sensitive* to the normative statuses they acknowledge and attribute. This is to say that the norms are efficacious, in that *if* the content of the norm being acknowledged or attributed *were* (or *had been*) different, the attitude *would be* different.

The heroism of the hero is allegorical for the norm-governedness of his attitudes in this dual sense. The correctness of his attitudes is to be assessed according to the standard provided by the norms he acknowledges, and his practical attitudes are sensitive to the contents of those norms, in the sense that if the norms were different, the hero's attitudes would be different. The challenge allegorically represented by the *Kammerdiener* is to make the possibility of the status-dependence of normative attitudes so much as intelligible in the face of the standing possibility (which Hegel admits) of purely naturalistic genealogical alternative accounts of the advent of normative attitudes that appeal only to other attitudes. If invocation of normative governance of attitudes by normative statuses is not *necessary* to account for the attitudes, how can it be *legitimate*? Insofar as this reductive naturalist challenge to the normativity of agency cannot be met convincingly, the result is *alienation* from the norms: the loss of traditional *sittlich* practical appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes.

The second allegory, of the confessing miscreant and the hard-hearted judge, presents a different sort of challenge to the intelligibility of the governance of practical attitudes by norms. It stems from Kantian rigorism about what is required for genuine responsiveness to norms, rather than from reductive naturalism. What the miscreant confesses is the admixture of non-normative attitudes in the causes of his action. He did not act just out of acknowledgment of "pure duty for duty's sake." Other attitudes also provided motives to which the action was subjunctively sensitive, in the sense that if they had been different (and the norm not) what was done would have been different. Subjunctive sensitivity was not limited to the content of the norm being acknowledged. The doing was in this regard both more than and less than a pure acknowledgment of the norm. Here the challenge is not that treating the performance as the acknowledgment of a norm is not *necessary* to explain the practical attitude, but rather that it is not *sufficient*. If invocation of normative governance is not by itself *sufficient* to account for attitudes (because an admixture of contingent, particular motives and circumstances—what the penitent confesses—is also always in play), then how can it be *legitimate*?

The challenge to the intelligibility of normative governance comes from the idea that the authority of norms over attitudes must be *total* in order to be *genuine*. It is a manifestation of the deformed conception of *pure independence*: the idea that authority (normative independence) is undercut by any sort of correlative responsibility to (dependence on) anything else. This is the practical normative conception Hegel criticizes allegorically under the rubric of "Mastery." Hegel sees Kant as perfectly distilling the essence of the modern form of this conception, as part of his otherwise progressive understanding of normativity in terms of autonomy. As a result, Kant adopts a *contraction* strategy, in which genuine doings shrink down to mere willings, since every more robust sense of action involves responsibility to other factors, subjective and objective, which are not themselves in the same sense governed by the norm that rationalizes the willing. In the allegory, the hard-hearted judge is the Kantian rigorist, who takes it that the penitent's confession of an admixture of non-normative motives shows that the action does not (also) express the acknowledgment of a norm, and so must be judged lawless. The affinity to the reductive naturalism of the *Kammerdiener* should be clear. For there, too, the mere possibility of a non-normative, reductive naturalistic explanation of attitudes is taken to pre-empt the

normative governance explanation, and in that sense to deny the authority of the norm. If the normative governance account of an attitude has a rival, it is taken to have no authority at all. Independence is seen as incompatible with any sort of dependence. Any correlative responsibility undermines claims of authority.

Unlike the *Kammerdiener* allegory, the allegory of the hard-hearted judge is extended to provide a path forward to a proper understanding of the status-dependence of normative attitudes. Hegel presents the structural transition from modern to post-modern conceptions of agency in the form of a parable, a narrative recounting sequential stages in the relationship between an "evil consciousness" [*PG* 661] and a "hard-hearted judge" [*PG* 669-70]: evil [*PG* 661-62], judgment [*PG* 662-66], confession [*PG* 666], refusal of reciprocal confession [*PG* 667-68], the breaking of the hard heart and confession by the judge [*PG* 669], forgiveness [*PG* 669-71], and the achievement of a new kind of community ("The reconciling Yea, in which the two 'I's let go their antithetical existence, is the existence of the 'I' which has expanded into a duality." [*PG* 671]). This is the final, *vernunftlich*, post-modern form of reciprocal recognition, and so, of normativity and *Geist*, structured by the normativity instituted by that newly self-conscious form of recognition.

What the contrite agent confesses is everything in its deed that is not norm-governed—in Hegel's idiom, every manifestation of *particularity* (the agent's circumstances and collateral attitudes in the form of intentions or beliefs, and of contingent unintended consequences) rather than *universality* (norm, governing normative status). It confesses every failure of the status-dependence of the practical attitudes whose content is revealed in the deed as actually done. Confession [Verständnis] in this sense is at once a performance partly constitutive of a special form of self-consciousness, and a petition for recognition. (The connection is forged by Hegel's understanding of self-consciousness as the social product of mutual recognition.) In Hegel's allegory, it is met not with an edelmütig reciprocating recognition, but with a niederträchtig merely critical assessment of failure to fulfill responsibilities (failure of attitudes to be normatively governed by statuses). The blaming, hard-hearted, Kantian rigorist judge plays the "role of the moral valet" to the penitent agent.

> The consciousness that judges in this way is itself base, because it divides up the action, producing and holding fast to the disparity of the action with itself. Further, it is hypocrisy, because it passes off such judging, not as another manner of being wicked, but as the correct consciousness of the action, setting itself up in this unreality and conceit of knowing well and better above the deeds it discredits, and wanting its words without deeds to be taken for a superior kind of reality.[318]

The judge's attitudes are exclusively adopted from the perspective of normative *assessment*. The judge as assessor does not identify with the perspective of the deliberating agent, or even acknowledge the essential complementary roles in constituting normative statuses played by attitudes of assessment and deliberation—that is, attribution to another and acknowledgment oneself of practical commitments.

The point of this episode in the allegory is to enforce the contrast with the next step. The "breaking of the hard heart" describes the adoption by the assessing consciousness of the appropriate edelmütig recognitive response to the petition for recognition that is the penitent's confession. That response Hegel denominates "forgiveness" [Verzeihung]. To understand the structure of normativity that gives *Geist* its characteristic post-modern shape, we must understand the constellation of reciprocal recognitive attitudes that institutes that structure. This is recognition in the form of mutual confession and forgiveness: the structure I call "trust." As I read the allegory, the shift to forgiveness that is the breaking of the judge's hard heart is a move from the judge merely *attributing* responsibility for the agent's deed to the judge practically *acknowledging* his own responsibility for that deed. As such, it is an act of *identification with* the doer, by making oneself co-responsible for what was done. The appropriate response to confession of an incapacity to produce deeds that are simply and purely governed by norms is for the judge to make a corresponding confession, to acknowledge "I am as you are," admitting that the judge, like the agent, is also doomed to act from a mixture of attitudes that are acknowledgments of governing norms and attitudes that are not such acknowledgements. ("We're all bozos on this bus.")

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[318] *PG* 666.

The responsibility the *assessing* consciousness undertakes for what is done is complementary to the responsibility the *deliberating* consciousness undertakes for its act, rather than identical with it. It has two dimensions: reparative and recollective. The reparative responsibility is practically to intervene in the still-unfolding consequences of the doing, which provide an ever-increasing stock of consequential specifications of it. The deed is never done, and part of the generous edelmütig way of holding someone responsible for what they do is to acknowledge responsibility for helping to make it turn out well. One can do that by practically contributing new consequences, thereby making-true new consequential specifications of the deed. When everyone does acknowledges a responsibility to do that, each doing by a member of a community whose constitutive recognitive attitudes to one another take the form of confession and forgiveness is a doing by all. The deed of each is the deed of all. (Think here of Dumas's Musketeers' slogan "All for one and one for all!")

But what counts as "better" consequences? The standard for such normative assessments of consequences is set by the other, *recollective* dimension of forgiveness. The *reparative* responsibility to ameliorate the consequences of the doing being forgiven must be understood in terms of recollection. The aim is to make the whole that results from one's current action, thought of as a contribution to a tradition, as *more fully and successfully recollectable* than that tradition would otherwise be. So this constraint, too, is defined in terms of recollection. It is the norms of recollection that determine what count as "better" consequences, and to which contributing to such consequences must be subjunctively sensitive.

Recollective forgiveness is the key to understanding norm-governedness in general. Taking recollective responsibility for another's doing is practically acknowledging the obligation to tell and endorse a certain kind of retrospective story about that doing. That is the responsibility to rationally reconstruct it *as* norm-governed. The forgiving recollector must discern an implicit norm that governs the development of the deed. This is the intention in the sense of *Absicht*, which stands to the consequentially extended *Tat* as the agent's initial *Vorsatz* stands to the *Handlung*, which is the narrower action specified only under the descriptions explicitly licensed by the purpose for which it was performed. The *Absicht* must be exhibited as normatively governing the doing in the dual sense both of serving as a normative standard for

assessment of the practical attitudes it governs (each specification of the doing being thought of as an acknowledgment of that norm), and as being the norm that those attitudes can be seen to have been subjunctively sensitive to, in the sense that had the norm been different, so would the attitudes.

One recollectively discerns/imputes a norm that is in the form of an *Absicht*, something that governs the practical process as what is being *striven* for or *aimed* at. Saying that goes beyond just saying that it serves as a normative standard for assessments of the success of practical attitudes. For that could be true without entailing that anyone cares about the standard and is making decisions in the light of what the norm enjoins. The additional element involves thinking of each component of the subsequent retrospectively constructed/discovered tradition as surrounded by a cloud of incompatible alternatives. The recollective forgiver then practically takes or treats the subject of the attitude in question as *choosing* the alternative taken (the one incorporated in the recollective-recognitive forgiveness-narrative), as having *selected* it out of the cloud of relevant alternatives. That is what it is to treat the governing norm as not just a norm of assessment, but as an *Absicht*. This is rationally reconstructing a tradition of attitudes that are status-dependent, in the sense of being governed, in the dual sense, by an implicit norm that becomes gradually more explicit as it is acknowledged by the attitudes incorporated in the recollected tradition.

The meta-norm that governs recollective performances (and the practical attitudes they express) is that the norm one reconstructively discerns or imputes must normatively govern *all* the consequential specifications of attitudes downstream of the *Handlung*. That includes the practical-reparative and hermeneutic-recollective attitudes the assessing judge adopts. So the forgiving agent must endorse the norm being attributed as governing the deed—must acknowledge its authority. That is part of taking co-responsibility for it. In forgiving, one makes oneself responsible for the emerging norm one attributes as the implicit *Absicht* of the deed. This is *identifying with* the agent, in the sense of risking and if need be sacrificing one's own attitudes, by subjecting them to normative assessment according to the norm one both attributes and acknowledges, and being subjunctively sensitive to that norm in one's own attitudes. In this

specific sense, the forgiving agent acknowledges the doing as its own, as the doing not *only* of the agent who initiated it, but *also* of the forgiving recollector.

Forgiving recollection can be understood on the model of the institutional common or case-law jurisprudential practices mentioned above. There, the current judge rationally reconstructs the tradition by selecting a trajectory of prior precedential decisions that are expressively progressive, in that they reveal the gradual emergence into explicitness of a norm (the content of a law) that can be seen to have implicitly governed (in the dual sense of serving as a standard and having the precedential attitudes be revealed as subjunctively sensitive to it) all the decisions (attitudes) in the reconstructed tradition. It is that norm that then justifies the current judge's decision. The norm that is seen as emerging from the rationally reconstructed tradition of decisions sets the standard for normative assessment by future judges of the current decision, which claims to be subjunctively sensitive to that very norm. So the recollecting judge subjects herself to (acknowledges the authority of) the norm she retrospectively discerns. The more of the prior decisions the recollection rationalizes and exhibits as expressive of the norm, the better the recollective warrant that norm provides for the current decision. Whatever residue there is of decisions that cannot be fit into the retrospectively rationally reconstructed tradition as precedentially rationalizing and expressive of the norm, increases the scope for criticism of the current decision by future judges, who may or may not acknowledge it as correct and itself precedential. For the only authority the decision has derives from its responsibility to the tradition of prior decisions.

Forgiving, on this account, is hard work. It cannot be brought off with a single, sweeping, abstractly general gesture: "I forgive you for what you did." One could always *say* that, but saying it would not make it so. Besides commitment to practically affect the consequences of the doing one is forgiving, one must produce a concrete recollective reconstruction of the deed, under all of its intentional and consequential specifications. Recollection is a *making*—the crafting of a distinctive kind of narrative—that is successful only insofar as it ends up being recognizable as having the form of a *finding*. Doing that seems perverse, but it is giving contingency the normative form of necessity. Recollection is the narrative genre in which the rationalization of decisions appealing to common or case law also

belongs. One must recruit and assemble the raw materials one inherits so as to exhibit a norm one can endorse oneself as always having governed the tradition to which one oneself belongs, with which one oneself identifies—a tradition that shows up as progressively revealing a governing norm, making ever more explicit what was all along implicit. The expressively progressive tradition discerned culminates (for now) in the consequential specification of the doing that is the recollection itself.

V. Conclusion

What if what one is given to work with is *too* hard to forgive? What if the subject of the attitude that is being forgiven as part of the larger enterprise of forgiving something upstream of it is in fact dispositionally unresponsive to the verdict of the norm? What if (as the Kammerdiener alleges) it in fact is sensitive only to other concerns particular to its subject? It seems that the criteria of adequacy for *successful* forgiveness, both reparative and recollective, are in many cases *impossible* to satisfy. Some things people have done, we want to say, are simply *unforgivable*. In some cases, though we might try to mitigate the consequences of evil doings, we have no idea how to go about discerning the emergence of a governing norm we could endorse ourselves. Any actual recollective story will involve strains: elements of what is actually done, at *every* stage in the developing process, that can*not* be smoothly, successfully, or convincingly given such a norm-responsive explanation.

Indeed. But now we must ask: whose fault is it that the doing is unforgiveable—the doer or the forgiver? Is the failure that of the bad agent or of the bad recollector? Is whose fault it is a factual matter of how things anyway just are? Or is it at least partly reflecting the recollector's failure to come up with a more norm-responsive narrative? The first is the attitude of the *unsittlich valet*, for whom no-one is a practically norm-acknowledging *hero*, in the sense of being genuinely responsive and sensitive to norms. To treat the recollective failure as wholly the fault of the doer, to take it as simply an objective fact that there is no norm we could endorse that governs the deed as the assessor inherits it, is to adopt exactly the blaming practical attitude of the hard-hearted judge—an attitude Hegel criticizes as niederträchtig. The contrasting edelmütig

attitude he recollectively recommends as implicit in the idea of norm-governedness as such is rather to identify with the doer, to take (co-)responsibility for the doing. That is to acknowledge at least equal responsibility on the part of the unsuccessful forgiver. For the issue is not properly posed in alethic modal terms of the *possibility* or *im*possibility of forgiving what was done. It is a deontic normative matter. One is *committed* to forgiving, *responsible for* forgiving. We have here a Hegelian version of a Kantian regulative ideal. That governing regulative ideal is "Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner." One can be *committed* to that ideal (normatively governed by it in the dual sense) even if one must confess that in many cases one can*not* understand—and so forgive—all.

It might well be that one is in fact incapable of fulfilling that commitment, of carrying out that responsibility. If and insofar as that is so, it is a normative failure that the unsuccessful would-be forgiver should *confess*. To take proper recognitive recollective responsibility requires the forgiving agent to confess its own inadequacy to the recollective task. Your confession of a failure of your practical attitudes appropriately to acknowledge a norm is a petition for my recognition in the form of my forgiving taking of (co-)responsibility for your doing. My subsequent failure to adopt adequately forgiving recollective recognitive attitudes is something I am responsible for confessing. That confession is itself an act of identification with you: "I am as you are." My attitudes, like yours, fail adequately to satisfy the norms that they nonetheless acknowledge *as* binding, *as* governing those attitudes. For one acknowledges an obligation (the bindingness of a governing norm) insofar as one confesses the extent to which one has been unresponsive to the demands of the recollective norm, unable properly to fulfill a responsibility one acknowledges. And one is genuinely sensitive to that normative demand in making such a confession. Confessing is what one must do to *make* it the case that one is in fact sensitive to the norm recollected as governing the attitudes that make up the tradition one has discerned (including one's own attitudes), even though one is incapable of fulfilling the responsibility one thereby acknowledges.

As an edelmütig, forgiving assessor of another's doing, one *confesses* that it is (also) one's *own* fault, that one is not good enough at forgiving. And one must *trust* that this failure, too—like the failure of the original, inadequately forgiven doer—will be more successfully

forgiven by future assessors (who know more and are better at it). That one *cannot* successfully tell a recollective story is not what matters. That is a deontic failure, relative to one's commitments. It is something to be *confessed*, in *trust* that that failure, too, can be *forgiven*. The well-meaning but incompetent forgiving recollector's confession, like that of the contrite agent, is a petition for recognition in the form of forgiveness. The trusting confession of recollective failure completes the identification of the one playing the role of assessor with the one playing the role of agent. The recognitive attitudes of forgiveness and confession emerge as two sides of one coin, two aspects of the symmetric recognitive structure: the norm-instituting structure of *trust*. Its slogan is: "Attribute responsibility forgivingly, acknowledge responsibility contritely." In a normative community with this recognitive structure, everyone forgives to the limits of their ability, and everyone confesses those limits, and trusts that they, too, will be forgiven. The content of the shared recognitive attitudes with which all parties identify is "*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass before us*."

It is of the essence of both the reparative ameliorating dimension and the hermeneutic recollecting dimension of the recognitive attitude of forgiveness that they address a performance that expresses a *prior* practical attitude. The doing being forgiven must already be underway. For this reason, the final, *vernunftlich* form of reciprocal recognition as confession and forgiveness is essentially *historical*. The attitude-governing norms it institutes and acknowledges have the rich diachronic recognitive form of *traditions*. Hegel practices forgiving recollection, retrospectively rationally reconstructing expressively progressive traditions, in his own accounts of intellectual and cultural history, and particularly in the way he reads the history of art, religion, and especially, philosophy. It is what I mean to be practicing in telling the stories I tell here.

The claim that is crucial for understanding the third age of *Geist* as retaining the progress made by modernity while overcoming its structural alienation is that recognition understood as including the recollective institution of traditions acknowledges both the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and the status-dependence of normative attitudes. On the one hand, it incorporates the insight that norms (normative statuses) are instituted by reciprocal recognition—that is, by recognitive attitudes that are symmetric in the sense of being suitably complemented.

On the other hand, each recollective rational reconstruction is obliged to display the normative attitudes it addresses as governed by norms (normative statuses) in the dual sense of being subject to assessment according to those norms and of being subjunctively sensitive to them. In this way, the post-modern recognitive practices re-achieve a *sittlich* appreciation of the authority of norms over attitudes: the sense in which attitudes are responsible to (governed by) norms they acknowledge and attribute. It is true that acknowledgement of the authority of governing norms is always within the scope of a recollective rational reconstructive *story* about what is going on. The normative status on which attitudes are understood as dependent (to which they are responsible) is itself always the object of a recollective attitude. In this sense, the overall account invokes nothing but attitudes. But *that* attitudes are status-dependent (norm-governed) is an essential, necessary, and characteristic structural feature of *every* recollective attitude, as such. In that sense, the status-dependence of normative attitudes is not merely a contingent product of some attitudes people happen to adopt. It is in the end what makes normative attitudes *normative* attitudes—acknowledgments and attributions of normative *statuses* of responsibility and authority.

Agency in the age of trust re-achieves the heroic character—so striking in the original ancient form of agency—that was pushed out by the ironic distancing and alienation from norms essential to the achievement of individual self-consciousness that is the triumph of modern over traditional forms of normative life. Central to heroism was what Hegel calls "character": the decisive *sittlich* identification of an individual agent with the norms: practically treating them as authoritative over and binding on one's attitudes. This is an acknowledgment of the status-dependence of normative attitudes, of one's attitudes as norm-governed. The "ought-to-*do*"s governing normative attitudes (acknowledged or attributed responsibilities) are understood as wholly determined by the "ought-to-*be*"s that articulate normative statuses (what someone is really responsible for or committed to: their duty). As a result, the heroic agent takes responsibility for every aspect of his act. If some feature of it is not as it ought to be, that is confessed to be the agent's responsibility, whether or not it was intended or foreseen. Compared to the contracted modern conception, the heroic conception makes the agent primarily responsible for a much-expanded deed, stretching out to include distant, unanticipated consequences. For this reason, traditional heroism is essentially tragic: it requires subjecting

oneself to the dark, unknowable power of fate, identifying with what one is made by forces beyond one's knowledge and control. Shouldering the responsibility that fate in this sense brings down upon one who acts is tragic heroism.

Heroism in the age of trust is like heroism in the age of tragedy in its *sittlich* acknowledgement of the bindingness of norms, in the sense of their governing authority over normative attitudes, the status-dependence of those attitudes. There are norms that set standards for assessment of the correctness of our attitudes of acknowledging and attributing responsibility and authority, and it is the responsibility of each agent to be sensitive to those norms, shaping its attitudes accordingly. Each forgiving retrospective recollective rational reconstruction of an expressively progressive tradition of attitudes is responsible for discerning just such governing norms. And where the cramped and contracted modern practical conception of agency drew a bright line between normatively attributable and assessable aspects of each doing and non-normative ones—between what the agent can properly be held responsible for, because done knowingly or intentionally and what is done only in the sense of happening because of such doings in the narrow sense—the trusting conception is heroic like the tragic conception in that responsibility is total. Responsibility is taken for the whole deed. There is no aspect of intentional doings that overflows and falls outside the normative realm of responsibility—no specification of the deed for which no-one takes responsibility. In *Geist* with the recognitive structure of trust, responsibility for the deed is shared between the agent whose attitudes initiated the doing and the members of her recognitive community, who take it as their own by committing themselves to forgiving it.

Agency as understood and practiced within the magnanimous recognitive structure of confession and forgiveness combines these two heroic aspects of the pre-modern conception: *sittlich* appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes and acknowledging total responsibility for the deed as consequentially extended beyond the knowledge and control of the agent. It can maintain a heroic expanded conception of the deed for which responsibility is taken because it has an expanded conception of who is responsible for each doing. Complementary recognitive attitudes both institute the governing norms and acknowledge the authority of the norms so instituted. The essentially historical fine structure of those reciprocally related

recognitive attitudes and normative statuses articulates a division of normative labor between the agent whose practical attitudes initiate a self-conscious intentional doing, who takes responsibility for it in one sense, and members of the agent's recognitive community, who take responsibility for it in another sense. In this way the two essentially modern insights into the attitude-dependence of normative statuses and the distinction of responsibility marked by the individual agent's "rights of intention and knowledge" (the distinction between *Handlung* and *Tat*) are respected, and synthesized with the two principal features of pre-modern heroic agency.

But the *vernunftlich* conception of agency as heroic does away with the element of tragic subjection to fate. Fate showed up as an alien, inhuman force in the tragic form of agency because it was a *non-normative* force, one that is not itself governed by norms but nonetheless substantially shapes our normative responsibilities. What was left to us was bearing up and carrying on in the face of the results of the incursions by fate into the properly normative realm. The neo-heroic form of practical normativity replaces fate with something we do. What *happens* is given the form of something *done*. Immediacy, contingency, particularity and their recalcitrance to conceptualization are not done away with. But they now take their proper place. For we appreciate the necessary role they play in the process of determining the contents of the norms we both institute by our recognitive attitudes and acknowledge as governing that experiential process. The burdens of tragic subjection to fate are replaced by the tasks of concrete magnanimous forgiveness. Where our normative digestion and domestication of immediacy, contingency, and particularity shows its limitations, when (as in each case at some point they must) they outrun our recollective capacity to incorporate them into the mediated, normative conceptual form of governing universals, that failure of ours is properly acknowledged by confession and trust in the forgiveness of that failure to fulfill our responsibilities, by more capable future recollectors.

The wounds of the Spirit heal, and leave no scars behind. The deed is not imperishable; it is taken back by Spirit into itself, and the aspect of individuality present in it, whether as intention or as an existent negativity and limitation, straightway vanishes. The self that carries out the action, the form of its act, is only a moment of the whole, and so likewise is the knowledge, that

by its judgement determines and establishes the distinction between the individual and universal aspects of the action.[319]

The responsibility the individual tragic heroic agent takes on himself is accordingly spread out and shared. The doing of each (in one sense) is now in a real sense the doing of all (in another, recognitively complementary sense). For all share responsibility for each action. The distinctive role played by individual agents is not obliterated, for the responsibility acknowledged by and attributed to the initiating agent is different from the reparative and recollective responsibility undertaken by those who take up the burden of forgiving the agent. Every deed now shows up both as a practical contribution to the content of all that came before it, and as acknowledging a recollective responsibility with respect to all those deeds. The temporally extended, historically structured recognitive community of those who are alike in all confessing the extent of their failure to be norm-governed, acknowledging their responsibility to forgive those failures in others, confessing the extent of their efforts at recollective and reparative forgiveness, and trusting that a way will be found to forgive their failures, is one in which each member identifies with all the others, taking co-responsibility for their practical attitudes. It is the "'I' that is 'we', the 'we' that is 'I'."[320]

[319] *PG* 669.
[320] *PG* 177.

Part Five

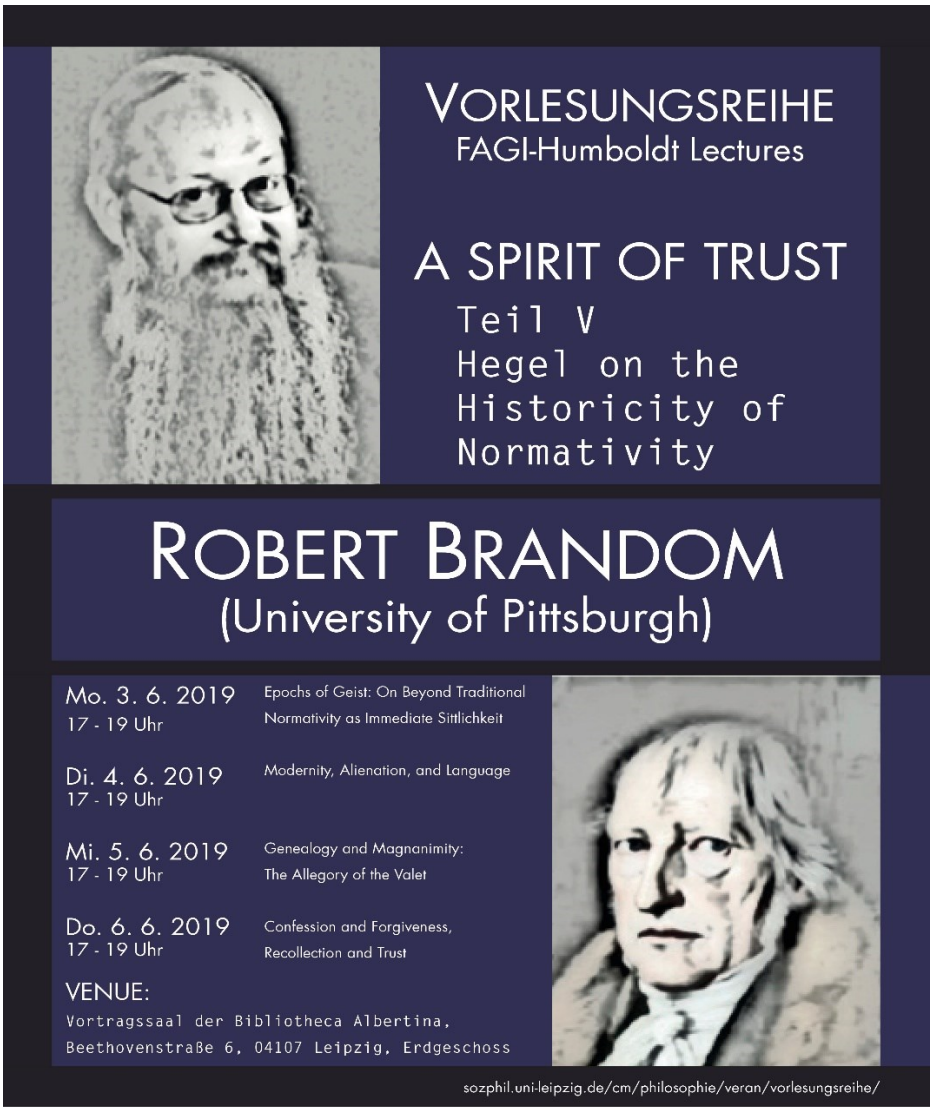
Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity

Lecture 15: Epochs of Geist: Traditional Normativity as Immediate *Sittlichkeit*

Lecture 16: Modernity, Alienation, and Language

Lecture 17: Genealogy and Magnanimity: The Allegory of the Valet

Lecture 18: Confession and Forgiveness, Recollection and Trust



Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**
Handout for Lecture 15

Epochs of *Geist*:
Traditional Normativity as Immediate *Sittlichkeit*

"Geist" is Hegel's collective term for everything that has a *history* rather than a *nature*—or, put otherwise, everything whose nature is essentially historical. *Geist* is all of our properties, doings, and institutions, specified in a suitable *normative* vocabulary. *Geist* as a whole has a history, and it is Hegel's view that, in an important sense, that history boils down to one grand event. That event—the *only* thing that has ever really happened to *Geist*—is its structural transformation from a traditional to a modern form.

"The history of *Geist* is its own act. *Geist* is only what it does, and its act is to make itself the object of its own consciousness. In history its act is to gain consciousness of itself as *Geist,* to apprehend itself in its interpretation of itself to itself. This apprehension is its being and its principle, and the completion of apprehension at one stage is at the same time the rejection of that stage and its transition to a higher. To use abstract phraseology, the *Geist* apprehending this apprehension anew, or in other words returning to itself again out of its rejection of this lower stage of apprehension, is the *Geist* of the stage higher than that on which it stood in its earlier apprehension." [*RP* §343]

Question: What exactly is it that traditional forms of life got wrong about us that modern forms of life get right? What have we gained? What is it that we have learned and incorporated into our practices and institutions that makes us *modern* selves? What is the "rise of subjectivity"?

Stage One: *Sittlichkeit,* no modern subjectivity;
Stage Two: Alienation, modern subjectivity;
Stage Three: *Sittlichkeit* (in a new form, compatible with subjectivity), modern subjectivity (in a new, *sittlich* form).

Sittlichkeit requires that practitioners identify with the norms that govern their practices. Hegelian identification is risk and sacrifice. One identifies with what one is willing to sacrifice for. *Sittlich* identification is willingness to risk and sacrifice for the norms, for what is really fitting, appropriate, or correct, for what one is in fact obliged or committed to do (normative statuses).

"This ruin of the ethical [sittlichen] Substance and its passage into another form is thus determined by the fact that the ethical consciousness is directed on to the law in a way that is essentially immediate. This determination of immediacy means that Nature as such enters into the ethical act, the reality of which simply reveals the contradiction and the germ of

destruction inherent in the beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium of the ethical Spirit itself." [*PG* 476]

"…unalienated spirits transparent to themselves, stainless celestial figures that preserve in all their differences the undefiled innocence and harmony of their essential nature. The relationship of self-consciousness to them is equally simple and clear. They are, and nothing more; this is what constitutes the awareness of its relationship to them." [*PG* 437]

> "They are not of yesterday or today, but everlasting, / Though where they came from, none of us can tell.

They are. If I inquire after their origin and confine them to the point whence they arose, then I have transcended them; for now it is I who am the universal, and they are the conditioned and limited. If they are supposed to be validated by my insight, then I have already denied their unshakeable, intrinsic being, and regard them as something which, for me, is perhaps true, but also is perhaps not true. Ethical disposition consists just in sticking steadfastly to what is right, and abstaining from all attempts to move or shake it, or derive it." [*PG* 437]

"However, although the Family is immediately determined as an ethical being, it is within itself an ethical entity only so far as it is not the natural relationship of its members . . . this natural relationship is just as much a spiritual one, and it is only as a spiritual entity that it is ethical. . . . [T]he ethical principle must be placed in the relation of the individual member of the Family to the whole Family as the Substance." [*PG* 452]

"Death . . . is a state which has been reached immediately, in the course of Nature, not the result of an action consciously done. The duty of the member of a Family is on that account to add this aspect, in order that the individual's ultimate being, too, shall not belong solely to Nature and remain something irrational, but shall be something done, and the right of consciousness be asserted in it." [*PG* 452]

"…keeps away from the dead this dishonouring of him by unconscious appetites and abstract entities, and puts its own action in their place. . . . The Family thereby makes him a member of a community which prevails over and holds under control the forces of particular material elements and the lower forms of life, which sought to unloose themselves against him and to destroy him." [*PG* 452]

"Because, on the one hand, the ethical order essentially consists in this immediate firmness of decision, and for that reason there is for consciousness essentially only one law, while, on the other hand, the ethical powers are real and effective in the self of consciousness, these powers acquire the significance of excluding and opposing one another. . . . The ethical consciousness, because it is decisively for one of the two powers, is essentially character; it does not accept that both have the same essential nature. For this reason, the opposition between them appears as an unfortunate collision of duty merely with a reality which possesses no rights of its own. . . . Since it sees right only on one side and wrong on the other, that consciousness which belongs to the divine law sees in the other side only the violence of human caprice, while that which holds to human law sees in the other only the

self-will and disobedience of the individual who insists on being his own authority." [*PG* 466]

"[T]he two sexes overcome their [merely] natural being and appear in their ethical significance, as diverse beings who share between them the two distinctions belonging to the ethical substance. These two universal beings of the ethical world have, therefore, their specific individuality in naturally distinct self-consciousnesses, because the ethical Spirit is the immediate unity of the substance with self-consciousness—an immediacy which appears, therefore, both from the side of reality and of difference, as the existence of a natural difference. . . . It is now the specific antithesis of the two sexes whose natural existence acquires at the same time the significance of their ethical determination." [*PG* 459]

"Human law in its universal existence is the community, in its activity in general is the manhood of the community, in its real and effective activity is the government. It is, moves, and maintains itself by consuming and absorbing into itself . . . the separation into independent families presided over by womankind. . . . But the Family is, at the same time, in general its element, the individual consciousness the basis of its general activity. Since the community only gets an existence through its interference with the happiness of the Family, and by dissolving [individual] self-consciousness into the universal, it creates for itself in what it suppresses and what is at the same time essential to it an internal enemy—womankind in general. Womankind—the everlasting irony [in the life] of the community." [*PG* 475]

"The wrong which can be inflicted on an individual in the ethical realm is simply this, that something merely happens to him . . . the consciousness of [those who share] the blood of the individual repair this wrong in such a way that what has simply happened becomes rather a work deliberately done." [*PG* 462]

"[S]elf-consciousness . . . learns through its own act the contradiction of those powers into which the substance divided itself and their mutual downfall, as well as the contradiction between its knowledge of the ethical character of its action, and what is in its own proper nature ethical, and thus finds its own downfall. In point of fact, however, the ethical substance has developed through this process into actual self-consciousness; in other words, this particular self has become the actuality of what it is in essence; but precisely in this development the ethical order has been destroyed." [*PG* 445]

"ethical realm . . . self-consciousness has not yet received its due as a particular individuality. There it has the value, on the one hand, merely of the universal will, and on the other, of consanguinity. This particular individual counts only as a shadowy unreality." [*PG* 464]

"The ethical Substance . . . preserved [its simple unitary] consciousness in an immediate unity with its essence. Essence has, therefore, the simple determinateness of mere being for consciousness, which is directed *immediately* upon it, and is the essence in the form of *custom* [Sitte]. Consciousness neither thinks of itself as this *particular exclusive self,* nor has substance the significance of an existence excluded from it, with which it would have to become united only by alienating itself from itself and at the same time producing the substance itself." [*PG* 484]

"Essence" [Wesen] here means the norms implicit in the customary practices of the traditional community ("substance").
"This substance is equally the universal *work* produced by the action of all and each as their unity and identity, for it is the *being-for-self,* self, action." [*PG* 439]
"…[a]s yet, no deed has been committed; but the deed is the actual self. It disturbs the peaceful organization and movement of the ethical world. . . . It becomes the negative movement, or the eternal necessity, of a dreadful fate which engulfs in the abyss of its single nature divine and human law alike, as well as the two self-consciousnesses in which these powers have their existence—and for us passes over into the absolute being-for-self of the purely individual self-consciousness." [*PG* 464]
"Guilt is not an indifferent, ambiguous affair, as if the deed as actually seen in the light of day could, or perhaps could not, be the action of the self, as if with the doing of it there could be linked something external and accidental that did not belong to it, from which aspect, therefore, the action would be innocent." [*PG* 468]
"Ethical self-consciousness now learns from its deed the developed nature of what it *actually* did. . . . The resolve [Entschluß], however, is *in itself* the negative aspect which confronts the resolve with an "other," something alien to the resolve which knows what it does. Actuality therefore holds concealed within it the other aspect which is alien to this knowledge, and does not reveal the whole truth about itself to consciousness: the son does not recognize his father in the man who has wronged him and whom he slays, nor his mother in the queen whom he makes his wife. In this way, a power which shuns the light of day ensnares the ethical consciousness, a power which breaks forth only after the deed is done, and seizes the doer in the act. For the accomplished deed is the removal of the antithesis between the knowing self and the actuality confronting it." [*PG* 469]
"Its absolute right is, therefore, that when it acts in accordance with ethical law, it shall find in this actualization nothing else but the fulfillment of this law itself, and the deed shall manifest only ethical action. . . .

The absolute right of the ethical consciousness is that the deed, the *shape* in which it *actualizes* itself, shall be nothing else than what it *knows.*" [*PG* 467]
The characteristically modern insight is that norms are not, as traditional forms of life implicitly took them to be, independent of the subjective normative attitudes of concept users. Alienation is the structural denial that subjective attitudes are responsible to norms which, as authoritative count as independent of those attitudes. The claim is that traditional and modern practical understandings are alike in taking it that if norms exert authority over attitudes, then attitudes cannot exert authority over norms, and *vice versa.* Either norms are independent of attitudes and attitudes dependent on norms, or attitudes are independent of norms and norms are dependent on attitudes.

"It is . . . through culture that the individual acquires standing [Gelten] and actuality. His true original nature and substance is the alienation of himself as Spirit from his natural being. This externalization is . . . at once the means, or the transition, both of the [mere] thought-

form of substance into actuality, and, conversely, of the specific individuality into essentiality. This individuality moulds itself by culture into what it intrinsically [an sich] is . . . its actuality consists solely in the setting-aside of its natural self. . . . [I]t is the contradiction of giving to what is particular an actuality which is immediately a universal." [*PG* 489]

"What, in relation to the single individual, appears as his culture, is the essential moment of the substance itself, viz. the immediate passage of the [mere] thought-form of its universality into actuality; or, culture is the simple soul of the substance by means of which, what is implicit in the substance, acquires an acknowledged, real existence. The process in which the individuality moulds itself by culture is, therefore, at the same time the development of it as the universal, objective essence, i.e. the development of the actual world." [*PG* 490]

"What appears here as the power and authority of the individual exercised over the substance, which is thereby superseded, is the same thing as the actualization of the substance. For the power of the individual consists in conforming itself to that substance, i.e. in externalizing its own self and thus establishing itself as substance that has an objective existence. Its culture and its own actuality are, therefore, the actualization of the substance itself." [*PG* 490]

Alienation is the inability to bring together these two aspects of *Bildung:* that self-conscious individuals acknowledging the norms as binding in their practice is what makes those selves what they are, and that self-conscious individuals acknowledging the norms as binding is what makes the norms what they are. These are the authority of the community and its norms over individuals (their dependence on it), and the authority of individuals over the community and its norms (its dependence on them), respectively.

Hegel's account of the nature of the expressively progressive development he can envisage by which the modern alienated structure of self-conscious subjectivity and social substance can give rise to a new, better structure, which overcomes alienation, and so reachieves *Sittlichkeit,* while retaining the advance in self-conscious subjectivity characteristic of modernity encompasses a nonreductive account of how we should understand the place of norms in the natural world.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**

Lecture 15

Epochs of *Geist*: Traditional Normativity as Immediate *Sittlichkeit*

I. Epochs of *Geist*

Philosophers such as Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, and Kant helped give theoretical shape to new attitudes toward the nature and significance of subjectivity that can, in retrospect, be seen to be characteristically *modern.* But Hegel was the first major philosopher to take the advent of modernity as an explicit theoretical *topic.*[321] Indeed, as the chapter on *Spirit* makes clear, in an important sense that is *the* topic of the *Phenomenology.* The principal aim of the book is to articulate, work out, and apply a way of understanding the transition from premodern to modern social practices, institutions, selves, and their immanent forms of understanding. "Geist" is Hegel's collective term for everything that has a *history* rather than a *nature*—or, put otherwise, everything whose nature is essentially historical. *Geist* is all of our properties, doings, and institutions, specified in a suitable *normative* vocabulary. *Geist* as a whole has a history, and it is Hegel's view that, in an important sense, that history boils down to one grand event. That event—the *only* thing that has ever really happened to *Geist*—is its structural transformation from a traditional to a modern form.[322] The advent of modernity in this sense is not just an intellectual matter—not just the Enlightenment or the scientific revolution. Hegel was the first to see its economic, political, and social manifestations as all of a piece with those theoretical advances.

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[321] Robert Pippin has argued this at length in *Idealism as Modernism: Hegelian Variations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[322] This is an oversimplification. In many places Hegel attributes more gross structure to history. For instance, in the *Philosophy of Right* (§§353–360) he identifies *four* stages in world history, putting the Oriental before the Greek, and interposing the Roman between the Greek and the modern (Nordic or German). I think there is a point to his practice in the *Phenomenology* of ignoring the first and treating the Roman as part of the extended transition to modernity.

Hegel offers us a vocabulary in which to understand that titanic transformation, and the new kind of selfhood it brings with it. For coming to understand the transition to modernity is the achievement of a distinctive kind of self-consciousness: historical self-consciousness. *Geistig,* normative beings are to be understood in terms of their becoming: their present in terms of their past, their states and normative statuses in terms of the processes that produced them. By reading the *Phenomenology* we are to become *self-consciously* modern, conscious of ourselves *as* the products of an unprecedented revolution in human institutions and consciousness.

The ultimate point of this theoretical, historical, recollective enterprise is practical, prospective, and progressive. For rational reconstruction of the process of self-formation so as to exhibit it as expressively progressive is for Hegel the engine of self-development. Achieving an explicit historical understanding of the genesis of one's current stage is how one moves to the next stage.

> The history of *Geist* is its own act. *Geist* is only what it does, and its act is to make itself the object of its own consciousness. In history its act is to gain consciousness of itself as *Geist,* to apprehend itself in its interpretation of itself to itself. This apprehension is its being and its principle, and the completion of apprehension at one stage is at the same time the rejection of that stage and its transition to a higher. To use abstract phraseology, the *Geist* apprehending this apprehension anew, or in other words returning to itself again out of its rejection of this lower stage of apprehension, is the *Geist* of the stage higher than that on which it stood in its earlier apprehension. [*PR* §343]

Hegel's claim is that making explicit what is implicit in the vast sea change *Geist* has undergone in becoming modern shows that the same normative forces that brought forth that change make appropriate and necessary another one, no less sweeping and significant than the first. Properly understood, modernity becomes visible as a way station rather than a destination. It constitutes only the middle, interim phase of a *three*-stage process. Hegel is the prophet of a second large-scale structural transformation of *Geist,* of its passage beyond modernity into a radically new form: a new beginning, the birth of a new world. The principal positive practical lesson of Hegel's analysis of the nature of modernity, the fruit of his understanding of the One Great Event in human history, is that if we properly digest the achievements and failures of modernity, we

can build on them new, better kinds of institutions, practices, and self-conscious selves—ones that are normatively superior because they embody a greater self-consciousness, a deeper understanding of the kind of being we are.

Hegel understands modernity in terms of the rise of self-conscious subjectivity of the kind his philosophical predecessors had theorized about. His social recognitive theory of self-consciousness—of the intersubjective structure of subjectivity—means that he understands the achievement of that new sort of subjectivity as part of a more wide-ranging process than the earlier modern philosophers had considered, one that necessarily encompasses also fundamental transformations of social practices and institutions. But his thought nonetheless self-consciously develops the modern philosophical tradition stretching from Descartes to Kant. At the core of the distinctively modern attitude toward subjectivity to which they gave explicit philosophical expression, Hegel sees a genuine insight. He takes it that modernity is the theoretical and practical elaboration of a *better* understanding of some fundamental aspects of the rational (because conceptually articulated) norm-governed activity in virtue of which we are the kind of creatures we are. So the first big question about the *Spirit* chapter of the *Phenomenology* is how we should understand that crucial, orienting insight of modernity:

Question One: What exactly is it that traditional forms of life got wrong about us that modern forms of life get right? What have we gained? What is it that we have learned and incorporated into our practices and institutions that makes us *modern* selves? What is the "rise of subjectivity"?

Hegel accepts Kant's trope in "What Is Enlightenment?": the transition to modernity is the passage of humanity from the "self-imposed tutelage" of its childhood into the grappling with responsibility that is its adolescence. But he is concerned to envisage the maturity that lies beyond that adolescence. He generates these three stages conceptually by construing them as different combinations of two basic elements. While Hegel does think that the transition from traditional to modern culture was expressively progressive—that it essentially involves the becoming explicit of central features of ourselves and our practices and institutions that had previously remained implicit—he does not think that that progress was either complete or

unalloyed. Something crucial and important was also lost. His term for what traditional communities had that modern ones do not is "Sittlichkeit" (from *Sitte:* mores, ethos). (Miller translates "Sittlichkeit" as "ethical life," but for our purposes it is best left untranslated, to underline that it is a term of art in substantial need of interpretation.) The absence or opposite of *Sittlichkeit* is *alienation* ("Entfremdung"). Hegel is a romantic rationalist, who aims to synthesize Enlightenment cheerleading for modernity and Romantic critiques of it. Alienation is the master-concept articulating what Hegel thinks is right about those critiques. It is because the rise of modern subjectivity can be seen to have been accompanied by alienation that the possibility of a future third stage in the progressive development of Spirit—an advance beyond the modern—becomes visible. That notional third stage would preserve the modern appreciation of the significance of subjectivity, while reachieving *Sittlichkeit.*

So the picture is like this:

Stage One: *Sittlichkeit,* no modern subjectivity;

Stage Two: Alienation, modern subjectivity;

Stage Three: *Sittlichkeit* (in a new form, compatible with subjectivity), modern subjectivity (in a new, *sittlich* form).

As he is writing the *Phenomenology,* Hegel sees *Geist* as beginning to consolidate itself at Stage Two. The book is intended to make possible for its readers the postmodern form of self-consciousness Hegel calls "Absolute Knowing," and thereby to begin to usher in Stage Three. The new form of explicit philosophical self-consciousness is only the beginning of the process, because new practices and institutions will also be required to overcome the structural alienation of modern life.

These schematic presentations of the developmental stages of *Geist* indicate that the further large questions about *Spirit* that must be addressed are the following:

Question Two: What is premodern *Sittlichkeit?*

Question Three: What is modern alienation?

Question Four: Why did the advent of modern subjectivity bring with it alienation—that is, why did these two structures arise together?

What is *Sittlichkeit?* I have suggested that "alienated" just means "not *sittlich*." In contemporary usage, the term "alienation" is usually applied to psychological attitudes of individuals. Though this usage derives from Hegel's, it is extremely misleading to read it back into his view. Attitudes are indeed part of what is at issue for him, but *Sittlichkeit* and (so) alienation are in the first instance metaphysical structures of normativity—structures of the whole, *Geist,* which comprises communities and their practices and institutions, as well as individuals and their actions and attitudes. *Sittlichkeit* is a kind of normativity. Attitudes are not all of it, and the attitudes that matter are *normative* attitudes, rather than psychological ones.

To begin with, we can think of the normativity in question in very general terms of proprieties or appropriatenesses, of the "fittingness" of things, of what is or is done being right or proper, being as it ought to be. This is a notion of normative status that is so far undifferentiated into ought-to-bes and ought-to-dos, which we saw in the previous chapter to be distinguished and related in intricate and important ways in Hegel's theory of action. *Sittlichkeit* is then a matter of the *bindingness* ("Gültigkeit") of norms. That is, it concerns the nature of their *force* or practical significance. The Hegelian image is that one is *at home* with *sittlich* norms, one *identifies with* them. They are the medium in which one lives and moves and has one's being. Ultimately, this is a matter of them being a medium of self-*expression*—understood as *constitutive* self-expression. That is the practice of making explicit what can then recollectively be seen to have been implicit. It is the process of subjectivity: self-*formation* by self-*expression.*

Sittlichkeit is a matter of the kind of *authority* that *norms* (normative statuses) have over normative *attitudes.* The attitudes in question are *practical* attitudes: taking or treating something *as* appropriate, fitting, or correct, as obligatory or permitted—that is, as having some normative status—in individual, institutional, or communal practice. They are practical attitudes toward *normative* statuses: what *is* rather than what is *taken to be* correct or appropriate, what *has* authority (what one *is* responsible to), as opposed to what is merely *treated as* authoritative (what one takes oneself to be responsible to). In this sense, *Sittlichkeit* is the authority of normative *statuses* over normative *attitudes.*

The norm-governedness of attitudes has two components: deontic normative and alethic modal. Norms (normative statuses, such as what one is really responsible for) provide standards for assessments of the correctness of attitudes. One ought to attribute and acknowledge just the commitments one actually has. The other element of normative government of attitudes by norms is that attitudes are to be subjunctively sensitive to the norms that govern them, in the sense that if the norm *were* (or *had been*) different, the attitudes *would be* (or *would have been*) different. So another important element of the authority-structure that is *Sittlichkeit* is that *sittlich* norms are and are taken to be actually efficacious. Their normative bindingness or authority over attitudes is actually and practically acknowledged. What is appropriate according to a practice (a normative status or norm) makes a real difference in what is actually done (the attitudes and performances of practitioners). Participants in a *sittlich* practice *acknowledge* and *act on* their acknowledgments of proprieties, responsibilities, commitments, and authority.

For *Sittlichkeit* is not just a matter of actually doing what one ought to do—in fact conforming to the governing norms. *Sittlichkeit* requires that practitioners identify with the norms that govern their practices. Hegelian identification is risk and sacrifice. One identifies with what one is willing to sacrifice for. *Sittlich* identification is accordingly willingness to risk and sacrifice for the norms, for what is really fitting, appropriate, or correct, for what one is in fact obliged or committed to do. What is it that is risked and sacrificed for the norms? It is the particular, contingent, subjective practical *attitudes* of practitioners. *Sittlichkeit* requires a particular kind of acknowledgment of the authority of the norms over the normative attitudes of practitioners: the willingness to sacrifice (and take it that others ought to sacrifice) attitudes and inclinations that are out of step with the norms. That is identifying with the norms. It is identifying with the norms, *rather than* one's own particular subjective attitudes—what one eternally risks and occasionally sacrifices *for* the norms. The participants in *sittlich* practices accordingly identify with something larger and more encompassing than just their own individual attitudes. They identify with the norms implicit in the practices they share.

The process of identifying with some *attitudes* at the expense of other attitudes is not restricted to *sittlich Geist.* It necessarily characterizes *all* concept use. For the adjudication of the claims of competing, because incompatible, commitments is the process of experience, in which

determinate conceptual contents are both applied and instituted. But at the metalevel, that process can show up practically in two different forms. It can be a matter of the acknowledgment of the authority of *norms*—what really follows from and is incompatible with what, what one is actually obliged or committed to do—over *attitudes.* Or it can be a matter *merely* of the collision of *attitudes,* where the norms the attitudes are attitudes *toward* are demoted to something like adverbial modifications of the attitudes. The former is a *sittlich,* the latter an alienated structure. Only attitudes, not genuine norms, are visible in alienated *Geist.*

To understand this requires looking more closely at what Hegel says about premodern *Sittlichkeit* and modern alienation. The ultimate goal of this diagnostic exercise, though, is a therapeutic one: to point the way forward from modernity to a future shape of *Geist* characterized by individually self-conscious *Sittlichkeit.* That third stage of the development of norm-governed social substance is to be the result of *retaining* the insight into the authority of subjectivity and the attitudes and activities of individual subjects, while overcoming alienation. Overcoming alienation would be *reachieving Sittlichkeit.* But *Sittlichkeit* requires identifying with the norms understood as transcending individual attitudes.

II. Immediate *Sittlichkeit*

Hegel's term for the normative structure of premodern Spirit is "*immediate* [unmittlebare] *Sittlichkeit.*" In keeping with the general procedure in the *Phenomenology,* his treatment of the topic is allegorical. This time—by contrast, for instance, to his discussion of the death struggle for mastery in *Self-Consciousness*—he explicitly reads the allegory for us himself. The allegory is the version of ancient Greek society portrayed in Sophocles's *Antigone.* At the end of his discussion, Hegel sums up the overall point of the allegory this way:

> This ruin of the ethical [sittlichen] Substance and its passage into another form is thus determined by the fact that the ethical consciousness is directed on to the law in a way that is essentially immediate. This determination of immediacy means that Nature as such enters into the ethical act, the reality of which simply reveals the contradiction and

> the germ of destruction inherent in the beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium of the ethical Spirit itself. [*PG* 476]

The "ruin" is the breakup of a premodern structure of normativity ("law"). It is the manifestation of the instability of practices that identify the *normative* with the *natural.* The practical view in question is one that looks for norms in the way things simply are, independently of any human activity. The fittingnesses of things—how things ought to be and what one ought to do—are thought of as objective, natural facts. This is the constitutive misunderstanding of the normative characteristic of *immediate Sittlichkeit.* The norms with which practitioners identify are thought of as brutely given facts about how things are. "What observation knew as a given object in which the self had no part, is here a given custom [Sitte]." [*PG* 461] The mediation that is denied by this practical conception of norms as *im*mediate is mediation by the *attitudes* of those who are bound by them.

Talking about this sensibility elsewhere in the book, Hegel says of the laws that they appear to immediate *Sittlichkeit* as

> unalienated spirits transparent to themselves, stainless celestial figures that preserve in all their differences the undefiled innocence and harmony of their essential nature. The relationship of self-consciousness to them is equally simple and clear. They are, and nothing more; this is what constitutes the awareness of its relationship to them. [*PG* 437]

Thus, Sophocles' Antigone acknowledges them as the unwritten and infallible law of the gods.

> They are not of yesterday or today, but everlasting, / Though where they came from, none of us can tell.
>
> They are. If I inquire after their origin and confine them to the point whence they arose, then I have transcended them; for now it is I who am the universal, and they are the conditioned and limited. If they are supposed to be validated by my insight, then I have already denied their unshakeable, intrinsic being, and regard them as something which, for me, is perhaps true, but also is perhaps not true. Ethical disposition consists just in

> sticking steadfastly to what is right, and abstaining from all attempts to move or shake it, or derive it. [*PG* 437][323]

Sittlich consciousness's relation to the norms is one of passive acknowledgment of their bindingness: obedience, and shame and guilt for disobedience (attributed and acknowledged, respectively). This subjection of subjective attitudes to objective norms is sacrifice of what is particular to what is universal, hence identification with that universal. This is "immediate . . . ethical consciousness which knows its duty and does it, and is bound up with it as its own nature." [*PG* 597]

What is wrong with the distinctively premodern metaphysics of normativity, which treats norms as a kind of fact, whose *authority* (*rational* authority, in the sense of settling what has the force of a *reason*) is *immediate,* in deriving from their simple *existence,* independently of human practices, attitudes, acknowledgment, or interpretation? *We* can see that the mistake lies in implicitly modeling the *normative products* of social practices of *recognition* on the *natural objects* of *cognition.* But how does this mistake show up practically for the practitioners themselves, for the members of communities whose norms are practically construed as objective and immediately *sittlich?* What is "the contradiction and the germ of destruction inherent in the beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium of the ethical Spirit itself"? The answer is clearest if we think about what Hegel takes to be the correct metaphysics of normativity. On the side of the *force* of norms, normative bindingness or validity is intelligible only in the context of a recognitive community, in which the attitudes of recognizing and being recognized, claiming authority and undertaking responsibility oneself and attributing those statuses to others, play an essential role. On the side of *content,* norms are intelligible as determinately contentful only in virtue of their being caught up in practices of adjudicating the competing claims of materially

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[323] The Antigone passage is from lines 454–457, *Sophocles I* [University of Chicago Press, 1954], David Grene, Elizabeth Wycoff, which Elizabeth Wycoff renders as

> the gods' unwritten and unfailing laws.
> Not now, nor yesterday's, they always live,
> and no one knows their origin in time.

Hegel mentions this passage again in *PR* 144Hin the third paragraph of his introduction to *Sittlichkeit:* "Antigone proclaims that no-one knows where the laws come from: they are eternal. That is, their determination has being in and for itself and issues from the nature of the thing [Sache]."

incompatible commitments and entitlements. By denying these basic features of its own implicit norms, immediate *Sittlichkeit* condemns itself to practical self-contradiction.

To begin with, the "beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium of the ethical Spirit" is a recognitive achievement. It is a reflection of a community—the *polis*—instituted, maintained, and structured by *mutual,* reciprocal recognition.[324] (Of course, there are also asymmetrical recognitive relations in play, literally between masters and slaves, but they are orthogonal to the ones that matter for the allegorical point Hegel is after in this discussion.) That recognitive structure involves two normative poles of potentially competing authority: the universal, or recognitive community, and the particulars whose recognitive attitudes institute it. Individuals—that is, particulars *as* falling under the universal, as members of the recognitive community—both exercise authority and acknowledge the authority of others, both undertake and attribute responsibilities. Practically reifying and objectifying normative proprieties as natural properties *presupposes* a preestablished "harmony and equilibrium" among them, because any conflicts there were among them would be irresolvable by individuals. But formal reciprocity of recognition does not *guarantee* and cannot *establish* such a system of norms. For the determinate contentfulness of conceptual (reason-articulating) norms depends on incorporating matter-of-factual contingency in the form of normative necessity: acknowledging the authority of particulars over universals, as well as the converse. Friction, individuals finding themselves subject to the competing demands of materially incompatible norms, is both the price of determinateness of normative content and an inevitable consequence of "the distinction that action (and consciousness) involve."

In the *polis* Hegel describes, the reciprocally recognizing particulars who institute the community are not individual humans, but *families.* The *polis* and the family are accordingly the two normative centers from which potentially conflicting demands can issue, addressed to the self-conscious individual agents who must actualize the norms by applying them in particular,

[324] Does Hegel think that all premodern societies are characterized by reciprocal recognition? Not at all—as his remarks elsewhere about traditional Indian and Chinese societies show. Thus at the end of the *Philosophy of Right* he puts "Oriental world-historical realm," which "originates in the natural whole of patriarchal society," as a stage more primitive than the epoch epitomized by the Greeks. But he *does* seem to think that the sort of incompatible norms whose practical obtrusiveness triggers the transition to modernity arise only in this sort of recognitive context.

contingent circumstances. The family is in one sense a natural, hence immediate, biological unit, held together by bonds of sexual desire and reproduction.[325] But as a *normative* locus, it, too, is a *recognitive* community—albeit one with asymmetrical relations, at least between parents and children, and traditionally, also between the husband and wife.

> However, although the Family is immediately determined as an ethical being, it is within itself an ethical entity only so far as it is not the natural relationship of its members . . . this natural relationship is just as much a spiritual one, and it is only as a spiritual entity that it is ethical. . . . [T]he ethical principle must be placed in the relation of the individual member of the Family to the whole Family as the Substance. [*PG* 452]

Sophocles' *Antigone* is the perfect allegory for Hegel to use to exhibit "the little rift within the lute / That bye and bye shall make the music mute / And, ever-widening, slowly silence all," in premodern (immediate) *Sittlichkeit,* because its conflict turns on the collision of the *recognitive* demands of family and *polis.* The dispute is over the recognitive status of an individual who belongs to both communities, who has rights and owes duties to both normative institutions.

In the allegory, the concrete, practical bearer of recognitive significance—the practical attitude-expressing performance constitutive of community membership—is the act of *burial.* It is a paradigm of how the acts and attitudes of individuals *do* matter for normative statuses, which must go beyond what is merely found in nature. For this sort of recognitive performance *gives* a normative significance to a natural occurrence. The normative status is *conferred,* not just *found.* The significance of burial is to turn something that otherwise merely *happens* into something *done.*

> Death . . . is a state which has been reached immediately, in the course of Nature, not the result of an action consciously done. The duty of the member of a Family is on that account to add this aspect, in order that the individual's ultimate being, too, shall not belong solely to Nature and remain something irrational, but shall be something done, and the right of consciousness be asserted in it. [*PG* 452]

Burial constitutively recognizes someone as not merely a dead animal, but as a member of the community—a member with a particular status: a *dead* member of the community, an honored

[325] "A *natural* ethical community—this is the Family." [*PG* 450]

ancestor. “Even the departed spirit is present in his blood-relationship, in the self of the family.” [*PG* 486] The family “interrupts the work of Nature,” it

> keeps away from the dead this dishonouring of him by unconscious appetites and abstract entities, and puts its own action in their place. . . . The Family thereby makes him a member of a community which prevails over and holds under control the forces of particular material elements and the lower forms of life, which sought to unloose themselves against him and to destroy him. [*PG* 452]

Burial “makes him a member of a community”; it is recognition.

It is this recognitive deed that is at issue between Creon and Antigone. The laws of the *polis* demand that her brother not be acknowledged as anything more than a dead animal, and the laws of the family demand that recognition. The normative institutions actualizing the two recognitive moments of the community (universal and particular) clash over the propriety of adopting a recognitive attitude, of performing a recognitive deed. Because it is individuals who must act, these conflicting demands fall on individuals representing the two institutional recognitive moments. Because the norms in question are immediately *sittlich,* the two figures identify themselves with (are willing to sacrifice for) one set of those norms—one issuing in a demand not to recognize by burial, the other in a demand for such normative constitution. The immediacy of the *sittlich* norms means that this conflict cannot be avoided, adjudicated, or resolved.

> Because, on the one hand, the ethical order essentially consists in this immediate firmness of decision, and for that reason there is for consciousness essentially only one law, while, on the other hand, the ethical powers are real and effective in the self of consciousness, these powers acquire the significance of excluding and opposing one another. . . . The ethical consciousness, because it is decisively for one of the two powers, is essentially character; it does not accept that both have the same essential nature. For this reason, the opposition between them appears as an unfortunate collision of duty merely with a reality which possesses no rights of its own. . . . Since it sees right only on one side and wrong on the other, that consciousness which belongs to the divine law sees in the other side only the violence of human caprice, while that which holds to

> human law sees in the other only the self-will and disobedience of the individual who insists on being his own authority. [*PG* 466]

Neither of the *sittlich characters*—avatars decisively identifying with and acting for one institutional aspect of the normative community[326]—is subject to conflicting demands. But the audience sees the structural conflict of incompatible laws. And we see that the contradiction or collision between the family and the polis stands for a collision between the authority of the recognizing parties (particulars) and the recognitive community (universal), respectively. These are not merely contingent normative institutions, but necessary and essential structural dimensions of the recognitive context in which any norms can be discerned.

Antigone and Creon identify with and speak for different aspects of the recognitive community. Neither distinguishes between the attitudes they evince and express and the norms they identify with. Neither takes her- or himself to be *settling* what is right. Each is only practically *acknowledging* what is objectively right, independently of those attitudes. The other's stubborn refusal to acknowledge what is objectively right cannot be seen by them as a *normative* attitude at all. The other's attitude shows up rather as the expression of merely subjective, contingent particularity. The intransigence of the dispute is thus a consequence of the *immediacy* of the *sittlich* practical attitudes: treating norms as objective matters of fact, whose normative force owes nothing to the attitudes of those who are by their nature bound by those norms.

The immediacy that is the fatal structural flaw in premodern *Sittlichkeit* is a running together of the normative and the natural. On the one hand, this means that normative proprieties are treated as natural properties: as simply there, part of the furniture of the world, independently of the human practices they govern. On the other hand, it means that merely natural properties are treated as having intrinsic normative significance. To say that the normative significance of some natural properties is "intrinsic" is to deny that it is in any way attitude-dependent. The paradigm to which Hegel appeals to make this point is the way natural differences of biological gender are taken objectively to determine fundamental normative roles. Specifically, which

[326] "[*C*]*haracter* . . . that ethical consciousness . . . which, on account of its immediacy, is a specifically determined Spirit, belongs only to one of the ethical essentialities." [*PG* 597]

recognitive aspect of the community one decisively is identified with, and hence what *sittlich* character one is (not "has") is taken to be settled by nature.

> Women are the agents of the private family, men of the public political community. [T]he two sexes overcome their [merely] natural being and appear in their ethical significance, as diverse beings who share between them the two distinctions belonging to the ethical substance. These two universal beings of the ethical world have, therefore, their specific individuality in naturally distinct self-consciousnesses, because the ethical Spirit is the immediate unity of the substance with self-consciousness—an immediacy which appears, therefore, both from the side of reality and of difference, as the existence of a natural difference. . . . It is now the specific antithesis of the two sexes whose natural existence acquires at the same time the significance of their ethical determination. [*PG* 459]

The problem is not that natural distinctions are *given* or taken to have normative significances, but that they are understood as already *having* those significances independently of the practices or attitudes of those for whom they are normatively significant. "Nature, not the accident of circumstances or choice, assigns one sex to one law, the other to the other law." [*PG* 465] These defining normative roles are accordingly not practically conceived as roles individuals can play, but simply as facts about them.

This is fetishizing the natural: seeing normative phenomena as merely natural ones, independent of the attitudes of those bound by the norms. There is accordingly a structural conflict built into "the beautiful harmony and tranquil equilibrium" of immediately *sittlich* Spirit. Commitment to different "laws" is understood as given as part of the nature of individuals, assigned by biological gender.

> Human law in its universal existence is the community, in its activity in general is the manhood of the community, in its real and effective activity is the government. It is, moves, and maintains itself by consuming and absorbing into itself . . . the separation into independent families presided over by womankind. . . . But the Family is, at the same time, in general its element, the individual consciousness the basis of its general

> activity. Since the community only gets an existence through its interference with the happiness of the Family, and by dissolving [individual] self-consciousness into the universal, it creates for itself in what it suppresses and what is at the same time essential to it an internal enemy—womankind in general. Womankind—the everlasting irony [in the life] of the community. [*PG* 475]

Hegel thinks that traditional society is distinguished by a one-sided objectivism about norms: taking it that natural distinctions immediately and intrinsically have normative significances. The decisive move to modernity will be acknowledging the significance of normative *attitudes* and *practices* in instituting norms and normative statuses. (The need to pass on beyond the modern arises because the initial form this insight takes is a one-sided subjectivism about norms.) The paradigm example he chooses to exemplify this claim about traditional misunderstandings of the significance of natural properties for normative proprieties is gender essentialism. In emphasizing that the core of modernity consists in a rejection and overcoming of the most basic presuppositions of this constellation of practical attitudes, Hegel deserves a place in the feminist pantheon.

The most basic structural conflict that Hegel's allegorical reading of *Antigone* uncovers, however, is not that between its protagonists, or what they represent—not between two laws, between *polis* and family, or between men and women. Those are real conflicts. But the more fundamental clash is at a higher level: between the *immediacy* of the construal of norms and the *constitutive* character of the recognition that is at issue between the two sides. It is the tension between the implicit understanding of normativity as immediate—as wholly natural and objective, independent of human practices and attitudes—on the one hand, and an equally implicit grasp of the significance of actual recognitive attitudes, performances, and practices for the institution of normative statuses, on the other. In the allegory, what Creon and Antigone are fighting about is officially understood by both to be a matter of objective fact, of how it is right and proper to treat the dead Polyneices, something that it is up to the various parties simply to *acknowledge.* But the stakes are so high—identification with the recognitive law of the family up to the point of sacrificing biological life, for Antigone—because both sides implicitly acknowledge that recognition-by-burial *confers* the normative status in question. If Polyneices remains unburied, he will *be* nothing but a dead animal, whereas burying him, even in secret, "*makes* him a member of the community," as Hegel says in the passage quoted earlier.

> The wrong which can be inflicted on an individual in the ethical realm is simply this, that something merely happens to him . . . the consciousness of [those who share] the blood of the individual repair this wrong in such a way that what has simply happened becomes rather a work deliberately done. [*PG* 462]

In recognition through burial, the family substitutes its action for the merely natural occurrence that is biological death. The family *gives* that natural event a normative significance, *takes* responsibility for it, *exercises* its recognitive authority. It thereby gives contingency the form of necessity—that is, a normative form. That constitutive recognitive act is not intelligible as the immediate acknowledgment of how things already objectively are. The attitude-dependence of normative statuses is implicitly being acknowledged.

The *polis* and the family *are* recognitive communities. *Sittlich* substance (Spirit) *is* synthesized by reciprocal recognition. Making explicit the commitments that are implicit in *sittlich* practices requires giving up the practical understanding of *Sittlichkeit* as immediate. One cannot properly understand normative statuses such as commitment, responsibility, authority, and correctness apart from their relation to normative attitudes: recognizing others by *taking* or *treating* them *as* committed, responsible, authoritative, as acting correctly or incorrectly. That practical realization is the motor of modernity.

> [S]elf-consciousness . . . learns through its own act the contradiction of those powers into which the substance divided itself and their mutual downfall, as well as the contradiction between its knowledge of the ethical character of its action, and what is in its own proper nature ethical, and thus finds its own downfall. In point of fact, however, the ethical substance has developed through this process into actual self-consciousness; in other words, this particular self has become the actuality of what it is in essence; but precisely in this development the ethical order has been destroyed. [*PG* 445]

Hegel is here talking about an expressively progressive transformation of Spirit: one that reveals something that was all along implicitly true. The claim is not that this transformation was inevitable. It is "necessary" only in the sense that it is necessary *if* what we are implicitly is to become explicit to us. And the transformation need not be *total.* Some individuals and institutions may retain traditional practical conceptions of self, agency, and community, even

while others take modern form. All of that is compatible with a decisive cognitive and practical breakthrough having been made.

III. The Rise of Subjectivity

In taking the advent of modernity as an explicit topic, Hegel inaugurated a discussion that would shape the whole of nineteenth-century thought, defining the founding issue of what was to become the new discipline of sociology, providing focal ideas that would be developed in the work of such figures as Marx, Durkheim, Tönnies, and Weber. The slogan for his construal of that transition that Hegel offers in the passage just quoted is "the development of ethical substance into actual self-consciousness." Hegel understands modernity to begin with in terms of the rise of a new kind of individual, subjective self-consciousness. By contrast to the modern subject, in the

> ethical realm . . . self-consciousness has not yet received its due as a particular individuality. There it has the value, on the one hand, merely of the universal will, and on the other, of consanguinity. This particular individual counts only as a shadowy unreality. [*PG* 464]

In a sense, individual agents are dissolved into the social institutions to which they are understood to be assigned by nature, and with which they decisively identify. The individual person is a mere reflection of his status, and can understand himself as an agent only in terms of the duty of actualizing those implicit, objective norms.[327] The modern conception of an individual person as one who plays many roles and must make choices to adjudicate the many conflicts among them is not yet on the horizon.

> The ethical Substance . . . preserved [its simple unitary] consciousness in an immediate unity with its essence. Essence has, therefore, the simple determinateness of mere being for consciousness, which is directed *immediately* upon it, and is the essence in the form of *custom* [Sitte]. Consciousness neither thinks of itself as this *particular exclusive self,* nor has substance the significance of an existence excluded from it, with which it would

[327] F. H. Bradley summed up this view in the title of his essay "My Station and Its Duties," in his book *Ethical Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1876).

> have to become united only by alienating itself from itself and at the same time producing the substance itself. [*PG* 484]

"Essence" [Wesen] here means the norms implicit in the customary practices of the traditional community ("substance").

One point of contrast with the self-understanding of modern individual subjects is that immediately *sittlich* ones do not take themselves to be *producing* those institutions and their norms ("substance" and "essence") by their own activities. Spiritual substance is "the in-itself of every self-consciousness." So it is what is *found* as always already there, as "the unmoved solid ground and starting point for the action of all." But a crucial part of the founding insight of modernity is that it is also *made* by the individual self-consciousnesses that are the form of Spirit as it is *for* itself:

> This substance is equally the universal *work* produced by the action of all and each as their unity and identity, for it is the *being-for-self,* self, action. [*PG* 439]

Individuals in traditional society understand themselves as made by the norms they identify with by practically acknowledging the authority of those norms over particular attitudes and inclinations. But they treat the norms as found, rather than made. They do not see themselves as having any corresponding authority over the norms, which are treated just as part of the objectively given furniture of the world. They do not appreciate the contribution their own activity makes to instituting those norms. That appreciation—seeing "the trail of the human serpent over all," in William James's phrase—is distinctively modern.

Agency is what individuates, carving up the social substance into individual agents, as loci of responsibility. And it is in the practical conception of individual agency that we are to find the key to this historic sea change in the relations between acting subjects, the norms that lift them above the merely natural, and the practices and institutions in which those norms are implicit. In the traditional world as so far considered

> [a]s yet, no deed has been committed; but the deed is the actual self. It disturbs the peaceful organization and movement of the ethical world. . . . It becomes the negative movement, or the eternal necessity, of a dreadful fate which engulfs in the abyss of its single nature divine and human law alike, as well as the two self-consciousnesses in

> which these powers have their existence—and for us passes over into the absolute being-for-self of the purely individual self-consciousness. [*PG* 464]

Of course, premodern individuals performed intentional actions and pursued private ends. What is the difference in their relations to their doings that Hegel is referring to in these apocalyptic terms? It is a shift in the practical conception of the "distinction that action involves"—the distinction between what is in the broad sense done by the agent and what is more narrowly intended. This is the distinction between *Tat* (deed) and *Handlung,* and between *Absicht* and *Vorsatz.* We have seen that Hegel understands the premodern self as an expansive self, in that agents are characters, immediately identifying with the recognitive communities to which nature has assigned them, sacrificing their particular attitudes and inclinations for the norms implicit in their practices and institutions. "Ethical consciousness . . . is the simple, pure direction of activity towards the essentiality of ethical life, i.e. duty." [*PG* 465] But the traditional self is construed as an expansive self along another dimension as well. The premodern practical conception of agency is *heroic,* in that agents identify with what they have done in the broader sense, not the narrower—with the *Tat,* rather than just the *Handlung.* They acknowledge responsibility for what they have done under *all* the descriptions that turn out to be true of it, not just the ones they intended or envisaged.

Thus Oedipus *is* a parricide; he has committed that crime, even though he did not know that the man he killed in anger was his father. He takes responsibility for that deed, and others attribute to him responsibility for it. That he did not intend the deed under this description, and did not know that that is what he was doing, in no way mitigates his guilt. He is responsible for the deed under *all* its specifications, the consequential as well as the intentional.

> Guilt is not an indifferent, ambiguous affair, as if the deed as actually seen in the light of day could, or perhaps could not, be the action of the self, as if with the doing of it there could be linked something external and accidental that did not belong to it, from which aspect, therefore, the action would be innocent. [*PG* 468]

That what the agent does—what he is responsible for—outruns what he intends or can know is what makes this heroic conception of agency also *tragic.* Tragedy is just the way the distinction that action involves appears in the context of the heroic acceptance of responsibility for the whole deed.

> Ethical self-consciousness now learns from its deed the developed nature of what it *actually* did. . . . The resolve [Entschluß], however, is *in itself* the negative aspect which confronts the resolve with an "other," something alien to the resolve which knows what it does. Actuality therefore holds concealed within it the other aspect which is alien to this knowledge, and does not reveal the whole truth about itself to consciousness: the son does not recognize his father in the man who has wronged him and whom he slays, nor his mother in the queen whom he makes his wife. In this way, a power which shuns the light of day ensnares the ethical consciousness, a power which breaks forth only after the deed is done, and seizes the doer in the act. For the accomplished deed is the removal of the antithesis between the knowing self and the actuality confronting it. [*PG* 469]

(Because the resolve "knows what it does," it can be identified with the *Vorsatz.*) The tragic aspect of the heroic conception just is that one cannot know what one is doing, does not have the power to avoid crime and guilt, can know what one has made oneself responsible for only after the fact. In acting, one is exposing oneself to the forces of fate [Schicksal], over which the subject has no authority. "By the deed, therefore, it becomes guilt." [*PG* 468]

Immediate *Sittlichkeit* has shown up under two aspects. It involves individuals identifying with the norms implicit in the practices and institutions of a recognitive community, in the sense of being willing to risk and sacrifice their particular, contingent attitudes and inclinations to the dictates of those norms. This is what Hegel calls "character." Immediate *Sittlichkeit* also involves the heroic conception of agency. Individuals take responsibility for their deeds under every description: the unforeseen consequential ones as well as the acknowledged intentional ones. What is the connection between these two aspects of traditional *Geist?* The first concerns norms in the form of ought-to-bes; the second norms in the form of ought-to-dos. And it is of the essence of this form of life that the connection between them is practically construed as being *immediate.* That is, what one ought to *do* is understood as settled directly by how things ought to *be.* It is one's *sittlich* obligation to *do* what must *be.* That *duty* is independent of one's knowledge of how to bring about that state of affairs. That one does not know how to bring it about that one does not kill one's father does not let one off the hook. Parricide ought not to be. It is accordingly one's obligation not to do anything correctly describable as father killing. The

eruption of modernity begins when a gap emerges between these—when how things ought to be is not simply, directly, and immediately translatable into what one ought to do. The wedge that opens that gap is conditioning the connection on the attitudes of the subject—on what the agent knows and intends.

The essence of the modern is contained in what Hegel in the *Philosophy of Right* calls "the rights of intention and knowledge." This is the right to have one's responsibility apportioned to one's authority—to be held responsible only for what one does *intentionally* and *knowingly,* only for that part of the *Tat* that is the *Handlung.* This right is the right of the individual consciousness. It always implicitly collided with the *sittlich* structure of norms:

> Its absolute right is, therefore, that when it acts in accordance with ethical law, it shall find in this actualization nothing else but the fulfillment of this law itself, and the deed shall manifest only ethical action. . . .
>
> The absolute right of the ethical consciousness is that the deed, the *shape* in which it *actualizes* itself, shall be nothing else than what it *knows.* [*PG* 467]

Explicitly acknowledging that right of individual consciousness is making the transition from the traditional heroic, and therefore tragic, practical conception of agency to the modern, subjective one. On the modern conception, the tragic structure of guilt and fate is seen as *unjust.*

Responsibility and authority must be reciprocal and coordinate. The two sides of the traditional conception of agency appear from this point of view to be out of balance. The heroic aspect is that one takes responsibility for the whole deed, the *Tat*. The tragic side is that one actually has authority only over what one intends and can foresee, the *Handlung.* The responsibility and the authority are not commensurate. Only individual self-consciousnesses can *apply* the norms in concrete situations, and so actualize them. The modern conception of agency accordingly treats subjectivity as sovereign, in that one's normative *status,* what one is committed to or responsible for, is determined by one's normative *attitudes,* what one *acknowledges* as a commitment or responsibility. The expansive heroic conception of agency is contracted. Responsibility extends only as far as the specifications under which the doing was intentional—the ones in virtue of which it was a doing at all—and not to all the consequential specifications. This is the rise of subjectivity.

On the side of normative force, Hegel sees the revolution of modernity as culminating in what I have called the "Kant-Rousseau criterion of demarcation of the normative." This is the thought that what distinguishes constraint by norms from nonnormative constraint (for instance, by causes in nature or coercion by power) is that one is genuinely responsible only to what one *acknowledges as* authoritative. One's normative status as committed or obliged depends upon one's normative attitude of having undertaken or acknowledged that commitment or obligation (perhaps not explicitly, but at least implicitly). The Enlightenment theories of political obligation in terms of implicit social contracts that inspired Rousseau are only one expression of this conditioning of normative statuses on normative attitudes. Kant's distinguishing of the realm of nature from the realm of freedom—constraint by nature from constraint by norms—in terms of the contrast between being bound by rules or laws and being bound by *conceptions* of rules or laws already substantially generalizes the conception.

IV. Alienation and Culture

What I have been calling "the rise of subjectivity" is a new appreciation of the significance of normative attitudes—of undertaking and attributing commitments, acknowledging authority and responsibility. Alienation is not identifying with those normative statuses, not acknowledging the authority of norms over one's attitudes by being willing to sacrifice attitudes for norms. On the practical conception distinctive of alienation, what one gives up some attitudes for can be only other attitudes. The attitudes are not understood as answering to something that is not a subjective attitude. One question I asked at the outset is: "Why did the advent of modern subjectivity bring with it alienation?" The answer is that where the immediate *Sittlichkeit* Hegel takes to characterize traditional society practically construes the implicit normative structure of its practices in a one-sidedly objective way, the alienation he takes to characterize modern society practically construes the implicit normative structure of its practices in a one-sidedly subjective way. First, subjective attitudes are understood as merely reflecting objective norms, and then norms are understood as merely reflecting subjective attitudes.

What makes both traditional and modern forms of normativity one-sided, and so ultimately inadequate, is in both cases the *immediacy* of their practical conceptions. More specifically, to use one of Hegel's favorite ways of putting the point, both understand normativity in terms of *independence,* rather than *freedom.* As I understand him, Hegel uses "independence" [Unabhängigkeit] in two different ways, depending on whether its contextual contrary is "dependence" or "freedom." In the first usage, what is independent exercises *authority* over what is dependent upon it, which is accordingly *responsible* to it. The second usage concerns a particular, defective, way of understanding those generic notions of independence and dependence, authority and responsibility. This is the conception allegorized as Mastery: *pure* independence, authority without correlative responsibility. It is an atomistic and immediate conception, by contrast to the holistic, mediated conception of freedom in which authority and responsibility, and status and attitude are practically understood in their necessary interrelations. This is the sense in which the narrative of recollection Hegel offers us is the "history of the progress of the consciousness of freedom."

Hegel introduces the sense of "independence" that contrasts with freedom under the heading of "Mastery." The allegorical Master's conception of authority is that it is incompatible with any and every sort of dependence, rather than being the converse of just some particular kind of dependence. The authority of the Master is to be recognized as immediate, independent of all relations to others. In particular, it is to be independent of the attitudes of those who recognize and are obliged to recognize him—those who acknowledge and are obliged to acknowledge that authority. So the Master construes recognition as necessarily asymmetrical. He cannot acknowledge the authority of those who recognize him, the dependence of his authority on their recognition of it, the sense in which he is responsible to others. The correct understanding of normative statuses as instituted by reciprocal recognitive attitudes is the conception of freedom that contrasts with the Master's notion of pure independence. Like the corresponding conception of the Concept as infinite, this notion of freedom essentially involves moments of independence in the first sense: the reciprocal authority of recognized and recognizer.

The characteristically modern insight is that norms are not, as traditional forms of life implicitly took them to be, independent of the subjective normative attitudes of concept users. The dependence of norms on attitudes is a dimension of responsibility on the side of the norms or statuses, and of corresponding authority on the part of the attitudes. It is because that authority of attitudes over norms is construed on the model of independence-as-Mastery, *pure* independence, that the insight into the normative role of subjectivity shows up in its distinctively modern, *alienated,* form. For what is distinctive of the atomistic conception of authority that is epitomized by the Master is precisely that authority (independence) is construed as ruling out any correlative responsibility (dependence). It follows that if norms are dependent on attitudes, there can be no intelligible reciprocal dependence of attitudes on norms. Alienation is the structural denial that subjective attitudes are responsible to norms which, as authoritative count as independent of those attitudes. The claim is that traditional and modern practical understandings are alike in taking it that if norms exert authority over attitudes, then attitudes cannot exert authority over norms, and *vice versa.* Either norms are independent of attitudes and attitudes dependent on norms, or attitudes are independent of norms and norms are dependent on attitudes.

The most sophisticated theoretical form in which this defective sort of practical normative understanding is expressed is what Hegel calls "Verstand." He is recommending replacing that sort of understanding by one that has quite a different structure, what he calls "Vernunft." The holistic *Vernunft* conception is one in which dependence is always reciprocal, and always involves reciprocal independence. For X to be dependent on Y is for Y in that respect to be independent of X. But that relation is not only *compatible* with Y being dependent on X in another respect, in which X is accordingly independent of Y; it is *necessary* that there be such correlative dependence. The paradigm, as always, is the structure of reciprocal authority-and-responsibility by which self-conscious individual selves and their communities (universals) are together synthesized by mutual recognition (by particular desiring organisms). That sort of reciprocal, mediating recognition is, of course, just what the Master's atomistic immediate asymmetrical conception of authority and responsibility rules out. That is the context that makes it seem that one must choose: either norms have authority over attitudes, or *vice versa*—but not both.

So the claim is first that when the hyper*objectivity* about norms characteristic of immediate *Sittlichkeit* is shattered by a practical realization of the essential role played by the normative attitudes of individual subjects in instituting norms, the result is a complementary hyper*subjectivity:* alienation. And second, that what drives that pendulum from the one extreme to the other is failure to appreciate the mediated structure not only of reciprocal sense-dependence, but of reciprocal reference-dependence of the concepts of dependence and independence (that is, responsibility and authority). In short, it is retaining the *immediacy* of the conception of normativity that dictates that appreciating the dependence of norms on attitudes precludes retaining a *sittlich* appreciation of the dependence of attitudes on norms, and so entails alienation.

Hegel introduces his discussion of "Spirit alienated from itself" in terms of the concept of culture [Bildung].[328] Cultivation or acculturation is the process by which we are transformed from merely natural into spiritual creatures, coming to be governed by norms and not just driven by desires. It is what makes self-conscious individuals out of merely particular organisms, by bringing them under universals—making them members of a community, subject to norms.

> It is . . . through culture that the individual acquires standing [Gelten] and actuality. His true original nature and substance is the alienation of himself as Spirit from his natural being. This externalization is . . . at once the means, or the transition, both of the [mere] thought-form of substance into actuality, and, conversely, of the specific individuality into essentiality. This individuality moulds itself by culture into what it intrinsically [an sich] is . . . its actuality consists solely in the setting-aside of its natural self. . . . [I]t is the contradiction of giving to what is particular an actuality which is immediately a universal. [*PG* 489]

Gelten is normative standing (etymologically related to Kant's "Gültigkeit," or validity). "Substance" is the community, and "essence" is the constellation of norms implicit in its practices and institutions. The acculturation of individuals is accordingly not only the process by which they pass into "essentiality"—become *geistig* beings, subject to norms. It is also the

[328] "Der sich entfremdete Geist," from the title of chapter 6B. Alienation, like *Sittlichkeit,* is not a psychological attitude of individuals (though it can be reflected there), but a structure the whole of Spirit exhibits.

process by which those communal norms (the "thought-form of substance") are actualized in the attitudes of individuals who acknowledge them as binding.

> What, in relation to the single individual, appears as his culture, is the essential moment of the substance itself, viz. the immediate passage of the [mere] thought-form of its universality into actuality; or, culture is the simple soul of the substance by means of which, what is implicit in the substance, acquires an acknowledged, real existence. The process in which the individuality moulds itself by culture is, therefore, at the same time the development of it as the universal, objective essence, i.e. the development of the actual world. [*PG* 490]

Not only does the culture make us; we make the culture. For the only actual existence the norms have is in the attitudes and activities of individuals who acknowledge them *as* norms. That is actualizing what otherwise is merely implicit. Norms are causally inert apart from the normative attitudes of those who acknowledge them.

> What appears here as the power and authority of the individual exercised over the substance, which is thereby superseded, is the same thing as the actualization of the substance. For the power of the individual consists in conforming itself to that substance, i.e. in externalizing its own self and thus establishing itself as substance that has an objective existence. Its culture and its own actuality are, therefore, the actualization of the substance itself. [*PG* 490]

Alienation is the inability to bring together these two aspects of *Bildung:* that self-conscious individuals acknowledging the norms as binding in their practice is what makes those selves what they are, and that self-conscious individuals acknowledging the norms as binding is what makes the norms what they are. These are the authority of the community and its norms over individuals (their dependence on it), and the authority of individuals over the community and its norms (its dependence on them), respectively. In the traditional structure, attitudes have no normative weight at all. They are not really in the picture because they are supposed to reflect only the norms. In the modern structure, both communal norms and individual attitudes are fully in play. Each claims a certain authority. For the rise of subjectivity is the realization that the communal norms whose acknowledgment makes us cultural, and not just natural creatures depend in turn on our attitudes and activities to actualize them. We readers of the *Phenomenology* are to come to see those claims as not only compatible but complementary—

indeed, as each intelligible only in the context of the other. In alienated spiritual substance, however, the claims to authority of self-conscious individual attitudes and communal norms compete, both in practice and in theory. The opposition and competition between normative attitudes and normative statuses is the core of alienation. The challenge of modernity is to secure the binding force and determinate contentfulness of conceptual norms from the threat posed to them—in the context of practical construals of authority according to the implicit structure of Mastery and theoretical construals of authority according to the explicit categories of *Verstand*—by giving up the picture of those norms as something we simply find as part of the attitude-independent world and accepting the essential role our attitudes play in instituting them. How can the *responsibility* of subjective normative attitudes (what is acknowledged as correct) to normative statuses (what really is correct) be reconciled with the *authority* of subjective normative attitudes over normative statuses? Any social, institutional, or conceptual context that forces a choice between these is an alienated one.

The norms in question are *conceptually* contentful norms, in that their determinate contents settle what is incompatible with conforming to that norm and what would be a consequence of doing so. That means that the norms articulate *reasons*—reasons for applying concepts by judging and acting intentionally. So the issue Hegel is addressing under the heading of "alienation"—about practical conceptions of the relations between conceptual norms and normative attitudes—includes the relations between *reasons* and *causes.* Indeed, it encompasses the question of how to think about the relations between the *normative* and the *natural* orders more generally. *Naturalistic reductionism,* in the form of commitment to an explanatory framework that eliminates reference to norms entirely, in favor of attitudes, is a principal expression of the alienation of the modern world. Hegel's account of the nature of the expressively progressive development he can envisage by which the modern alienated structure of self-conscious subjectivity and social substance can give rise to a new, better structure, which overcomes alienation, and so reachieves *Sittlichkeit,* while retaining the advance in self-conscious subjectivity characteristic of modernity accordingly encompasses a nonreductive account of how we should understand the place of norms in the natural world.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**
Handout for Lecture 16

Modernity, Alienation, and Language

The fact that it is a hallmark of modernity that normative force is understood to depend on the possibility of a legitimating *account* expressing a rationale for it underlines a key feature characteristic of the modern form of *Geist:* for it, *language* becomes the medium of recognition.

Language [Sprache], Hegel tells us repeatedly (at [*PG* 652, 666]), is the *Dasein* of *Geist:* its concrete, immediate being. Modernity is the age of alienated *Geist,* and "[t]his alienation takes place solely in language, which here appears in its characteristic significance." [*PG* 508]

Hegel distinguishes two aspects of the normative structure of the modern world of culture: *actual* consciousness and *pure* consciousness.
Actual consciousness comprises social institutions, the norms they embody, and individuals playing roles and engaging in practices governed and articulated by those norms. By applying those norms in their practice, individual subjects make them actual and efficacious; they actualize the norms.
Pure consciousness is how the norms are understood theoretically: their explicit discursive articulation. Hegel says that pure consciousness "is both the thinking of the actual world, and its thought-form [Denken und Gedachtsein]." [*PG* 485] It is the way normativity is *understood,* the theory that makes explicit the normativity implicit in the institutionalized practice of actual consciousness. Pure consciousness is the way norms are conceived or conceptualized.

One way in which the model of language helps us think about the possibility of overcoming alienation, then, is that it exhibits an unalienated combination of the authority of individual attitudes and their responsibility to genuinely binding norms. For linguistic practice exhibits a social division of labor. It is up to each individual which speech acts to perform: which claims to make, which intentions and plans to endorse. The original source of linguistic commitments is the acts and attitudes of individual speakers. In undertaking those commitments, those speakers exercise a distinctive kind of authority. But in doing so, as an unavoidable part of doing so, they make themselves responsible to the norms that articulate the contents of the concepts they have applied. Committing oneself in asserting or expressing an intention is licensing the rest of one's community to *hold* one responsible. The speaker and agent's authority is not only *compatible* with a coordinate responsibility (that is, authority on the part of the norms, administered by the community); it is unintelligible as determinately contentful apart from such responsibility. The individual has authority over the normative *force,* the undertaking of a commitment, only by making himself responsible to the world and to others for the *content* of the commitment. The positive freedom to exercise authority by undertaking determinately contentful commitments requires giving up some negative freedom, by making oneself responsible.

When you speak a language, you get the capacity to formulate an indefinite number of novel claims, and so to entertain an indefinite number of novel intentions, plans, and conjectures. That is a kind of positive

freedom to make and entertain novel claims, things that could be true, or things one could commit oneself to making true. One gets this explosion of positive expressive freedom, though, only by constraining oneself by linguistic norms—the norms one must acknowledge in practice as binding in order to be speaking some particular language.

Part of Hegel's thought about how we can move beyond modernity, and a lesson we should learn from the single biggest event in the history of *Geist,* is that the positive expressive freedom afforded by engaging in linguistic practices, so subjecting oneself to constraint by linguistic norms, is the paradigm of freedom for normative, discursive beings like us, and that political institutions and the normative constraint they exercise should be justifiable in exactly the same way that conceptual linguistic ones are. In particular, every loss of negative freedom should be more than compensated for by an increase in positive expressive freedom. This is the capacity to undertake new kinds of commitments, new kinds of responsibility, to acknowledge and exercise new kinds of authority, all of which at once express and develop the self-conscious individuals who are the subjects of those new norms. This is a paradigm and measure of justifiable political constraint. This is how it can be rationally legitimated—even if only retrospectively, because the positive expressive freedom in question may not, as in the paradigmatic linguistic case, be prospectively intelligible. The demand is that every aspect of the loss of negative freedom, of the constraint by norms that individuals take on, be compensated for many times over by an increase in positive expressive freedom. The form of a rational justification for a political institution and its immanent norms is to show that it is in this crucial respect language-like.

"Here, in the realm of faith, the first is the absolute being, spirit that is in and for itself insofar as it is the simple eternal substance. But, in the actualization of its notion, in being spirit it passes over into being for another, its self-identity becomes an actual self-sacrificing absolute being, it becomes a self, but a mortal, perishable self. Consequently, the third moment is the return of this alienated self and of the humiliated substance into their original simplicity. Only in this way is substance represented as spirit." [*PG* 532]
"These distinct beings, when brought back to themselves by thought out of the flux of the actual world, are immutable, eternal spirits, whose being lies in thinking the unity they constitute." [*PG* 533]
Enlightenment's critique of Faith is a three-pronged attack. There is an ontological claim, an epistemological claim, and a practical, moral, claim. The first is that Faith makes an ontological mistake. It thinks that something exists, when it does not. God is not in fact part of the furniture of the world. The epistemological objection of Enlightenment to Faith is that even if there were such an object, we could not come to know about it in the way Faith claims to know about God. The actual epistemological grounds for belief in this absolute are prejudice, error, gullibility, confusion, stupidity. Third, enlightenment accuses faith of bad intention or motivation, of practical errors of action, of immoral activity. The priests are accused of trickery, the pretense of insight and knowledge, and of using that as a means to amass power.

Hegel responds to these familiar, telling complaints that Enlightenment is fundamentally misunderstanding Faith by seeing it as in the first instance standing in a *cognitive* relation to some thing—as consisting at base in a claim to *knowledge* of the Absolute.
For Hegel, Faith is, in the first instance, a matter of realizing a certain self-conception. It is not a kind of *cognition,* but a kind of *re*cognition, and therefore a kind of self-constitution. Generically, it is the identification of the individual self with its universal rather than its particular aspect.

"But here Enlightenment is foolish. Faith regards it as not understanding the real facts when it talks about priestly deception and deluding the people. It talks about this as if by some hocus pocus of conjuring priests, consciousness has been pawned off with something absolutely alien and other to it in place of its own essence. It is impossible to deceive a people in this manner. Brass instead of gold, counterfeit instead of genuine money may well be passed off, at least in isolated cases. Many may be persuaded to believe that a battle lost was a battle won, and other lies about things of sense and isolated happenings may be credible for a time. But in the knowledge of that essential being in which consciousness has immediate certainty of itself, the idea of this sort of delusion is quite out of the question." [*PG* 550]
'Trust' [Vertrauen] is what Hegel calls the form of recognition that is an ideal of Faith:
"Whomsoever I trust, his certainty of himself is for me the certainty of myself; I recognize in him my own being-for-self, know that he acknowledges it and that it is for him purpose and essence. Further, since what is object for me is that in which I recognize myself, I am for myself at the same time in that object in the form of another self-consciousness, i.e. one which has become in that object alienated from its particular individuality, viz. from its natural and contingent existence, but which partly remains therein self-consciousness, partly, in that object, is an essential consciousness." [*PG* 549]

"The absolute Being of faith is essentially not the abstract essence that would exist beyond the consciousness of the believer; on the contrary, it is the Spirit of the [religious] community, the unity of the abstract essence and self-consciousness. It is the spirit of the community, the unity of the abstract essence in self-consciousness." [*PG* 549]

"[t]hat [the absolute Being of Faith] be the spirit of the community, this requires as a necessary moment the action of the community. It is this spirit only by being produced by consciousness, or rather it does not exist as the spirit of the community without having been produced by this consciousness." [*PG* 549]
It is just this that Enlightenment rightly declares faith to be, when it says that what is for faith the absolute Being, is a Being of its own consciousness, is its own thought, something that is a creation of consciousness itself. [*PG* 549]
"Consciousness has found its Notion in Utility . . . from this inner revolution there emerges the actual revolution of the actual world, the new shape of consciousness, absolute freedom." [*PG* 582]
Contentful norms require incorporation of particularity and contingency in the form of necessity (normative force) and universality (conceptual content) through recognitive relations of reciprocal authority and responsibility articulated not only *socially,* but also *historically,* in the form of constraint by a recollected *tradition.* Understanding that there are no norms wholly independent of the attitudes and

practices of individual self-consciousnesses is modern; understanding that authority of attitudes over statuses on the model of unconstrained, pure independence (asymmetrical recognition) rather than freedom is alienated. Any such conception is bound to oscillate between seeing the norms as not constraining attitudes because they are contentless, and seeing them as not constraining attitudes because their content is arbitrary, contingent, and particular, hence irrational, derived from the contingent attitudes, interests, and inclinations of some particular subject.

Faith and Enlightenment are each one-sided appreciations of the true nature of norms in relation to attitudes. Faith is on the right track on the practical recognitive dimension of self-consciousness, but has the wrong theoretical cognitive take on the side of consciousness.
Faith is right in what it *does:* to *give* the norms determinate content by building a recognitive *community.* It builds a *community of trust,* which can *develop* and *sustain* determinately contentful norms. It is right to see that its relation to the norms should be one of *acknowledgment* and *service.* It is wrong to think that private conceptions and concerns must or even can be totally sacrificed to make that possible. Faith is wrong to take over the traditional immediate conception of its relation to the norms: to reify, ontologize, and in a sense naturalize them by objectifying them. It does not recognize itself in those norms it identifies with, in that it does not see them as its own product. Neither its community nor its individual activities are seen as *essential* or as *authoritative* with respect to those norms.
Enlightenment is right that the norms depend for both their force and their content on the attitudes and practices of the very individuals who become more than merely particular, natural beings by being acculturated—that is, by being constrained by those norms. It is wrong to think that all we contribute is the *form.* And it is wrong in the practical recognitive consequences of its insight into our authority over the norms. It is right in its criticism of Faith's metaphysics, but wrong to think that undercuts its form of life.

What is needed is to combine the humanistic *metaphysics* of Enlightenment (with its theoretical cognitive emphasis on the contribution of the activity of individual self-consciousnesses) with the *community of trust* of Faith (with its practical recognitive emphasis on the contribution of the activity of individual self-consciousnesses through acknowledgment of, service to, and identification-through-sacrifice with the norms). The recipe for moving to the third, postmodern phase in the development of *Geist* is to bring together the *cognitive* and *recognitive* successes of Enlightenment and Faith. The key to doing that is appreciating the role *recollection* plays in both cognition and recognition. When cognitive activity takes the form of forgiving recollection, it institutes semantic representational relations between knowing subjects and the objects known. When recognitive activity takes the form of forgiving recollection, it institutes communities with the normative structure of trust. In short, recollection as forgiveness forges the conceptual link between unalienated cognition and unalienated recognition.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**

Lecture 16

Modernity, Alienation, and Language

I. Introduction: Modernity, Legitimation, and Language

The *Phenomenology* aims to help us understand modernity. It is true that to do that we need to understand the traditional forms of life we came from, and how we got here from there. And recollectively understanding modernity is the proper way to realize where we are committed to going from here: what would count as further progress. Nonetheless, Hegel resolutely keeps the narrative center of attention focused on the promises and perils of the still-incomplete project of modernity. The motor of that project is the burgeoning significance of self-conscious individual subjectivity. A principal manifestation of that self-consciously new form of self-consciousness is the felt need for the theoretical *legitimation* of the norms by which moderns find themselves acculturated. The mere existence of inherited normative structures is no longer accepted as sufficient warrant for them. Entitlement to the acquiescence of individuals to institutionalized constellations of authority and responsibility is conditioned on the provision of sufficient reasons justifying those arrangements to those subject to them. The demand for their theoretical legitimation is an important dimension along which in modernity the authority of normative statuses answers to the attitudes of those bound by the norms in question. The demand for legitimation of authority is an aspect of the modern practical attitude-dependence of normative statuses that does not entail that the statuses in question are *instituted by* attitudes. The latter, stronger claim (to which the reciprocal recognition model answers) asserts the *sufficiency* of attitudes for statuses. Conditioning the bindingness of statuses on attitudes on their acknowledgment as legitimate by those whose attitudes they bind asserts only a *necessary* condition.

The fact that it is a hallmark of modernity that normative force is understood to depend on the possibility of a legitimating *account* expressing a rationale for it underlines a key feature

characteristic of the modern form of *Geist:* for it, *language* becomes the medium of recognition. Their specifically linguistic expression is now an essential aspect of recognitive attitudes of attributing and acknowledging normative statuses. Emphasis on characteristic means of linguistic expression was central all along to Hegel's discussion of different forms of empirical self-consciousness on the side of cognition: indexicals and demonstratives for sense-certainty, predicates and singular terms for perception, and subjunctively robust modals for understanding. As it is for cognition, so it is for recognition. We saw that behind and supporting the cognitive practices that embody and enact empirical consciousness lie the recognitive practices that embody and enact normative self-consciousness. Modern normative self-consciousness is articulated by recognitive attitudes and normative statuses that are what they are in significant part because of the language in which they are made explicit.

In particular, we can understand the *alienation* from our norms that is inherent in modernity only in terms of the deformations of language that express it. It is an essential, principled part of Hegel's general methodology to understand what is implicit in terms of its explicit expressions—to think of those expressions as essential to the identity of what is implicit. In this particular case, its specifically *linguistic* expressions are essential to alienation as a distinctively modern metaphysical normative structure. That is so precisely because alienation is at base a pathology of legitimation, undercutting the bindingness of norms. As such, it is rooted in the demand for a linguistically explicit account of the nature and rationale of the bindingness of the norms that make us what we are, in the light of an appreciation of the sense in which we make them what they are. The norms in question are discursive norms, in that they are conceptually contentful. But the demand for explicit legitimation is further a demand for specifically discursive justification. The failure to reconcile the status-dependence of normative attitudes with the attitude-dependence of normative statuses has significant practical expressions. But its theoretical expressions are equally essential to the predicament.

Language [Sprache], Hegel tells us repeatedly (at [*PG* 652, 666]), is the *Dasein* of *Geist:* its concrete, immediate being. Modernity is the age of alienated *Geist,* and "[t]his alienation takes place solely in language, which here appears in its characteristic significance." [*PG* 508] In the middle section of his long *Spirit* chapter, Hegel accordingly explicitly addresses language,

with particular attention to the language characteristic of alienation and the institutions that both foster that language and to which it is addressed.

II. Actual and Pure Consciousness

Hegel's discussion of the normative structure of the modern world of culture is long, intricate, and interesting. But our purposes do not require rehearsal of many of its details. He distinguishes two aspects of that structure: *actual* consciousness and *pure* consciousness. Actual consciousness comprises social institutions, the norms they embody, and individuals playing roles and engaging in practices governed and articulated by those norms. By applying those norms in their practice, individual subjects make them actual and efficacious; they actualize the norms. The norms and the individuals acting and assessing their actions according to those norms collectively *constitute* the institutions, giving them, as well as the norms, actual existence. To *act* according to the norms is to appeal to these in one's practical deliberations about what to do. Similarly, to *assess* according to them is to appeal to those norms—the ones implicit in custom—as standards in assessing one's own and others' performances. This is for one's attitudes to be governed by the norms in the dual sense that the norms provide standards for normative assessment of the attitudes and that the attitudes are subjunctively sensitive to the content of the norms.

The term "pure consciousness" is a way of talking about how the norms are understood theoretically: their explicit discursive articulation. Hegel says that pure consciousness "is both the thinking of the actual world, and its thought-form [Denken und Gedachtsein]." [*PG* 485] It is the way normativity is *understood,* the theory that makes explicit the normativity implicit in the institutionalized practice of actual consciousness. Pure consciousness is the way norms are conceived or conceptualized. Hegel's term for conceptual articulation—articulation by relations of material incompatibility and inference—is "mediation." So he says that pure consciousness *mediates* the relation between actual individual selves and the norms it theorizes about. In traditional society, as opposed to modern culture, the norms implicit in *Sitte,* in customs, are *immediate*—not the subject of conceptualization or thematization, not made *explicit,* and hence

not subject to critical scrutiny. Immediate *Sittlichkeit* has a purely practical, implicit, *nonconceptual* conception of norms, and so has no analogue of pure consciousness.

Pure consciousness is a distinctively modern form of self-consciousness, a manifestation of the rise of subjectivity. It is a new way the norms implicit in the practices of actual consciousness can be something explicitly *for* consciousness. Where actual consciousness requires the adoption of *practical* attitudes toward the norms, applying them in practice by judging, acting intentionally, and assessing the claims and performances of others, pure consciousness requires the adoption of *theoretical* attitudes toward the norms. In particular, pure consciousness offers explicit accounts of the nature of the *binding force* and the source of the *content* of the norms. It reflects on the relations between norms and the institutions that embody them, on the one hand, and their relations to the subjective normative attitudes of those whose practice they govern, on the other. Pure consciousness is a response to a felt need for the norms, their binding force, and their particular contents not only to be explicitly understood and explained, but to be validated, legitimated, vindicated. That demand is itself a prime expression of the newly appreciated authority of self-conscious subjectivity and its attitudes. The question at issue between traditional and modern practical conceptions and constellations of normativity is whether, when the individual acknowledges the norms in action and assessment, that needs to be conceptually mediated or not—whether a theory, a story about it is needed. To say that it is, is to accord a new kind of authority to the attitudes of the individuals who produce, consume, and assess such legitimating stories. That is why the role in the world of culture of what Hegel calls "pure consciousness" is an essential part of the advent of modernity as the rise of subjectivity.

III. Language

Language is the medium in which the ultimately recognitive relations among self-conscious individuals, their acts, their normative attitudes, the norms they are bound by, the practices in which those norms are implicit, their communities, and their institutions are not only expressed, but instituted and instantiated. That is why the deformations in that recognitive constellation of attitudes distinctive of alienation take the form of characteristic linguistic practices. In particular, they take the form of ironic relations between individuals and the culture-constituting norms,

which are viewed as pious fictions. Modernity is characterized by a one-sided focus on the normative significance of some of these elements at the expense of others. Paradigmatically this is the privileging of the authority of individuals and their acts and attitudes, construing them as independent of and authoritative with respect to the norms they fall under. The very fact that language has come to the fore as the recognitive medium in which conceptual normativity is articulated offers some guidance as to how the one-sidedness of the modern appreciation of the significance of subjectivity (alienation) can be overcome, without having to give up the insight that marks the shift from traditional to modern culture as an expressively progressive transformation of our self-consciousness. It sets criteria of adequacy for an unalienated, postmodern form of recognition. For it means that our model for the articulation of *Geist* should be the relations among individual language users, their speech acts, the attitudes those speech acts express, linguistic norms, linguistic practices, linguistic communities, and languages. The move beyond modernity will require us to understand how the bindingness of objective conceptual norms is compatible with both those norms being what makes particular desiring organisms into *geistig,* self-conscious individuals and with those norms being instituted by the practices such individuals engage in of applying concepts in the judgments and actions that express their commitments and other attitudes. Implemented practically, in actual and not just pure consciousness, that understanding will take the form of a move from the relations between individuals and their conceptually articulated norms exhibiting the structure of *irony* to exhibiting the structure of *trust.*

There is a fundamental social division of normative labor corresponding to the distinction between the *force* and *content* of speech acts. The force (Fregean "Kraft") is the normative significance of a speech act: what difference it makes to the commitments and responsibilities that the speaker acknowledges, undertakes, or licenses others to attribute. The content is what determines *what* one has committed oneself to or made oneself responsible for by performing a speech act with that content. The key point is that performing a speech act (expressing a linguistic attitude, such as a belief or intention) involves coordinate dimensions of *authority* of the speaker concerning the claim*ing,* and *responsibility* with respect to what is claim*ed.* When we talk, making claims about how things are, or expressing intentions as to how they shall be, there is always something that is up to each one of us, and something that is not. It is up to each

of us which move we make, what concept we apply, what counter in the language game we play. And then it is not up to us what the significance of that is, given the content of what we have said. So it is up to me whether I claim that this pen is made of copper, whether I play the "copper" counter that is in play in our practices. But if I do play it, I have bound myself by a set of norms; I have committed myself to things independently of whether I realize what I have committed myself to. In this sense, the normative *status* I have taken on outruns my normative *attitudes.* What I am actually committed to need not coincide with what I *take* myself to be committed to. (The linguistic *Tat* goes beyond the linguistic *Handlung:* the distinction that speech acts involve.) If I say that the pen is copper, then whether I know it or not I have committed myself to its melting at 1085°C, because what I am saying cannot be true unless that is true, too. It *is* up to me whether I play the counter, make that move, invest my authority or normative force in that content, but then *not* up to me what I have committed myself to by it, what commitments I have ruled out, what would entitle me to it. The normative significance of the move I have made, the boundary of the responsibility I have undertaken is not up to me; it is a matter of the linguistic norms that articulate the concepts I have chosen to apply.

The conceptual norms determined by the content of the concepts speakers apply in judgment and intention are administered by the linguistic community, which accordingly exercises an authority correlative to that of the speaker. Metallurgical experts know a great deal more than I do about what I have claimed, what I have committed myself to, by calling the pen "copper." Those to whom I am speaking, those who attribute and assess my speech act, have a certain kind of privilege: the authority to keep a different set of books on its consequences than I do. It is important to Hegel that even expert audiences are not *fully* authoritative concerning the content. They do not determine melting point of copper. That is a matter of how things are in themselves, which is not a matter of how things are for the experts, or the rest of the community, any more than it is a matter of how things are for the speaker. The norms are not something that can simply be read off of the attitudes of either. Hegel wants to reconstruct the objective, representational dimension of discourse, what it is for there to be referents that are authoritative for our inferences, the noumena behind the phenomena, the realities behind the appearances, in terms of the recollective *historical* structure of discursive practice. One of the principal aims of the rest of the discussion here of Hegel's *Spirit* chapter is further to delineate the fine structure of

the diachronic, historical account of the relations between normative force and conceptual content. But the fact that there is a third pole of authority, besides that of the speaker and of the linguistic community, should not be taken to minimize the authority that the community does exercise with respect to conceptual content.

Further, if we ask how the term "copper" came to express the content that it does, so that assertions employing it have the normative significance that they do, the story we tell is going to have to include the practices of the linguistic community in question, the acts individual speakers have actually performed in concrete circumstances, and the assessments of the correctness or incorrectness of those performances that their fellow community members have actually made. Somehow, by using the expression "copper" the way we have—in concert with the uses we have made of a whole lot of other expressions—we have managed to make "copper" claims beholden to how it objectively is with *copper.* We have incorporated features of the world into the norms we collectively administer, instituting a sense of correctness according to which the correctness of our "copper" claims answers to the facts about copper. Judging and acting intentionally must be understood both as the process of *applying* conceptual norms and as the process of *instituting* those norms. (Recall the slogan that, in this respect, Hegel is to Kant as Quine is to Carnap.) In terms we will be concerned with further along, the first is the process of giving contingency the form of necessity, the second the process of incorporating contingency into necessity. As we will see, the account of recollective rationality and the relations between normative statuses and attitudes that are instituted by the recollective phase of experience points the way to a postmodern form of recognition that overcomes ironic alienation. This is the recollective-recognitive structure of trust.

Hegel talks about the move from theoretical and practical application of categories of *independence* to categories of *freedom* (from *Verstand* to *Vernunft*) as giving us a conceptual apparatus for both, on the one hand, identifying ourselves as the products of norms that incorporate features of the objective world like what the melting point of copper is and, on the other hand, seeing our activity as having instituted those norms, the norms that make that fact potentially visible and expressible. Focusing on the linguistic character of modern recognitive processes—the practices of adopting specific recognitive attitudes—that is, of acknowledging

and attributing conceptually contentful commitments, responsibilities, and licensings—provides a new perspective on the notion of freedom, which is characteristic of *Vernunft.* According to the Kantian framework Hegel takes over, agency is thought of as a matter of what agents are responsible for. Agents (and knowers) are creatures who live and move and have their being in a normative space, creatures who can commit themselves, who can undertake and attribute responsibility and exercise authority. Concepts determine what one has committed oneself to, what one has made oneself responsible for in acting intentionally (and judging). This framework leads Kant to distinguish between the realm of nature and the realm of freedom in normative terms. To be *free* in his sense is to be bound by norms, to be able to perform intentional actions and make judgments, which is to say to be able to undertake commitments. That is to be able (in the normative sense of having the authority) to make oneself responsible in the ways articulated by concepts, which are rules for determining what one has committed oneself to—for instance, by calling the pen "copper." One of the radical features of this normative conception of freedom as constraint by norms is that it is a conception of *positive,* rather than *negative,* freedom.[329] Negative freedom is freedom *from* something: the absence of some sort of constraint. Positive freedom is freedom *to* do something: the presence of some sort of ability. In Kant's picture of the freedom characteristic of *geistig,* normative beings, the capacity that they have to commit themselves, to undertake responsibilities, is of a kind of positive freedom. They are able to do something that merely natural creatures cannot. Freedom for Kant is the capacity to constrain oneself by something more than the laws of nature—the capacity to constrain oneself normatively, by undertaking commitments and responsibilities, acknowledging authority, and so on.

One way in which the model of language helps us think about the possibility of overcoming alienation, then, is that it exhibits an unalienated combination of the authority of individual attitudes and their responsibility to genuinely binding norms. For linguistic practice exhibits a social division of labor. It is up to each individual which speech acts to perform: which claims to make, which intentions and plans to endorse. The original source of linguistic commitments is the acts and attitudes of individual speakers. In undertaking those commitments,

[329] The terminology is due to Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 168-216.

those speakers exercise a distinctive kind of authority. But in doing so, as an unavoidable part of doing so, they make themselves responsible to the norms that articulate the contents of the concepts they have applied. Committing oneself in asserting or expressing an intention is licensing the rest of one's community to *hold* one responsible. The speaker and agent's authority is not only *compatible* with a coordinate responsibility (that is, authority on the part of the norms, administered by the community); it is unintelligible as determinately contentful apart from such responsibility. The individual has authority over the normative *force,* the undertaking of a commitment, only by making himself responsible to the world and to others for the *content* of the commitment. The positive freedom to exercise authority by undertaking determinately contentful commitments requires giving up some negative freedom, by making oneself responsible.

Unlike Kant, Hegel has a social practice account of the nature of normativity. Freedom for him is accordingly not a wholly individual achievement, not something that can be understood agent by agent. It is possible only in the context of communities, practices, and institutions that have the right structure. Because normativity is a social achievement, freedom is an essentially political phenomenon, in a way it is not for Kant. This difference between the two thinkers is connected to another one: freedom is a comparative normative phenomenon for Hegel in a way that it is not for Kant. Not everyone who is constrained by norms is free, according to Hegel. Only norm-instituting recognitive communities and institutions with the right structure constitute *free* self-conscious individuals. The paradigm of that ideal freedom-instituting structure is *linguistic* normativity.

A classic, perennial, in some sense defining problem of political philosophy has always been to explain how and on what grounds it could be rational for an individual to accept some communal constraint on her will. What could justify the loss of negative freedom—the freedom from constraint—that you get by entering into a community and subjecting yourself to their norms, acknowledging the authority of those norms? One can easily see how that could be justified from the point of view of the community. Unless people act rightly and conform to the norms, there are lots of things the community cannot do. The challenge has been to say, how one could justify that loss of negative freedom, as rational on the part of the individual. Responses to

this challenge form a favorite literary genre in the Enlightenment. (Hobbes and Locke are paradigmatic practitioners.) Hegel saw in Kant's notion of positive freedom the possibility of a new kind of response to this challenge. In this context the fact that language provides both the medium and the model of recognition takes on a special importance. His idea is that some kinds of normative constraint provide a positive freedom, which, in Hegel's distinctive view, and moving beyond Kant, is *expressive* freedom. And the model for the exercise of that sort of freedom is talking.

Subsequent developments have put us in a somewhat better position to say what is promising about the linguistic model of positive freedom. Think to begin with about the astonishing empirical observation with which Noam Chomsky inaugurated modern linguistics—the observation that almost every sentence uttered by an adult native speaker is a *novel* sentence. It is new, not just in the sense that *that speaker* has never produced or heard exactly that string of words before, but in the much stronger sense that *no one* in the history of the world has ever heard exactly that string of words before. "Have a nice day" may get a lot of play, but for any tolerably complex sentence (a sentence drawn at random from this text, for instance), the odds of anybody having uttered it before (unless we are in quotation mode) approach the infinitesimal. This is an observation that has been empirically verified over and over again by examining large corpora, transcribing actual conversations, and so on. And it is easy to show on fundamental grounds. Although we do not have a grammar that will generate all and only sentences of English, we have lots of grammars that generate only sentences of English. If you look at how many sentences of, say, fewer than twenty-five words there are, even in the vocabulary of basic English, five thousand words (the average speaker may use twenty thousand), you can see that there has not been time for a measurable proportion of them to be uttered, even if everyone always spoke English and did nothing but talk. So linguistic competence is the capacity to produce and understand an indefinite number of novel sentences. Chomsky wanted to know how that is possible.

However the trick is done, being able to do it is a kind of positive linguistic expressive freedom. The fact is that when you speak a language, you get the capacity to formulate an indefinite number of novel claims, and so to entertain an indefinite number of novel intentions,

plans, and conjectures. That is a kind of positive freedom to make and entertain novel claims, things that could be true, or things one could commit oneself to making true. One gets this explosion of positive expressive freedom, though, only by constraining oneself by linguistic norms—the norms one must acknowledge in practice as binding in order to be speaking some particular language. However open textured those norms may be, they involve genuine constraint. If one does not sufficiently respect the linguistic norms, then one ends up not saying, or thinking, anything at all. Of course, one need not say anything. One could just not ever say anything, though at the cost, as Sellars says, of having nothing to say. But the only way one can buy this positive, expressive freedom is by paying a price in negative freedom. One must constrain oneself by linguistic and conceptual norms. When one is speaking one's own language and not using fancy vocabulary, that constraint becomes invisible. It becomes much more visible when speaking in a language in which one is not fluent. The point here is that the way in which the language one does constrain oneself by becomes the medium in which one's *self* not only expresses, but develops itself is a paradigm of central importance for Hegel.

In the context of the essentially political, because social, account of the nature of normativity, the paradigm of linguistic norms provides the form of an argument about how it could be rational to give up some kind of negative freedom, constraining oneself by norms, making oneself and one's performances responsible to them (liable to assessment according to them) by practically acknowledging them as authoritative. For consider a rational assessment of the costs and benefits of trading off some minor negative freedom for the bonanza of positive expressive freedom that comes with constraining oneself by linguistic norms. (Any such assessment would have to be retrospective, of course, because anyone who has not yet made the deal is not in a position rationally to assess anything.) Can there be any doubt that the trade-off is worth it? Even though the beasts of field and forest are not in a position to make this argument, it seems clear that it would be rational for them to embrace this sort of normative constraint if they were.

Part of Hegel's thought about how we can move beyond modernity, and a lesson we should learn from the single biggest event in the history of *Geist,* is that the positive expressive freedom afforded by engaging in linguistic practices, so subjecting oneself to constraint by

linguistic norms, is the paradigm of freedom for normative, discursive beings like us, and that political institutions and the normative constraint they exercise should be justifiable in exactly the same way that conceptual linguistic ones are. In particular, every loss of negative freedom should be more than compensated for by an increase in positive expressive freedom. This is the capacity to undertake new kinds of commitments, new kinds of responsibility, to acknowledge and exercise new kinds of authority, all of which at once express and develop the self-conscious individuals who are the subjects of those new norms. This is a paradigm and measure of justifiable political constraint. This is how it can be rationally legitimated—even if only retrospectively, because the positive expressive freedom in question may not, as in the paradigmatic linguistic case, be prospectively intelligible. The demand is that every aspect of the loss of negative freedom, of the constraint by norms that individuals take on, be compensated for many times over by an increase in positive expressive freedom. The form of a rational justification for a political institution and its immanent norms is to show that it is in this crucial respect language-like.

Language is of course not a distinctively modern institution. There is no *Geist* of any kind apart from linguistic practices. But we can see that the stakes are high when Hegel specifies the distinctive role language plays in the norm-articulating recognitive structure of modernity. Rather than being just one optional form in which the force of norms can be acknowledged and their content expressed, language becomes the medium in which the norms are instituted and applied. There are profound consequences to seeing the rise of subjectivity in the form of the acknowledgment of the rights of intention and knowledge, the advent of a new kind of self-conscious individuality, as bringing with it this new institutional centrality of language. Hegel's philosophy of language—his account of the relations among speakers, their acts and attitudes, the linguistic communities they belong to, and the linguistic norms that make up the language itself, and the idiom in which that account is articulated—may be the part of his thought that is of the most contemporary philosophical interest and value. That is partly because he attributes deep *political* significance to the replacement of a semantic model of atomistic representation by one of holistic expression. It is this line of thought that underlies the contention here not only that Hegel's semantic theory (his theory of conceptual content) and his pragmatist understanding of how *meaning* is related to the norms governing the *use* of expressions (the practical attitudes

expressed by applying concepts in judging and acting intentionally) should be thought of as at the center of his thought, but also that he is presenting a semantics that is intended to have a practically edifying effect. Understanding how discursive practice both institutes and applies determinately contentful conceptual norms is to point the way to a new and better, more fully self-conscious structure of practical normativity. It is to lead to a new form of mutual recognition and usher in the third stage in the development of *Geist:* the age of trust.

IV. Pure Consciousness: Alienation as a Disparity between Cognition and Recognition

As actual consciousness is divided into State Power and Wealth, pure consciousness is divided into Faith and Enlightenment. Faith and Enlightenment are not just theories of normativity; they are *institutionalized* theories. The characteristically alienated structure of modern normativity shows up not only in the relations between the competing forms of actual consciousness, but also in the relations between the competing alienated theories of normativity embodied by Faith and Enlightenment. That is to say that in both cases the relations of authority and responsibility between the two substructures are practically construed on the model of independence, hence as competing and incompatible, rather than on the model of freedom, as reciprocal and mutually presupposing.

By telling us what he thinks Faith is right about, what he thinks Enlightenment is right about, how Faith looks to Enlightenment, and how Enlightenment looks to Faith, Hegel assembles raw materials that are crucial for the transition from modernity to a form of normativity structured by self-consciousness with the form of Absolute Knowing. In general, Hegel's reading of Faith—the distinctively modern, alienated form of religion—is a successor project to Kant's *Religion Within the Bounds of Reason Alone,* a book that had had a tremendous influence on Hegel when he was still a student at the *Stift* in Tübingen (and on his classmates Friedrich Schelling and Friedrich Hölderlin). Where Kant had looked for the rational moral teachings that were expressed in sensuous images in Christianity, Hegel seeks also lessons about the metaphysics of self-conscious individuality and social substance.

These passages about a core structure of Faith are a paradigm of how Hegel gives a metaphysical reading of religious imagery:

> Here, in the realm of faith, the first is the absolute being, spirit that is in and for itself insofar as it is the simple eternal substance. But, in the actualization of its notion, in being spirit it passes over into being for another, its self-identity becomes an actual self-sacrificing absolute being, it becomes a self, but a mortal, perishable self. Consequently, the third moment is the return of this alienated self and of the humiliated substance into their original simplicity. Only in this way is substance represented as spirit. [*PG* 532]
>
> These distinct beings, when brought back to themselves by thought out of the flux of the actual world, are immutable, eternal spirits, whose being lies in thinking the unity they constitute. [*PG* 533]

This is his reading of the actual significance and metaphysical meaning of the allegory of incarnation and the Trinity. (Similar accounts are found throughout his work, notably in the *Science of Logic.*) He thinks that the doctrine of the Trinity is really talking about the structure of *Geist*—that is, of social normative "substance"—and that the community and the norms that are implicit in the communal doings (its "essence") is what God the Father in the Trinity is the image of. The substance is social substance synthesized by reciprocal recognition. That is the medium in which the norms inhere. In the model, that is the language. The interfusion of humanity and divinity in God the Son within the allegory stands for the actual individual speakers, who are bound and constituted as self-conscious individuals by those norms "passing over into being for another, becoming a self, a mortal, perishable, self." The relations between them—the way in which speakers and their utterances are what they are only by virtue of the linguistic norms that govern them, and the norms are only actualized by being applied to actual utterances by speakers and audiences—that is the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. So we have the universals or norms, their perishable incarnation raised above mere particularity, which is also the actualization of those norms, and the relation between them in individuality. The lesson Hegel draws is that the being of these spirits "lies in thinking the unity they constitute"—that is, in understanding his recognitive account of normativity and individuality in relation to biological particularity and normative universality. It is a measure of the way he works that Hegel goes back and forth cheerfully between the logical vocabulary, the theological vocabulary, and the

linguistic-*cum*-normative vocabulary for talking about these things. The religious language is a sensuous allegory for the most fundamental metaphysical-logical idea Hegel has.

Thinking of the universal and particular elements of individuality (the divine and the human) as standing in familial relations is construing mediation under categories of immediacy. Universality is thought of as being a kind of *thing:* in many ways, like the things here, only somewhere else, over there, in a beyond ("jenseits," in a different ontological postal code than ours). In a corresponding and complementary approach, Enlightenment construes universality and normativity as rationality. This good thought shows up only in alienated form, however, when rationality is then thought of as a matter-of-factual dispositional property that happens to be shared by some particular organisms or kind of organism—when our being *geistig* beings is put in a box with having opposable thumbs. The lesson of the transition from *Perception* to *Force and Understanding* was that the universals, the conceptual relations of incompatibility and consequence that articulate facts and show up in the form of laws, should be understood not as a supersensible world of theoretical entities standing behind and ontologically distinguished from the objects that show up in sense, but rather as the implicit structure or articulation of them—the modal articulation of observable fact. In the same way, here, that is the lesson we are supposed to learn here about what he insists is the common topic of Faith, under the heading of the religious absolute, and of Enlightenment, under the heading of reason. Normativity, universality, is not to be reified into some kind of a thing, either over there (as God) or in individual human beings (as Reason), but rather as implicit in the articulation of individuals in a community, their recognitive interplay, and the utterances and attitudes that actualize and express the norms.

Enlightenment's critique of Faith shows some understanding of this lesson. As Hegel reconstructs that critique, it is a three-pronged attack. There is an ontological claim, an epistemological claim, and a practical, moral, claim. The first is that Faith makes an ontological mistake. It thinks that something exists, when it does not. God is not in fact part of the furniture of the world. Thinking there is such a being is just a generalization of premodern, magical thinking, which sees ordinary sensible material objects as enchanted, possessed of magical properties. Generically, this mistake is of a piece with thinking that there is a tiger in the next room, when in fact the room is empty. The epistemological objection of Enlightenment to Faith

is that even if there were such an object, we could not come to know about it in the way Faith claims to know about God. The actual epistemological grounds for belief in this absolute are prejudice, error, gullibility, confusion, stupidity. Faith claims an immediate relation to the Absolute, but in fact all the content of its purported knowledge depends on contingent, empirical claims. Reports of miracles, accidental preservation of evidence of the knowledge of those occurrences through scripture, and correct interpretation of the text cannot critically bear the weight of the belief that is predicated on it.

Third, enlightenment accuses faith of bad intention or motivation, of practical errors of action, of immoral activity. The priests are accused of trickery, the pretense of insight and knowledge, and of using that as a means to amass power. The proof of that is the way despotism, through the doctrine of divine right of kings, is a state power that employs the gullibility and bad insight of the masses and the trickery of the priests to establish itself. So, Enlightenment says, the ontological mistake and epistemological mistakes of religion are put in service of bad political and moral activity, and despotism and religious institutions are two hands that wash each other. (This is the radical enlightenment attitude that is summed up pithily by Denis Diderot, when he says that he will be happy only when the last king is strangled with the guts of the last priest.)

V. Faith and Trust

Hegel responds to these familiar, telling complaints that Enlightenment is fundamentally misunderstanding Faith by seeing it as in the first instance standing in a *cognitive* relation to some thing—as consisting at base in a claim to *knowledge* of the Absolute. The criticisms as to evidence, the ungenerous attribution of ignoble motives for promulgating this belief (which we consider further later on)—all of these things depend on seeing faith as making a matter-of-factual claim about how things are, about which we can then ask for its epistemological credentials, and about the matter of factual truth or falsity of the claim. For Hegel, Faith is, in the first instance, a matter of realizing a certain self-conception. It is not a kind of *cognition,* but a kind of *re*cognition, and therefore a kind of self-constitution. Generically, it is the identification of the individual self with its universal rather than its particular aspect. That identification with

the universal takes the form of sacrificing particular subjective attitudes and interests through service and worship.

In the original, melodramatic allegorical picture of the transition from nature to spirit, the first Masters pulled themselves by their own bootstraps out of the muck of nature by being willing to risk their biological lives for a normative status, for a form of authority, to be recognized as having that normative status, by being willing to *die* for the cause. The point of the allegory of the sacrifice of service and worship is, rather, to identify with the authority of the norms (the universal) by being willing to *live* for it, by submerging particular attitudes (beliefs and desires) in the communal norms. In that way, like the Master of the original allegory, believing consciousness succeeds in making itself something other than what it already was, constitutes itself as something more than that. That existential self-constitution—institution of a normative status by adoption of an attitude—is what faith really consists in.

The reason the criticisms of Faith by Enlightenment miss their mark, on this account, is that the self-conception to which a community is in this way practically committed to realizing is not the having of a belief that could turn out to be radically false. It does not stand in that sort of a relation to its world. It is a doing—a *making* things be thus and so, not a *taking* them to be thus and so. It is a recognition, a kind of self-constitution, not a kind of cognition. What it is about, the truth that the certainty of the believer is answerable to, is not something distinct from the believer in the community; it is something that if all goes well, the believers *make* true of themselves. If not, the failure is practical, not cognitive. Faith, for the believer, is not an alien thing that is just found in him, no one knowing how and whence it came. On the contrary, the faith of the believer consists just in him finding himself as this particular personal consciousness in the absolute being, and his obedience and service consist in producing, through his own activity, that being as his own absolute being. [*PG* 566]

> But here Enlightenment is foolish. Faith regards it as not understanding the real facts when it talks about priestly deception and deluding the people. It talks about this as if by some hocus pocus of conjuring priests, consciousness has been pawned off with something absolutely alien and other to it in place of its own essence. It is impossible to deceive a people in this manner. Brass instead of gold, counterfeit instead of genuine

> money may well be passed off, at least in isolated cases. Many may be persuaded to believe that a battle lost was a battle won, and other lies about things of sense and isolated happenings may be credible for a time. But in the knowledge of that essential being in which consciousness has immediate certainty of itself, the idea of this sort of delusion is quite out of the question. [*PG* 550]

The language of belief is performative, establishing as well as expressing social normative relations—not just saying how things objectively are, independently of the attitudes of the believers involved.

What is constituted by Faith is a certain kind of self-conscious individuality. The recognitive account of self-consciousness tells us that this is possible only if a corresponding kind of recognitive community is instituted at the same time. The religious community is established by individuals' reciprocal recognition of each other as serving and worshipping, which is to say as identifying with the norms through sacrifice of merely particular, subjective attitudes and interests of the individuals they would otherwise be. This recognitive relation Hegel calls "trust" [Vertrauen].

> Whomsoever I trust, his certainty of himself is for me the certainty of myself; I recognize in him my own being-for-self, know that he acknowledges it and that it is for him purpose and essence. [*PG* 549]

The second part of this passage puts three requirements for an attitude to count as trust. The trusting one must recognize her own being-for-self, her own self-conception, in the trusted one; the trusting one must correctly take it that that self-conception is acknowledged by the trusted one; and the trusted one must correctly take it that that self-conception is acknowledged by the trusting one also as her own. The first part of the passage says that when those conditions are met, the trusting individual counts as identifying with the trusted individual.

So there is a kind of emergent identification-through-recognition here, according to which identifying with the norms has the effect or significance of identifying with other individuals who also identify their individual selves with the norms. Identifying with (by sacrificing for) the norms, and recognizing other individuals as doing the same, is at once identifying with the communal side of *Geist*—the recognitive community in whose practices

those norms are implicit—and also identifying with the other individuals whom one recognizes as undertaking the same identification. One is not identifying with the norms or the community rather than with the other individuals, but identifying with each by identifying with the other. Put another way, because of the shared renunciation of particularity, the individuals one identifies with by recognizing them as identifying with the community and its norms are not being treated in practice as split into a particular and a universal aspect. This constellation of attitudes foreshadows the final, fully self-conscious form of mutual recognition.

In trust, everyone is identifying with the universal side of individuality—and thereby with others who also do so. The passage quoted earlier continues:

> Further, since what is object for me is that in which I recognize myself, I am for myself at the same time in that object in the form of another self-consciousness, i.e. one which has become in that object alienated from its particular individuality, viz. from its natural and contingent existence, but which partly remains therein self-consciousness, partly, in that object, is an essential consciousness. [*PG* 549]

The community synthesized by reciprocal recognition in the form of trust shows the way to the possibility of an unalienated community of self-conscious individuals. It does not yet constitute such a community, because the particularity of the actual individual self-consciousnesses that actualize the norms by their acts and attitudes (including their recognitive attitudes) is still slighted. Further recognitive progress is required to overcome alienation and move beyond the modern phase in the development of *Geist.* Unalienated *Geist* requires further recognitive structure beyond trust as it is on offer here. But that the recognitive community have the structure of trust in this sense is one essential element of *Sittlichkeit* after the rise of modern subjectivity. What trust brings about is the "unity of abstract essence and self-consciousness," of the norms believing individuals identify with and those believers. That unity, Hegel claims, is "the absolute Being of Faith"—that is, the distinctive *object* of religious belief.

> The absolute Being of faith is essentially not the abstract essence that would exist beyond the consciousness of the believer; on the contrary, it is the Spirit of the [religious] community, the unity of the abstract essence and self-consciousness. It is the spirit of the community, the unity of the abstract essence in self-consciousness. [*PG* 549]

On his view, the real object of religious veneration, Spirit, is not a God in the form of a distinct thing that causally creates human beings, but the religious community that believers create by their recognitive identification with it and with each other. That, after all, is the lesson of his reading of the real lesson of the Christian Trinity: God the Father is the sensuously clothed image of the norm-governed community synthesized by reciprocal recognitive attitudes (having the structure of trust) among self-conscious individuals. The spiritual dimension of human life, toward which religious believers properly direct their attention and respect, is what must be added to merely natural animals to make us persons, self-conscious individual selves, agents and knowers, subjects of normative assessment. That is the discursive normativity implicit in the practices of a properly constituted recognitive community of language users.

Even though its achievement of a community exhibiting the recognitive structure of trust is a positive development, Faith, as Hegel describes it, is still an alienated form of self-consciousness. It is alienated in that it does not suitably and self-consciously incorporate the particular element in its practical attitude toward individuality. It is in fact the activity of individuals that produces the community and its implicit norms. Further, the relation of each believing individual to that for which it sacrifices and with which it identifies, the object of its veneration, is mediated by its relations to other recognized and recognizing individuals, via those recognitive attitudes. But Faith insists that it stands in an *immediate* relation to absolute essence, and that the existence and nature of that essence is wholly *independent* of the activities and attitudes of believers. Whereas in fact

> [t]hat [the absolute Being of Faith] be the spirit of the community, this requires as a necessary moment the action of the community. It is this spirit only by being produced by consciousness, or rather it does not exist as the spirit of the community without having been produced by this consciousness. [*PG* 549]

Its norms are actually the product of its practical recognitive attitudes. Modernity is right about that. Faith does not understand itself this way. Hegel has been telling us what the object of Faith is *in* itself, not what it is *for* the kind of self-consciousness in question. He is describing for us the referent that they pick out (address themselves to) by means of misleading senses (conceptual contents), the noumena behind the phenomena of religious worship and service. In this respect, Enlightenment is right in its criticisms of Faith. It does seriously misunderstand its object, which

is not (as Faith thinks), an objective, independent being, but a product of its own thought and practice. (Making a mistake of this kind is what in Marx's anthropological allegory is called "fetishism.")

> It is just this that Enlightenment rightly declares faith to be, when it says that what is for faith the absolute Being, is a Being of its own consciousness, is its own thought, something that is a creation of consciousness itself. [*PG* 549]

Faith seeks to ground its recognitive and practical activities in knowledge of facts—that is, to give an objectivist metaphysical grounding for the bindingness of these norms. That meta-attitude is carried over from traditional society: thinking of the norms not as the products of our activity, but as something merely found in the way the world anyway is. Where for the Greeks the norms had been part of the natural world, for Faith they are part of the supernatural world. But that is a specific difference within a general agreement that norms are grounded in ontology and matters of fact, in something about how the world just is antecedently to its having human beings and their practical attitudes in it. Those norms and their bindingness are not understood as products of human attitudes and activity, though they in fact are instituted by people acting according to the pure consciousness of faith. Believers institute these norms by their attitudes, but they do not understand themselves as doing that. Faith has not embraced the fundamental, defining insight of modernity: the attitude-dependence of normative statuses.

Faith and Enlightenment each has both a cognitive, theoretical dimension and a recognitive, practical dimension. Faith is wrong in its cognitive attitudes, misunderstanding its object and its relation to that object. But it succeeds with its recognitive practices, creating a community of trust. Enlightenment is right in its cognitive attitudes, correctly seeing that the normativity both are concerned with is not something independent of our attitudes and activities. But it fails on the recognitive, practical side. Because it creates a community with the reciprocal recognitive structure of trust, Faith acknowledges norms that can have some determinate content; they are contentful norms because a community like that can actually institute, sustain, and develop determinately contentful conceptual norms. But Enlightenment creates no such community. On the cognitive side, it sees that contentful norms cannot simply be read off of the way the world simply is, independently of the attitudes, activities, practices, and capacities of the creatures who are bound by them. Rationality is a human capacity. But Enlightenment is stuck

with a purely formal notion of reason. It can criticize the contents Faith purports to find, but cannot on its own produce replacements.

Enlightenment acknowledges, as Faith does not, that both the binding force and the determinate content of conceptual norms depend on the activity of self-conscious individual knowers and agents. Its disenchanted, objective natural world does not come with a normative structure. The phenomena of authority and responsibility are a human imposition, the product of our attitudes and practices. Enlightenment manifests its alienation by developing its understanding of the norms in a way that is as one-sidedly subjective as Faith's is one-sidedly objective. The ultimately unsatisfactory result is Enlightenment utilitarianism, which construes the normative significance of things as consisting in their usefulness to us.[330] "Utility" here is allegorical for the role things play as objects of practical attitudes. This view radicalizes the insight that conceptual norms are not independent of the activities of self-conscious individuals who apply those concepts in judgment and intention ("The Useful is the object in so far as self-consciousness penetrates it." [*PG* 581]), by turning it into the view that norms are simply reflections of the particular, contingent purposes of individual self-consciousnesses. In Hegel's terms, the principle of utility identifies what the norms are in themselves with what they are for consciousness.

The term "Utilitarianism" is now usually used to refer to the sort of moral theory given its classical shape by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. The term typically used to refer to the extension of that way of thinking from the practical realm to the theoretical realm of theories of meaning and truth is "pragmatism." Hegel sees a trajectory of thought that begins with the extrusion of subjective values from an objective world of facts, and ends with an identification of all properties and facts as purpose relative, an understanding of the truth of claims as conduciveness to the success of the practical enterprises of individuals. "Alienation" is his term for the common practical conception of (attitudes toward) authority and responsibility

[330] "Enlightenment completes the alienation of Spirit in this realm, too, in which that Spirit takes refuge and where it is conscious of an unruffled peace. It upsets the housekeeping of Spirit in the household of Faith by bringing into that household the tools and utensils of this world, a world which that Spirit cannot deny is its own, because its consciousness likewise belongs to it. In this negative activity pure insight at the same time realizes itself, and produces its own object, the unknowable absolute Being and the principle of utility." [*PG* 486]

("independence" and "dependence") that underlies, motivates, and necessitates the oscillation between one-sided objectivism and one-sided subjectivism. When that alienated practical conception is made theoretically explicit, he calls it "Verstand." Hegel's overall philosophical aim is to give us the metaconceptual tools to get beyond the ways of understanding norms that require us to choose between taking them to be genuinely binding on individual attitudes because objectively there, antecedently to and independently of any such attitudes, on the one hand, and taking them to be mere reflections of those subjective attitudes, on the other. Thinking in terms of the categories of *Vernunft* instead of *Verstand* is to enable us to overcome not only the naïve, dogmatic ontological objectivism about norms of the tradition, but also this sort of utilitarian pragmatism—quite distinct from the sort of pragmatism I have argued Hegel endorsed—with its ironic distancing from the genuineness of the binding force of the norms, which has been the modern culmination of the rise of subjectivism.

Hegel thinks the practical stakes riding on this enterprise are high. When pure consciousness in the form of Enlightenment is the self-understanding of actual consciousness in the institutional form of State Power (the practical recognitive expression and actualization of a theoretical cognitive view), the result is the Terror, whose epitome is the final bloodthirsty death throes of the French Revolution.

> Consciousness has found its Notion in Utility . . . from this inner revolution there emerges the actual revolution of the actual world, the new shape of consciousness, absolute freedom. [*PG* 582]

Norms that are products of subjective attitudes are practically understood as unable to constrain those attitudes. A purely formal notion of reason offers no determinate content. The state is understood on the model of a particular individual self-consciousness—distinguished only in that the will of that consciousness (the "will of the people"), its commitments, are taken as binding on every individual. Thus individuals are obliged to identify with and sacrifice themselves for that will. But this sort of purely formal recognition relation—each citizen recognizing himself in the will or all, the common will—cannot in fact institute a determinately contentful common will. That would require that the particular subjective commitments of the individuals have some sort of authority over the universal, the common will. The result, he thinks, must be a content-vacuum, which can be filled only by the subjective attitudes and inclinations of some despotic

individual—in much the same way as in the realm of abstract legal personhood. Absolute Terror is what happens when the authority of individual self-consciousness to institute norms is conceived and practiced as unconstrained by correlative responsibility—as a matter of independence without correlative dependence.

Contentful norms require incorporation of particularity and contingency in the form of necessity (normative force) and universality (conceptual content) through recognitive relations of reciprocal authority and responsibility articulated not only *socially,* but also *historically,* in the form of constraint by a recollected *tradition.* Understanding that there are no norms wholly independent of the attitudes and practices of individual self-consciousnesses is modern; understanding that authority of attitudes over statuses on the model of unconstrained, pure independence (asymmetrical recognition) rather than freedom is alienated. Any such conception is bound to oscillate between seeing the norms as not constraining attitudes because they are contentless, and seeing them as not constraining attitudes because their content is arbitrary, contingent, and particular, hence irrational, derived from the contingent attitudes, interests, and inclinations of some particular subject. The charge of contentlessness was Hegel's objection at the end of the *Reason* section to the "honest consciousness," which pursues its contraction strategy for construing agency on the model of Mastery by taking responsibility only for what it *tries* to do, its *will,* narrowly construed, rather than its actual doing. And we will see the same objection made to the conscientious consciousness, which analogously identifies duty with what it sincerely takes to be duty (norm with attitude) in the discussion of *Moralität* near the end of *Spirit.*

Faith and Enlightenment are each one-sided appreciations of the true nature of norms in relation to attitudes. Faith is on the right track on the practical recognitive dimension of self-consciousness, but has the wrong theoretical cognitive take on the side of consciousness. Faith is right in what it *does:* to *give* the norms determinate content by building a recognitive *community.* It builds a *community of trust,* which can *develop* and *sustain* determinately contentful norms. It is right to see that its relation to the norms should be one of *acknowledgment* and *service.* It is wrong to think that private conceptions and concerns must or even can be totally sacrificed to make that possible. Faith is wrong to take over the traditional immediate conception of its

relation to the norms: to reify, ontologize, and in a sense naturalize them by objectifying them. It does not recognize itself in those norms it identifies with, in that it does not see them as its own product. Neither its community nor its individual activities are seen as *essential* or as *authoritative* with respect to those norms. Enlightenment is right that the norms depend for both their force and their content on the attitudes and practices of the very individuals who become more than merely particular, natural beings by being acculturated—that is, by being constrained by those norms. It is wrong to think that all we contribute is the *form.* And it is wrong in the practical recognitive consequences of its insight into our authority over the norms. It is right in its criticism of Faith's metaphysics, but wrong to think that undercuts its form of life. On the recognitive side of constituting communities and self-conscious individuals, the contrast between the Terror and the community of trust could not be more stark. The division of legitimating pure consciousness into complementary competing practically institutionalized rivals, one of whom can be successful on the cognitive side only at the cost of failure on the recognitive side, and the other of whom can be successful on the recognitive side only at the cost of failure on the cognitive side, is a structure distinctive of modern alienation.

What is needed to overcome it is to combine the humanistic *metaphysics* of Enlightenment (with its cognitive theoretical emphasis on the contribution of the activity of individual self-consciousnesses) with the *community of trust* of Faith (with its recognitive practical emphasis on the contribution of the activity of individual self-consciousnesses through acknowledgment of, service to, and identification-through-sacrifice with the norms). The recipe for moving to the third, postmodern phase in the development of *Geist* is to bring together the cognitive and recognitive successes of Enlightenment and Faith. The key to doing that is appreciating the role *recollection* plays in both cognition and recognition. When cognitive activity takes the form of forgiving recollection, it institutes semantic representational relations between knowing subjects and the objects known. When recognitive activity takes the form of forgiving recollection, it institutes communities with the normative structure of trust. In short, recollection as forgiveness forges the conceptual link between unalienated cognition and unalienated recognition.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**
Handout for Lecture 17

Genealogy and Magnanimity: The Allegory of the Valet

An important perspective on the concept of alienation is provided by two meta-attitudes that are in play throughout the final two-thirds of the *Spirit* chapter. Hegel's terms for these attitudes is "edelmütig" and "niederträchtig."

The *edelmütig* meta-attitude takes it that there really are norms that attitudes are directed toward and answer to. It treats norms as genuinely efficacious, as really making a difference to what individuals do. It understands attitudes as norm-governed, in the dual sense that norms provide standards for assessments of the correctness of attitudes, and that attitudes are subjunctively sensitive to the contents of the norms.

The *niederträchtig* meta-attitude sees only normative attitudes. The norms are construed as at most adverbial modifications of the attitudes: a way of talking about the contents of those attitudes by assigning them virtual objects. *Niederträchtigkeit* is the purest expression of the alienated character of modern normativity (hence culture, self-consciousness, and community).

The *Kammerdiener* passage on *Niederträchtigkeit*:
"[I]t holds to the other aspect . . . and explains [the action] as resulting from an intention different from the action itself, and from selfish motives. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]; for, qua action, it is the actuality of the individual. This judging of the action thus takes it out of its outer existence and reflects it into its inner aspect, or into the form of its own particularity. If the action is accompanied by fame, then it knows this inner aspect to be a desire for fame. If it is altogether in keeping with the station of the individual, without going beyond this station, and of such a nature that the individuality does not possess its station as a character externally attached to it, but through its own self gives filling to this universality, thereby showing itself capable of a higher station, then the inner aspect of the action is judged to be ambition, and so on. Since, in the action as such, the doer attains to a vision of himself in objectivity, or to a feeling of self in his existence, and thus to enjoyment, the inner aspect is judged to be an urge to secure his own happiness, even though this were to consist merely in an inner moral conceit, in the enjoyment of being conscious of his own superiority and in the foretaste of a hope of future happiness. No action can escape such judgement, for duty for duty's sake, this pure purpose, is an unreality; it becomes a reality in the deed of an individuality, and the action is thereby charged with the aspect of particularity. **No man is a hero to his valet; not, however, because the man is not a hero, but because the valet—is a valet,** whose dealings are with

the man, not as a hero, but as one who eats, drinks, and wears clothes, in general, with his individual wants and fancies. Thus, for the judging consciousness, there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the moral valet towards the agent."
[*PG* 665; emphasis added]

How should norms (what is or is not appropriate, correct, obligatory, or permissible) or normative *statuses* (responsibility, authority, commitment, or entitlement), on the one hand, be understood as related to normative *attitudes* (*taking* performances to be appropriate, correct, obligatory, or permissible, *acknowledging* or *attributing* responsibility, authority, commitment, or entitlement), on the other? The traditional, premodern view saw norms as independent and attitudes as dependent. The objective norms have authority over the subjective attitudes of individuals, which are supposed merely to reflect them, acknowledge their authority, apply them in deliberation and assessment, judgment and action. The modern view sees attitudes as independent, and norms as dependent. The subjective attitudes individuals adopt *institute* norms.

The *Kammerdiener* stands for a *niederträchtig,* relentlessly naturalistic alternative to this *edelmütig,* normative description of concept use. In place of the picture of "heroic" practical sensitivity to norms—trying, in deliberation and assessment, to determine what is really correct, what one ought to do, what one is obliged to do (what "duty" consists in), acknowledging genuine normative constraint on one's attitudes—this meta-attitude appeals *only* to attitudes, which are not construed as the acknowledgment of any normative constraint on or authority over those attitudes. Reasons are traded for causes.

The general thought is that the possibility of offering a certain kind of *genealogical* account of the process by which a conceptual content developed or was determined can seem to undercut the *rational* bindingness of the norms that have that content.

The first way of understanding the relation between the *edelmütig* normativist and the *niederträchtig* naturalist is as a cognitive disagreement about a matter of objective fact. They disagree about the correct answer to the question: Are there norms, or not?

This objectivist, cognitivist way of understanding the status of the two meta-attitudes toward norms and normative attitudes is not the only one available, however. It is possible to adopt instead an almost diametrically opposed subjectivist meta-meta-attitude. According to this way of thinking, the normativist and the naturalist employ different vocabularies in describing the world. Using one rather than the other is adopting a *stance.* The two stances are incompatible; one cannot adopt them both. One either uses normative vocabulary or one does not. But both of them are available, and both of them are legitimate.

"Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]." [*PG* 665]
"No action can escape such judgement," there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the moral valet towards the agent." [*PG* 665]
"Nature and the world or history of spirit are the two realities. . . . The ultimate aim and business of philosophy is to reconcile thought or the Notion with reality." [*Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Volume 3, p. 545]

"The consciousness that judges in this way is itself base [niederträchtig], because it divides up the action, producing and holding fast to the disparity of the action with itself." [*PG* 666]

The claim is that adopting the *niederträchtig* normative meta-attitude institutes a kind of normativity that has a distinctive, defective structure. To say that is to say that *Niederträchtigkeit* is in the first instance a kind of *recognition,* rather than of *cognition.*

"Faith . . . receives at [Enlightenment's] hands nothing but wrong; for Enlightenment distorts all the moments of faith, changing them into something different from what they are in it." [*PG* 563]
"To faith, [Enlightenment] seems to be a perversion and a lie because it points out the otherness of its moments; in doing so, it seems directly to make something else out of them than they are in their separateness." [*PG* 564]

The third construal of the *niederträchtig* and *edelmütig* meta-attitudes toward norms and normative attitudes is then that they are recognitive attitudes that have the effect of *practical commitments.* Adopting the *edelmütig* stance of spirit is committing oneself to *making* what we are doing being binding ourselves by conceptual norms, so acknowledging the authority of such norms, by practically *taking* it that that is what we are doing—by recognitively treating ourselves and our fellows as doing that. On this view normativity (which, because the norms in question are for Hegel all *conceptually* contentful, is the same phenomenon as rationality) is not feature of our practices independent of our practical meta-attitude toward it. "To him who looks at the world rationally, the world looks rationally back," Hegel says. Normativity and rationality are *products* of our *edelmütig* meta-attitudes, of our practically taking or treating what we are doing (recognizing each other) *as* acknowledging rational commitments. Spirit exists insofar as we *make* it exist by *taking* it to exist: by understanding what we are doing in normative, rational terms. We make the world rational by adopting the recognitively structured constellation of commitments and responsibilities I have—following Hegel's usage in connection with the community Faith is committed to instituting—denominated *trust.*

If the determinate contentfulness of the thoughts and intentions even of the *niederträchtig* is in fact intelligible *only* from an *edelmütig* perspective, *then* anyone who in practice treats what he is doing as judging and acting is implicitly committed thereby to *Edelmütigkeit.* The apparent parity of the two metanormative stances is an illusion. No genuine choice between them is possible. By talking (engaging in discursive practices) at all, we have already implicitly endorsed and adopted one of them, whether we explicitly realize that or (like the *Kammerdiener*) not. On this reading, what Hegel is asking us to do is only to *explicitly* acknowledge theoretical and practical commitments we have already *implicitly* undertaken just by taking part in discursive practices—which is to say, by being acculturated. Explicitly adopting the *edelmütig* practical-recognitive attitude is accordingly just achieving a certain kind of self-consciousness: realizing something that is already true of ourselves.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**

Lecture 17

Genealogy and Magnanimity: The Allegory of the Valet

I. Two Meta-Attitudes

An important perspective on the concept of alienation is provided by two meta-attitudes that are in play throughout the final two-thirds of the *Spirit* chapter. Hegel's terms for these attitudes is "edelmütig" and "niederträchtig." Miller translates these as "noble" and "base" (or "ignoble"). I take it that a better way to think about the contrast is as that between "generous" and "mean-spirited," or "magnanimous" and "pusillanimous" (literally: "great-souled" and "small-souled"). Because the rich content they are to convey goes beyond that expressed by any of these labels, however, I will generally leave these terms in the German. They are *meta*-attitudes because they are attitudes toward the relations between norms (or normative statuses such as commitments, responsibilities, and authority) and attitudes of acknowledging or attributing such norms as binding or applicable. As I understand it, the *edelmütig* meta-attitude takes it that there really are norms that attitudes are directed toward and answer to. It treats norms as genuinely efficacious, as really making a difference to what individuals do. It understands attitudes as norm-governed, in the dual sense that norms provide standards for assessments of the correctness of attitudes, and that attitudes are subjunctively sensitive to the contents of the norms. Attitudes—paradigmatically the acknowledgment or attribution of a norm as binding, taking oneself or another to be committed or responsible, practically distinguishing between performances that are appropriate and those that are not—are the way the norms are actualized, the way they become efficacious, how they make things happen in the causal order. The *niederträchtig* meta-attitude sees only normative attitudes. The norms are construed as at most adverbial modifications of the attitudes: a way of talking about the contents of those attitudes by assigning them virtual objects. *Niederträchtigkeit* is the purest expression of the alienated character of modern normativity (hence culture, self-consciousness, and community).

The two meta-attitudes of *Edelmütigkeit* and *Niederträchtigkeit* are initially both manifestations of alienation because they seize one-sidedly on the unity of knowing-and-acting consciousness, in the one case, and the distinction that it involves, on the other. Because the defining flaw of modernity is its failure to get the unity and the distinction that knowing-and-acting consciousness involve in focus together in one picture, the way forward to the reachievement of unalienated *Sittlichkeit* is a kind of higher *Edelmütigkeit.* On the theoretical side, that is coming to apply metaconceptual categories of *Vernunft,* rather than those of *Verstand.* Hegel's account of what that consists in is the core achievement of his philosophy. As we draw closer to the end of his exposition in the *Phenomenology,* we get a new vantage point on that structure of unalienated understanding.

II. The *Kammerdiener*

The clearest expression of the new piece of the puzzle comes in a famous passage about "playing the moral valet." "Valet" is "Kammerdiener," and I call this crucial stretch of text "the *Kammerdiener* passage." It expresses a cardinal form of *Niederträchtigkeit,* holding fast to the disparity that action involves:

> [I]t holds to the other aspect . . . and explains [the action] as resulting from an intention different from the action itself, and from selfish motives. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]; for, qua action, it is the actuality of the individual. This judging of the action thus takes it out of its outer existence and reflects it into its inner aspect, or into the form of its own particularity. If the action is accompanied by fame, then it knows this inner aspect to be a desire for fame. If it is altogether in keeping with the station of the individual, without going beyond this station, and of such a nature that the individuality does not possess its station as a character externally attached to it, but through its own self gives filling to this universality, thereby showing itself capable of a higher station, then the inner aspect of the action is judged to be ambition, and so on. Since, in the action as such, the doer attains to a vision of himself in objectivity, or to a feeling of self in his existence, and thus to enjoyment, the inner aspect is judged to be an urge to secure his own happiness,

> even though this were to consist merely in an inner moral conceit, in the enjoyment of being conscious of his own superiority and in the foretaste of a hope of future happiness. No action can escape such judgement, for duty for duty's sake, this pure purpose, is an unreality; it becomes a reality in the deed of an individuality, and the action is thereby charged with the aspect of particularity. **No man is a hero to his valet; not, however, because the man is not a hero, but because the valet—is a valet,** whose dealings are with the man, not as a hero, but as one who eats, drinks, and wears clothes, in general, with his individual wants and fancies. Thus, for the judging consciousness, there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the moral valet towards the agent. [*PG* 665; boldface added]

This is a rich and important passage. I see its significance as unfolding in a series of concentric, widening ripples, and I want to follow them as they broaden out from their center. To be a *hero* in the sense in play here is to act out of regard for one's duty. That is to have one's actions proceed from respect for or acknowledgment of the authority of norms. The hero is the one who acknowledges a norm as binding by actualizing it, who does what he ought, because he ought. To play the valet to such a hero is to impute only selfish, particular motives, to trace every action back to some perceived personal advantage, be it only a reputation for virtue, or, where even that is not available, the satisfaction of thinking well of oneself. In any case, only particular attitudes are acknowledged, not governing norms.

Consider the official who exercises state power. He has committed himself to act purely according to universal interests or norms. That is, he commits himself to doing *only* what acknowledgment of the norms requires. But every actual performance is a particular doing, and incorporates contingency. It is always *more* than just the acknowledgment of a norm, and may well also be *less* than that. (I can never *just* turn on the light or feed the poor—I am always *also* doing other things, such as alerting the burglar, or cutting the education budget or raising taxes.) Contingent motives and interests will always also be in play. Thus it will always be possible for the *niederträchtig* consciousness to point out the moment of disparity, the particularity and contingency that infects each action. It is never *just* an instance of the universal. The *Kammerdiener* can always explain what the hero of service did in terms of self-interested (hence

particular, contingent) motives and interests, rather than as a response to an acknowledged normative necessity. There is no action at all that is not amenable to this sort of reductive, ignoble description.

Broadening our horizons a little bit, I think we can see an issue being raised concerning the relations between norms and attitudes quite generally. The *Kammerdiener* does not appeal to norms in his explanations of behavior. The attitudes of individuals are enough. The public official says that he acted as he did because it was his duty. The *Kammerdiener* offers a competing explanation that appeals only to his desires. What his duty actually is, what he *ought* to do, plays no role in this account. Thought of at this level of generality, the moral-psychological valet stands for a kind of nihilism about norms that has more recently been championed by Gilbert Harman for the special case of moral norms.[331] According to this view, invoking moral norms or values is explanatorily otiose. For we can offer explanations of everything that actually happens in terms of people's *views* about what is right and wrong, what they *take* to be permissible or obligatory. It is those *attitudes* that are causally efficacious. And those attitudes—*believing* that it is wrong to steal, for instance—would have just the same causal consequences whether or not there were facts to which they corresponded, whether or not it is in fact wrong to steal. Nor is the case any different if we look upstream, to the antecedents of moral attitudes, rather than downstream at the consequences. My belief that it is wrong to steal was brought about by other beliefs (along with other attitudes, such as desires): some my own, some held by my parents and teachers. The *truth* of the belief need not be invoked to explain why I have the belief, or why anyone else has it. In this way moral beliefs (normative attitudes) contrast with the perceptual beliefs expressed by noninferential reports, for which the frequent truth of such beliefs must be appealed to both in explaining why we have those beliefs and in explaining why having those beliefs has the consequences it does. Acts of applying concepts in judgment and intentional action, and acts of assessing such applications form a complete explanatory structure, one that is capable of accounting for what people do without needing to be supplemented by reference to the conceptual norms or standards that are supposedly being applied and with respect to which applications are supposedly being assessed. Because we do not need to appeal to norms, the best explanation of our actions and attitudes appeals only to

[331] Gilbert Harman, *The Nature of Morality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

attitudes. So we should conclude that there are no norms, only attitudes. This approach sees a massive error standing behind our ordinary ways of talking about norms.

Another way to look at the issue is to ask what sort of theory of practical reasoning the *Kammerdiener*'s meta-attitude depends on. It is one that eschews what are sometimes called "external reasons." A broadly kantian form of practical reasoning and explanation appeals to inferences such as the following:

It is wrong to steal.
Taking that newspaper would be stealing.
So I shall not take that newspaper.

Here the norm, the wrongness of stealing, serves as a premise in a piece of practical reasoning that can be appealed to in deliberation about what to do, assessment of what has been done, prediction of what will be done, and explanation of what was done. That is the sort of practical reasoning to which the *edelmütig* meta-attitude appeals when it sees the official and the counselor acting out of respect for and obedience to communal norms. A broadly humean approach to practical reasoning, of the sort endorsed by Davidson, insists that the kantian radically misrepresents the reasons that actually motivate intentional action. Even if the first premise states a fact, even if it is wrong to steal, that fact would not by itself engage with my motivational machinery. To do that, I must know about or at least believe in the fact. The real reason in the vicinity is that *I believe* that it is wrong to steal. Apart from that belief, the wrongness of stealing is nothing to me, and cannot affect what I go on to do or try to do. Once we have added that belief as a premise, the original invocation of a norm can drop out. The humean principle is that only beliefs and desires (that is, individual *attitudes*) can serve as motivating reasons. Norms cannot. The idea is that what serve as reasons for action must also be causes, and only attitudes such as beliefs and desires can do that.

III. The Authority of Normative Attitudes and Statuses

The issue here concerns the practical conception of the pragmatic notion of normative *force.* How should norms (what is or is not appropriate, correct, obligatory, or permissible) or

normative *statuses* (responsibility, authority, commitment, or entitlement), on the one hand, be understood as related to normative *attitudes* (*taking* performances to be appropriate, correct, obligatory, or permissible, *acknowledging* or *attributing* responsibility, authority, commitment, or entitlement), on the other? The traditional, premodern view saw norms as independent and attitudes as dependent. The objective norms have authority over the subjective attitudes of individuals, which are supposed merely to reflect them, acknowledge their authority, apply them in deliberation and assessment, judgment and action. The modern view sees attitudes as independent, and norms as dependent. The subjective attitudes individuals adopt *institute* norms.

The selfish particular motives that are all the *Kammerdiener* attributes are independently authoritative attitudes that can be reflected only in statuses such as usefulness to private purposes, not in statuses such as duty, or being *unconditionally* obligatory—in the sense that the obligatoriness is authoritative for attitudes, rather than conditioned on them, as in the hypothetical, instrumental imperatives arising from prudent pursuit of privately endorsed ends. The *Kammerdiener* banishes talk of values that are not immediate products of individual valuings. The rise of subjectivity is the practical realization that values are not independent of valuings. Quintessential alienated later modern thinkers such as Nietzsche and the British utilitarians conclude that only valuings are real.

Taking it that the dependence of values on valuings implies that valuings are independent of values is a strategy of independence—which understands everything Humpty Dumpty's way, as just a matter of who is to be Master. If norms are not immediately authoritative over attitudes, then attitudes must be immediately authoritative over norms. Practically applying categories of immediacy (mastery) in this way, epitomized in the *Kammerdiener*'s *niederträchtig* meta-attitude, is a pure form of *alienation* because it makes unintelligible the very acculturating, conceptual norms subjection to which makes even the *Kammerdiener* a discursive, *geistig* being: a knower, agent, and self. *Kammerdiener* explanations, which admit only normative attitudes, not only cannot make sense of normative *force,* but also in the end make the notion of conceptual *content* unintelligible. The relation between these is the topic of the last part of the *Spirit* section of the *Phenomenology.*

Moving from the practically alienating standpoint of *Verstand* to the practically *sittlich* standpoint of *Vernunft* requires breaking out of the seeming inevitability of this restricted pair of alternatives—either norms are immediately, hence totally, authoritative over attitudes, or *vice versa*—by making intelligible the possibility of *reciprocal* dependence between norm and attitude. To do that, it is not enough, of course, simply to mouth the phrase "reciprocal dependence between norm and attitude." To make good on that phrase, Hegel offers a richly articulated metaconceptual apparatus laying out the nature of the complex interdependence of the authority of actual applications of concepts over the contents of those concepts and the responsibility of actual applications of concepts to the contents of those concepts. It requires reconceiving the relations between normative force and conceptual content in terms of a process of experience (a cycle of perception-and-action) that is at once the institution and the application of conceptual norms, both a making and a finding of conceptual contents. His account of how that is possible requires the interaction of a social-recognitive dimension and a historical-recollective dimension, on the side of normative pragmatics, and an incompatibility-inferential and representational-referential dimension, on the side of semantics.

There is a third, still more general issue being raised by the *Kammerdiener*'s meta-attitude, beyond treating attitudes as purely independent of norms (which remain in the picture only in an adverbial capacity, in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to individuate the contents of the attitudes). That concerns the relation between reasons and causes generally, or, still more abstractly, the place of norms in nature. For the *Kammerdiener* essentially treats the hero of duty as a merely *natural* being. The only way of making the hero's actions intelligible that the *Kammerdiener* admits are of the sort that are available in principle for unacculturated creatures, those merely "immersed in the expanse of life." Though the wants attributed to the hero (for instance, the "inner moral conceit" that consists in "the enjoyment of being conscious of his own superiority and in the foretaste of a hope of future happiness") go beyond the biologically dictated desires of mere animals, the *Kammerdiener*'s view of the hero is as one who "eats, drinks, and wears clothes"—that is, at base, as a being driven by creaturely comforts and discomforts. The most general issue Hegel is addressing in his discussion of the *Kammerdiener* is that of *reductive naturalism* about normativity.

This sort of naturalism is the most fundamental possible challenge to the Kantian picture of us as normative creatures, as distinguished from the merely natural precisely by our subjection to norms, by the fact that we can bind ourselves by (make ourselves responsible to) norms, by applying concepts, whose contents settle *what* we have made ourselves responsible for and to. Is there really any such thing as authority or responsibility, as commitment or entitlement? Or is that sort of normative talk wholly optional and dispensable, indeed, a positively misleading mystification: a fundamental error of the sort of which Enlightenment accuses Faith? For the *Kammerdiener* utilitarian, the work of Enlightenment is only half done when superstitious belief in a magical, invisible, supernatural objective Authority has been banished, so long as human behavior is still described in any terms that invoke norms not immediately derivable from the sensuous inclinations of desiring beings.

The *Kammerdiener* stands for a *niederträchtig,* relentlessly naturalistic alternative to this *edelmütig,* normative description of concept use. In place of the picture of "heroic" practical sensitivity to norms—trying, in deliberation and assessment, to determine what is really correct, what one ought to do, what one is obliged to do (what "duty" consists in), acknowledging genuine normative constraint on one's attitudes—this meta-attitude appeals *only* to attitudes, which are not construed as the acknowledgment of any normative constraint on or authority over those attitudes. Reasons are traded for causes. It is this large-scale, fundamental disagreement between the reductive naturalist and the rational-normativist that Hegel is committed to resolving in his discussion of what the *Kammerdiener* gets right, what he gets wrong, and what lessons we should learn from him. This project, broadly construed, is to provide a response to Kant's Third Antinomy—the challenge to integrate reasons and causes. A significant proportion of Hegel's claim to contemporary philosophical attention, I think, should be seen as deriving from his response to this issue of normative naturalism. So the stakes are very high.

Hegel takes it that he shares with Kant at least the aspiration for an account that manages to acknowledge both the attitude-dependence of norms and their genuine authority over attitudes. That is why the Kantian structure of *Moralität* opens the third section of the *Spirit* chapter. Kant's view is transitional between the alienated modernity epitomized by the moral valet and a new kind of *Sittlichkeit* compatible with the rise of subjectivity. For Hegel, Kant opens the door

to the third structural stage in the development of self-conscious Spirit, even though he does not succeed in helping us through it. For Kant's conception of us as creatures who are bound not just by rules (the laws that govern the realm of nature) but by *conceptions* (or representations, *Vorstellungen*) of rules (the norms that govern the realm of freedom), together with the tight conceptual connection he insists on between autonomy and normativity express an attempt to reconcile the attitude-dependence of norms with their genuine bindingness. All genuinely *normative* binding (authority) is *self*-binding. In the end, each of us *is* committed only to what we *have* committed *ourselves* to. Our *real* commitments are just those that we have (at least implicitly) *acknowledged.* In this sense, it is our *attitudes* that bring *norms* into force. We apply the concepts that only then bind us, by determining what we have thereby authorized and made ourselves responsible to and for. This is what I have called the "Kant-Rousseau demarcation of the normative in terms of autonomy." This approach offers a structural solution to the reconciliation of the attitude-dependence of norms and the norm-dependence of attitudes that appeals to a distinction between the *force* of conceptual norms and their *content.* It is up to us, as knowers and agents, what norms we bring into force. For it is up to us what concepts we apply. But it is *not* then up to us what the content of those norms is—the details of *what* we have committed ourselves to by applying the concepts we did, rather than some others.

IV. Naturalism and Genealogy

The general thought is that the possibility of offering a certain kind of *genealogical* account of the process by which a conceptual content developed or was determined can seem to undercut the *rational* bindingness of the norms that have that content. This is a form of argument that was deployed to devastating effect by the great unmaskers of the later nineteenth century. Suppose that the correct answer to the question of why we draw the distinction between right and wrong as we do in some area of discourse is a causal explanation in terms of economic class structure, or a quasibiological account in terms of the limited number of ways the will to power can manifest itself in the weak, or a description of how early traumas incurred while acting out the Family romance reliably recathect libido into standard repressed adult forms. If any such genealogy can causally explain why our normative attitudes have the contents that they do—why we make the judgments we do instead of some others—then the issue of the rational justifiability

of those attitudes lapses. We appear to have reasons for our deliberations and assessments, and it may be comforting to ourselves to think that is why they have the contents they do. But talk about what reasons there are for adopting one attitude rather than another is unmasked by a convincing genealogy of the process as a *mere* appearance. The genealogy tells us what is *really* going on, by presenting the underlying mechanism actually responsible for our taking this rather than that as appropriate, fitting, or correct. Seeing ourselves as creatures who are genuinely sensitive to reasons, who are trying to figure out what is in fact appropriate, fitting, or correct—what we really have reason to do—then comes to seem naïve and old-fashioned: the result of applying an exploded explanatory framework couched in a fanciful vocabulary, whose adoption can itself be explained away genealogically as the result of a process quite different from the reasoning to which it pretends.

A clear illustration of how a genealogy of content can undercut normative force is found in the principal model I have suggested throughout for Hegel's account of conceptual content: the way concepts of common law develop through the decisions of judges to apply them or withhold application of them in particular cases. I originally invoked this example as a model of the way in which a process of *applying* conceptual norms in making judgments and practical decisions can also serve to *institute* conceptual norms and *determine* their contents. The key point in the present context is that there is nothing outside the previous judges' decisions to determine the contents of the concepts each judge must apply in a new case. Those prior cases are the only source of *reasons* for the current judge to apply or not apply the concepts in question to the new set of facts. Here, too, a *genealogical* characterization of the process is possible. For in each of the prior cases appealed to in justifying a contemporary judgment it may be possible to explain the earlier decision by appealing to what *caused* the judgment, rather than what *reasons* there were for it. One may be able to account for the precedential decision by looking at, in the slogan of jurisprudential theory, "what the judge had for breakfast." Less fancifully, such a genealogical explanation might invoke the nature of the judge's training, the prejudices of his teachers, the opinions of his culture circle, his career ambitions, the political emphases, issues, and pressures of the day, and so on. Playing the moral valet to the judge is offering such a genealogical account of a judgment: revealing it as not a response to reasons properly provided by precedent and principle, not a matter of acknowledging as binding the content of an

antecedent norm, but as the product of extrajudicial, rationally extraneous motives and considerations.

Such genealogical accounts reveal the contingency of the conceptual content a later judge inherits from the tradition. For they make clear that *had* various judges happened to have had different "breakfasts" (had the contingencies the *Kammerdiener* appeals to as causes been different), the current content of the concept *would have been* different. Different decisions would have been made in the past, and would accordingly have provided a different field of possible precedents. In fact, it is a commonplace of jurisprudential genealogy that another sort of contingency infects the process. For it is often clear that the *order* in which various difficult cases arose crucially affects the contents that emerge from the process. In such situations, the present state of the law would be very different had the case that happened to arise for adjudication later had to be decided before the one that in fact came up first. Similar contingencies affecting the content of concepts handed down as precedents derive from the happenstance of what particular jurisdiction a particular set of facts arises in. The issue I am focusing on is how the availability of such a contingency-riddled genealogical explanation for why the concept currently has the content that it does affects the intelligibility of the norm embodied in that concept as *rationally binding,* as providing genuine *reasons* for the current decision to go one way or the other. This is the issue of the relation between genealogy and justification. There is a temptation, indulged and fostered by the genealogical tradition that stretches from Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud in the nineteenth century through Foucault at the end of the twentieth, to take it that explanations in terms of causes trump explanations in terms of reasons, showing the latter to be illusory. Exhibiting the contingent features of things, not addressed by a conceptual content or commitment, that caused it to be as it is, unmasks talk of reasons is irrelevant mystification. *Niederträchtig* explanations take precedence over *edelmütig* ones.

Why should that be? The answer lies in ways of thinking about reason that are deeply rooted in the philosophical tradition. Both the ancients and the moderns defined reason in part by what it excludes. The Greeks introduce the notion of reason in terms of the contrast between *rational* persuasion and *sophistical* ways of producing attitudes: the distinction between what

ought to convince and what merely in fact *does* convince. One explains the advent of the first sort of attitude by rehearsing an argument. One explains the advent of the second sort of attitude by producing a genealogy. The Enlightenment notion of reason is similarly structured by the contrast between the rational authority of *argument,* and the merely habitual influence of *tradition:* between what we *ought* to believe and what we merely as a matter of fact *have* believed. When Enlightenment offers a genealogy of religious belief in terms of interests of priests and despots, or describes the contingent processes by which scripture was transmitted, it understands itself as undercutting the rational authority of Faith. Both the ancient and the modern conceptions of reason motivate a project of *purifying* reason, by extruding the alien, extraneous influence of what is merely in fact efficacious in bringing about beliefs. On their conceptions, what merely as a matter of fact *is* or *has been* believed—the judgments (applications of concepts) that *have in fact* been endorsed—should be granted *no rational* weight or force—that is, authority. Kant is only making fully explicit a way of thinking that is already fully in play in Descartes' *Meditations* when he decisively separates *causal* from *justificatory* grounding, criticizing Locke for producing, in effect, a mere genealogy of empirical beliefs rather than an account of how they are rationally warranted. Hegel thinks that reason as so purified is reduced to something empty, contentless, purely formal—and so inevitably set on a road that leads to skepticism. Hegel's notion of reason is not opposed to the authority of tradition; it is an aspect of it. What merely *is does* have *rational* (defeasible) authority. ("The actual [wirklich] is the rational; the rational is the actual.") How we have in the past *actually* applied a concept—from one point of view, *contingently,* because not *necessitated* by the norm antecedently in play—helps determine how it is *correct* to apply it. Conceptual norms incorporate contingency, and only so can they be determinately contentful. This is how they come to be *about* what there actually *is,* to *represent* it, not in an *external* sense, but in a sense that involves *incorporating* into the representing the reference to what is represented.

I think the later Wittgenstein worried about this issue. I think he saw the temptation to see a demonstration of the parochiality of the content of a norm—its dependence on or reflection of certain kinds of contingent features of the practitioners and their practices—as undercutting the intelligibility of that norm as genuinely binding, as being a real norm, as having normative force. Wittgenstein does not, as Hegel does, take it that to be determinately contentful at all a norm

must have a *conceptual* content (though he does take the considerations about the dependence of the content of norms on contingent matters of fact to apply also to the case of the conceptual norms expressed by terms such as "rigid"). The effect of the contingency of their content on the *rational* bindingness of our norms is accordingly not exactly the way to put Wittgenstein's problem. But he does worry about the thought that showing, for instance, that what counts as the *right* way to go on depends on a reproducible consilience in how practitioners actually *would* go on makes mysterious the sense in which there *is* a *right* way to go on, a difference between doing so correctly and incorrectly. And I take it that he is concerned both to reject that inference and to diagnose it as the consequence of a traditional, but ultimately magical notion of normative force. The effect of the demonstration of the parochiality and contingency of the practices in which our norms are implicit is not meant to be normative nihilism. Rather, space is to be opened up for new ways of construing the relations between genealogy and justification.

The issue of how to recover a sense in which conceptual norms can be understood as genuinely binding in the face of the revelation of the contingency of their content by a genealogical account of their origin and development is particularly pressing for Hegel because his response to what he takes to be Kant's uncritical attitude toward determinate conceptual contents is to offer a conception of *experience* as a single process that is at once the application and the institution of conceptual norms. (That is what the common-law model is a model of.) The slogan I suggested there was that in this regard, Hegel is to Kant as Quine is to Carnap. Each replaces a two-phase story—according to which first meanings are specified, and then they are applied to make judgments (language first, then theory)—by a one-phase story in which the two functions are intermingled. *Kammerdiener* genealogies pose a threat to pragmatists of this sort. The possibility of a norm-free, *niederträchtig* account threatens the justifiability and even the intelligibility of norm-acknowledging, *edelmütig* ones. And for Hegel, the issue concerns the *rational* force of conceptual norms: their capacity to provide real *reasons* for saying or doing one thing rather than another. In situating *edelmütig* characterizations of our discursive practice with respect to *niederträchtig* ones, Hegel will be explaining how we should understand what the *normative force* of a *reason* consists in. To repeat the earlier observation: the stakes are high.

V. Four Meta-meta-attitudes

In order to see what the Hegelian account of the relation between normative pragmatic *force* (articulated by the distinction between norm and attitude) and semantic *content* adds to the story about the Hegelian version of the Fregean semantic distinction between *sense* and *reference*, it is important to be clear about the nature of the distinction between the two meta-attitudes toward the relations between norms and attitudes: *Niederträchtigkeit* and *Edelmütigkeit.* There are four different ways of thinking about that distinction—four different statuses it can be taken to have. They are progressively more insightful and sophisticated, representing an expressive progression—the cumulative emergence into explicitness of implicit features of the relations between norms and attitudes—that corresponds to the stages by which Hegel sees Spirit as a whole developing its self-consciousness.

The first way of understanding the relation between the *edelmütig* normativist and the *niederträchtig* naturalist is as a cognitive disagreement about a matter of objective fact. They disagree about the correct answer to the question: Are there norms, or not? If one makes an exhaustive catalog of the furniture of the universe, will one find norms on it, or only normative attitudes? On this way of construing it, the issue is put in a box with the question of whether there are leprechauns, and whether there is a bird in the bush. One or the other party to the dispute is wrong. Who is right and who is wrong is settled by an attitude-independent matter of fact—in the sense that whether there are norms or not is not reference-dependent on the meta-attitudes of the normativist or the naturalist. (For the normativist could be correct if it turned out that there are norms, but they are reference-dependent on normative attitudes.) On the side of epistemology, rather than ontology, the normativist takes it that normative attitudes are themselves cognitive attitudes, and that at least when things go right, they involve knowledge of norms. The hero may in fact know what his duty is and do it because it is his duty. The objectivist meta-meta-attitude to the issue takes it additionally that both the normative and the naturalist attitudes are themselves cognitive attitudes, only one of which can be right about what there really is.

This objectivist, cognitivist way of understanding the status of the two meta-attitudes toward norms and normative attitudes is not the only one available, however. It is possible to adopt instead an almost diametrically opposed subjectivist meta-meta-attitude. According to this way of thinking, the normativist and the naturalist employ different vocabularies in describing the world. Using one rather than the other is adopting a *stance.* The two stances are incompatible; one cannot adopt them both. One either uses normative vocabulary or one does not. But both of them are available, and both of them are legitimate.

> Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]. [*PG* 665]

As for the legitimacy of the reductive, *niederträchtig* attitude, Hegel acknowledges that the *Kammerdiener* is *not wrong.*

> No action can escape such judgement," there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the moral valet towards the agent. [*PG* 665]

Every intentional action is "charged with the aspect of particularity," in that the agent must have had some motive for performing it, some attitude that was efficacious in bringing it about. Norms are efficacious only through attitudes toward them, so one can always short-circuit explanations that appeal to the norms the attitudes are directed toward (what the agent ought to do, her duty), appealing only to the attitudes themselves. In the broader reading, I take it that Hegel is acknowledging the possibility of purely naturalistic descriptions of the world, including human actions.

Just so, "every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty"—that is, in the *edelmütig* normative vocabulary. What shows up in the causal-psychological vocabulary of the *Kammerdiener* is nature, natural beings, and natural processes: the world of desire. What shows up in the normative vocabulary of the hero is Spirit, *geistig* beings, and discursive practices: the world of recognition. The realm of Spirit comprises experience and agency. It is a structure articulated by relations of *authority* and *responsibility,* of *commitment* and *entitlement,* of *reasons* and *concepts* with the *obligations* and *permissions* that they involve and articulate. This normative, discursive realm of Spirit is Hegel's topic. (The

book is titled *Phänomenologie des Geistes,* after all.) It, too, is real. According to the stance stance (meta-meta-attitude), the reductive naturalist is wrong to take it that the explanatory completeness of the naturalistic-causal vocabulary in its own terms indicates its expressive completeness—so that any claims it cannot express cannot be true. For it must leave out concept-use as such (and hence the whole *geistig* dimension of human activity), even though every application of concepts in judgment and action can be explained in naturalistic terms, if it is described in naturalistic terms of noises and motions. But the normative vocabulary is *also* sovereign and comprehensive within its domain, and can achieve a corresponding explanatory equilibrium. For it is a vocabulary for describing the use of vocabularies—including the vocabulary of natural science. Everything the scientist does, no less than the activities and practices of other discursive beings, can be described in the language of judgment, intentional action, and recognition. The *Kammerdiener*'s attitude, too, is a *discursive* attitude.

One of the great questions of modernity—transposed into a new key by Kant's normative reconceptualization—concerns the relation between Spirit and Nature. As Hegel says at the end of the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy:* "Nature and the world or history of spirit are the two realities. . . . The ultimate aim and business of philosophy is to reconcile thought or the Notion with reality."[332] One strategy for doing that is to see the naturalistic and normative vocabularies as incommensurable, but as each providing a legitimate, valid, in some sense comprehensive perspective on things. They are understood as just expressing different features of things. The choice of which to employ in any particular case can then be understood to be pragmatic in the classical sense: a matter of what best conduces to securing the ends and interests motivating the subject making the choice of vocabulary at the time. Rather than disagreeing about an objective matter of fact, the naturalist and the normativist are seen as expressing different subjective preferences, adopting different attitudes, which reflect different interests. Whichever vocabulary one adopts makes possible genuine knowledge of some aspect of how things really are.

[332] Volume 3, p. 545, in the Haldane and Simpson translation of 1896 (repr., Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1983).

There is something right about this pragmatic, perspectival way of construing the relations between what is expressed by normative and naturalistic vocabularies. But the conception of *Niederträchtigkeit* and *Edelmütigkeit* as still basically *cognitive* stances misses something essential to Hegel's approach. When he introduces it, Hegel said that the *niederträchtig* meta-attitude "clings to the disparity between the two essentialities" [*PG* 501]—the distinction that action and (actual) consciousness involve. This is a partial, one-sided attitude. The *edelmütig* meta-attitude seizes one-sidedly instead on the complementary moment of unity or identity. We have seen various ways of conceptualizing these formal aspects of discursive activity, corresponding to different ways of thinking of what is distinguished or united. Judging and acting are species of concept-application. So they involve a distinction between a universal and a particular to which it is applied, and their unity in an individual: a particular as characterized by a universal. The universal is the concept being applied, what sets the standard of correctness of the judgment or action. On the broad construal, the *niederträchtig* attitude does not admit that there are standards of correctness (norms) in play at all. The particulars are actual and real, the universals are illusory. There are no genuine individuals that really unite universals and particulars. The issue comes up explicitly for intentional action; the *Kammerdiener* does not admit that what is done can be acknowledgments of the bindingness of a norm, can be simply an application of it to a particular. There are just particular performances, but no question of them genuinely falling under norms according to which they can be assessed. Judgments and actions as such are visible only from the *edelmütig* point of view, which discerns the unity, and hence the content, of consciousness and action.

So far, this characterization is compatible with a purely cognitive reading of the two meta-attitudes. But immediately after the *Kammerdiener* passage, Hegel says of the moral valet:

> The consciousness that judges in this way is itself base [niederträchtig], because it divides up the action, producing and holding fast to the disparity of the action with itself. [*PG* 666]

Adopting the *niederträchtig* meta-attitude not only *holds* fast to the "disparity of the action with itself," but "divides up the action" and *produces* the disparity. This sounds much more practical than cognitive—a matter of making something, not just finding something. But in what sense does the moral valet *produce* the disparity? It cannot be that what he produces is the "distinction

that action implies." [*PG* 400] For that distinction—between achievement and intention, between the context of assessment and the context of deliberation, between particular performance and universal conceptual norm that sets a standard for correctness for it—is a ubiquitous and essential part of the metaphysical structure of action. That distinction is not a product of modern alienation. Alienation is only one structure that a practical conception of that distinction can take. That alienated structure of agency is what the *Kammerdiener* produces by adopting the reductive *niederträchtig* attitude, which denies that knowers and agents are genuinely sensitive to conceptual norms.

The claim is that adopting the *niederträchtig* normative meta-attitude institutes a kind of normativity that has a distinctive, defective structure. To say that is to say that *Niederträchtigkeit* is in the first instance a kind of *recognition,* rather than of *cognition.* After all, recognition in general is taking someone to be a subject of normative statuses and attitudes (hence a knower and agent), and specific recognition is attributing particular normative statuses and attitudes. The magnanimous historian, who takes the hero to be genuinely sensitive to and acknowledging norms beyond his own desires, *recognizes* the hero in a very different sense than does the one who plays the moral valet to him. Just so, Enlightenment's taking Faith to consist in a simple cognitive mistake is taking up a *recognitive* stance to Faith. It not only makes a cognitive mistake when it takes Faith's defining commitments to be cognitive rather than recognitive (belief in the existence of a peculiar kind of thing rather than instituting a community of trust), it also commits a recognitive injustice:

> Faith . . . receives at [Enlightenment's] hands nothing but wrong; for Enlightenment distorts all the moments of faith, changing them into something different from what they are in it. [*PG* 563]
>
> To faith, [Enlightenment] seems to be a perversion and a lie because it points out the otherness of its moments; in doing so, it seems directly to make something else out of them than they are in their separateness. [*PG* 564]

Its ungenerous, *niederträchtig* failure to recognize Faith's recognitive achievement *changes* that achievement, *making* it less than it would be if properly acknowledged. By adopting that attitude, playing the moral valet to Faith, refusing proper recognition, Enlightenment rejects community with Faith, makes impossible the reciprocal recognition that would institute a community

exhibiting the structure of trust, and pushes the corresponding sort of self-consciousness out of reach.

The moral valet does not just *notice* or *point out* the disparity that action and consciousness involve, he *identifies* with it. For his recognitive act is also a recognitive sacrifice. What the *Kammerdiener* gives up is the possibility of a certain kind of self-consciousness: consciousness of himself as genuinely bound by norms. The principled grounds he has for refusing to recognize the hero as a norm-governed creature apply to himself as well. His position is that the idea of someone practically acknowledging a norm as binding is unintelligible. This characterization may seem wrong, at least for the narrow, literal construal of the *Kammerdiener* story. After all, he does attribute practical reasoning, and hence concept-use to the hero—just nothing that is not immediately self-serving, the satisfaction of some actual, contingent, motivating desire. So he does in some sense recognize the hero as a discursive being. But the claim will be that this is an unstable kind of recognition. If all anyone can do is fulfill felt desires, then concept-use is not in the end intelligible as such. The argument is the one rehearsed for the conscientious consciousness. A notion of duty showing some sort of independence from attitudes is needed to give content to the idea of assessing performances accordingly as they were or were not performed out of a *conviction* that they were what duty demanded. (Failing to appreciate that was the flaw diagnosed in the conscientious normative self-consciousness.) Normative *attitudes* are not in the end intelligible as contentful apart from the norms that identify and individuate their contents. What the *Kammerdiener* is *doing* by adopting the *niederträchtig* recognitive stance is *making* his own and others' performances and practices into something that is unintelligible as *discursive.*

The third construal of the *niederträchtig* and *edelmütig* meta-attitudes toward norms and normative attitudes is then that they are recognitive attitudes that have the effect of *practical commitments.* Adopting the *edelmütig* stance of spirit is committing oneself to *making* what we are doing being binding ourselves by conceptual norms, so acknowledging the authority of such norms, by practically *taking* it that that is what we are doing—by recognitively treating ourselves and our fellows as doing that. On this view normativity (which, because the norms in question are for Hegel all *conceptually* contentful, is the same phenomenon as rationality) is not feature of

our practices independent of our practical meta-attitude toward it. "To him who looks at the world rationally, the world looks rationally back," Hegel says.[333] Normativity and rationality are *products* of our *edelmütig* meta-attitudes, of our practically taking or treating what we are doing (recognizing each other) *as* acknowledging rational commitments. Spirit exists insofar as we *make* it exist by *taking* it to exist: by understanding what we are doing in normative, rational terms. We make the world rational by adopting the recognitively structured constellation of commitments and responsibilities I have—following Hegel's usage in connection with the community Faith is committed to instituting—denominated *trust.* As we will see, this means that Spirit is brought into existence and sustained by our recollective commitment to rationally reconstruct the tradition of experience in Whiggish terms—finding trajectories through it that are expressively progressive, that exhibit what we have been doing as the unfolding into explicitness of norms that were all along implicit.

This third understanding of the meta-attitudes of *Niederträchtigkeit* and *Edelmütigkeit,* as practical, recognitive, hence community- and self-constitutive, like the second, still presents them as options available for the subject freely to choose between. It is up to us whether to make ourselves into merely natural or genuinely normative beings. On this account, Hegel might be urging us to not to make the *Kammerdiener*'s choice, but he is not claiming we are compelled to do so. There is, however, a fourth way of understanding the status of these two stances. Its leading thought is that we have always already implicitly committed ourselves to adopting the *edelmütig* stance, to identifying with the unity that action and consciousness involve, to understanding ourselves as genuinely binding ourselves by conceptual norms that we apply in acting intentionally and making judgments. For we do judge and act, and we cannot avoid in practice taking or treating those judgments and actions as being determinately contentful—as materially incompatible with certain other judgments and actions, and as materially entailing still others. We count some judgments as reasons for or against others, and some intentions and plans as ruling out or requiring others as means. Even the *Kammerdiener* and his resolutely reductive naturalist generalization offer contentful *accounts* of our doings (performances and attitudes), accounts that aim to satisfy the distinctive standards of intelligibility, adequacy, and correctness

[333] *Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of History,* published in English as *Reason in History,* trans. Robert S. Hartmann (Newy York: Liberal Arts Press, 1953), p. 13.

to which they hold themselves. *If* the determinate contentfulness of the thoughts and intentions even of the *niederträchtig* is in fact intelligible *only* from an *edelmütig* perspective, *then* anyone who in practice treats what he is doing as judging and acting is implicitly committed thereby to *Edelmütigkeit.* The semantic theory that I have been extracting from the *Phenomenology* has as its conclusion the antecedent of that conditional.

If that is all right, then the apparent parity of the two metanormative stances is an illusion. No genuine choice between them is possible. By talking (engaging in discursive practices) at all, we have already implicitly endorsed and adopted one of them, whether we explicitly realize that or (like the *Kammerdiener*) not. On this reading, what Hegel is asking us to do is only to *explicitly* acknowledge theoretical and practical commitments we have already *implicitly* undertaken just by taking part in discursive practices—which is to say, by being acculturated. Explicitly adopting the *edelmütig* practical-recognitive attitude is accordingly just achieving a certain kind of self-consciousness: realizing something that is already true of ourselves. So the issue is, in the end, in one sense a broadly cognitive one: a matter of finding out how things in some sense already are. But the achievement of this definitive kind of self-consciousness is also, as must be so according to Hegel's social account of what self-consciousness consists in, the adoption of a distinctive kind of recognitive relation to others and to oneself.

The realization that *Edelmütigkeit* simply consists in doing explicitly what one has implicitly committed oneself to do by adopting discursive attitudes and engaging in discursive practices also exhibits that recognitive attitude as a *moral* necessity, in a sense that develops a Kantian idea. (This is part of the reason Hegel's expository development of his novel positive account of the shape of an explicitly *edelmütig* reciprocal recognitive relation closes the section titled "Moralität"). Kant seeks to ground moral imperatives in the presuppositions of rationality and discursivity, hence of normativity and the sort of positive freedom that consists in being able to bind oneself by conceptual norms. His thought is that whatever can be shown to be a necessary condition of being a knower and agent at all is thereby shown to have a grip on us that is unconditional in the sense of not being relative to any particular endorsement or commitment of ours, whether theoretical or practical. Hegel tells a different story than Kant does about the relations between treating *others* as one minimally must in order to be treating them as rational,

discursive, norm-governed, free beings (that is, recognizing them), on the one hand, and one's self-consciousness *as* oneself rational, discursive, norm-governed, and free. But he takes over the idea that recognizably *moral* norms are to be derived from the presuppositions of discursivity in general. Self-recognition, recognizing oneself, treating oneself as a discursive being, as able to undertake determinately contentful commitments, exercise determinately contentful authority and so on, requires recognizing others: attributing that kind of responsibility and authority to them. Any practical or theoretical presupposition of *that* is a structural presupposition of one's own self-consciousness. That is the source of moral requirements on how we treat others. Transposed into the key of Hegel's expressive idiom, edification concerning what is necessary shows up as the making explicit *(für sich)* of what it is already implicitly *(an sich)* committed to. Doing that always has both a cognitive aspect of finding out how things already really were (in themselves) and a recognitive aspect of self-transformation and constitution of oneself as a new kind of self-consciousness.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**

Handout for Lecture 18

Confession and Forgiveness, Recollection and Trust

The text that describes the transition to the third stage in the development of Spirit in the concluding eleven paragraphs of the *Spirit* chapter takes the form of a parable, a narrative recounting sequential stages in the relationship between an "evil consciousness" [*PG* 661] and a "hard-hearted judge" [*PG* 669–670]: evil [*PG* 661–662], judgment [*PG* 662–666], confession [666], refusal of reciprocal confession [*PG* 667–668], the breaking of the hard heart and confession by the judge [*PG* 669], forgiveness [*PG* 669–671], and the achievement of a new kind of community. ("The reconciling Yea, in which the two 'I's let go their antithetical existence, is the existence of the 'I' which has expanded into a duality." [*PG* 671])

The consciousness that judges in this way is itself base [niederträchtig], because it divides up the action, producing and holding fast to the disparity of the action with itself. [*PG* 666]

We need to be clear about the relations between
1. *Niederträchtigkeit,* as a practical attitude of identification with, hence sacrifice for, the disparity that action and consciousness involve, which *produces* that disparity in a distinctively alienated form;
2. *Alienation,* as a recognitive structure that is defective in making incomprehensible the normative dimension of the activities of individuals and the practices of communities that exhibit that structure (a failure of self-consciousness); and
3. *Asymmetry* of recognition as its characteristic structural defect, and as resulting from practically applying categories of immediacy or pure independence (the conception of authority and responsibility epitomized by the Master).

"Now the judging consciousness does not stop short at the former aspect of duty, at the doers knowledge of it that this is his duty, and the fact that the doer knows it to be his duty, the condition and status of his reality. On the contrary, it holds to the other aspect, looks at what the action is in itself, and explains it as resulting from an intention different from the action itself, and from selfish motives. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]. . . . No action can escape such judgement, for duty for duty's sake, this pure purpose, is an unreality; it becomes a reality in the deed of an individuality, and the action is thereby charged with the aspect of particularity. . . . Thus, for the judging consciousness, there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the moral valet towards the agent." [*PG* 665]

The judge still takes it that he can "oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality," because *he* still perceives that universal aspect. So the assessor and attributor of actions applies quite different standards to his own activities than he does to those of the ones he assesses. This is an *a*symmetrical *re*cognitive relation.

The first step toward a symmetrical, genuinely reciprocal interpersonal recognitive relation is taken by the individual who is judged, who *confesses* its particularity and the contingency of its attitudes.

"Perceiving this identity and giving utterance to it, he confesses this to the other, and equally expects that the other, having in fact put himself on the same level, will also respond in words in which he will give utterance to this identity with him, and expects that this mutual recognition will now exist in fact." [*PG* 666]

"The confession of the one who is wicked, "I am so," is not followed by a reciprocal similar confession. This was not what the judging consciousness meant: quite the contrary. It repels this community of nature, and is the hard heart that is for itself, and which rejects any continuity with the other." [*PG* 667]
"As a result, the situation is reversed. The one who made the confession sees himself repulsed, and sees the other to be in the wrong when he refuses to let his own inner being come forth into the outer existence of speech, when the other contrasts the beauty of his own soul with the penitent's wickedness, yet confronts the confession of the penitent with his own stiff-necked unrepentant character, mutely keeping himself to himself and refusing to throw himself away for someone else." [*PG* 667]

"It is thus its own self which hinders that other's return from the deed into the spiritual existence of speech and into the identity of Spirit, and by this hardness of heart produces the disparity which still exists." [*PG* 667]

The stage is set for the transition to the next and final stage in the development of self-conscious Spirit by the allegorical judge traversing the four meta-meta-attitudes laid out in my previous lecture:
a) First, the judge acknowledges that he is adopting a *stance,* rather than simply acknowledging a *fact;*
b) Second, the judge acknowledges that the stance is a *recognitive* one;
c) So the judge acknowledges that which stance he adopts *produces* a community of a certain kind;
d) Next, the judge must acknowledge that acting and judging (acknowledging and attributing, deliberating and assessing) implicitly presuppose (are intelligible only in the context of) *edelmütig* recognitive stances.

e) Finally, the judge must explicitly adopt such a recognitive stance and institute an *edelmütig* recognitive community.

"The forgiveness which it extends to the other is the renunciation of itself, of its unreal essential being which it put on a level with that other which was a real action, and acknowledges that what thought characterized as bad, viz. action, is good; or rather it abandons this distinction of the specific thought and its subjectively determined judgement, just as the other abandons its subjective characterization of action. The word of reconciliation is the objectively existent Spirit, which beholds the pure knowledge of itself qua universal essence, in its opposite, in the pure knowledge of itself qua absolutely self-contained and exclusive individuality—a reciprocal recognition which is absolute Spirit." [*PG* 670]

Forgiving, like confessing, is a *speech* act, something done in *language.* It is doing something by saying something. That is why Hegel talks about it in terms of the "word of reconciliation [Versöhnung]." [*PG* 670] Indeed, all the recognitive relations discussed in the last part of *Spirit* are linguistic performances—from the distinctive language by which the lacerated consciousness gives utterance to its disrupted state to the warrant of sincerity and conviction that is the core of the conscientious consciousness's claim to justification for what it does. "Here again, then, we see language as the existence of Spirit. Language is self-consciousness existing for others." [*PG* 652]

"Spirit, in the absolute certainty of itself, is lord and master over every deed and actuality, and can cast them off, and make them as if they had never happened." [*PG* 667]

"The wounds of the Spirit heal, and leave no scars behind. The deed is not imperishable; it is taken back by Spirit into itself, and the aspect of individuality present in it, whether as intention or as an existent negativity and limitation, straightway vanishes." [*PG* 669]

Forgiveness is a kind of *recollection* (*Erinnerung*—cf. [*PG* 808]). What one must do in order to forgive the confessor for what is confessed is to offer a rational reconstruction of a tradition to which the concept-application (theoretically in judgment or practically in intention) in question belongs, in which it figures as an expressively progressive episode.

Characterizing recollecting as forgiving emphasizes that it is not only a *cognitive* and *practical* enterprise—reconstruing judgments and actions—but also the adoption of a *recognitive* stance toward the ones whose judgments and actions are so construed.

"But just as the former has to surrender its one-sided, unacknowledged existence of its particular being-for-self, so too must this other set aside its one-sided, unacknowledged judgement. And just as the former exhibits the power of Spirit over its actual existence, so

does this other exhibit the power of Spirit over its determinate concept [seinen bestimmten Begriff]." [*PG* 669]
"The forgiveness which it extends to the other is the renunciation of itself, of its unreal essential being which it put on a level with that other which was a real action, and acknowledges that what thought characterized as bad, viz. action, is good; or rather it abandons this distinction of the specific thought and its *subjectively* determined judgement, just as the other abandons its subjective characterization of action. The word of reconciliation is the *objectively* existent Spirit, which beholds the pure knowledge of itself qua universal essence, in its opposite, in the pure knowledge of itself qua absolutely self-contained and exclusive individuality—a reciprocal recognition which is *absolute* Spirit." [*PG* 670]

The authority of the present judge to recognize is balanced by her responsibility to the past. For her entitlement to that authority derives wholly from her claim to be not innovating (clothing contingencies of her own attitudes in the guise of necessity), but *only* applying the conceptual norms she has inherited. The quality of her recollective rational reconstrual of the tradition is the only warrant for the authority she claims for her own assessments and applications of the concept. And that responsibility of the present judge to the past—to the actual content of the concept in question—is administered by future judges, who will assess in turn the precedential authority of the present judge's construal of precedent, in terms of its fidelity to the content they recollectively discern as having been all along implicitly setting the standards of correctness of applications and assessments of applications of the concept. So the recognitive authority of the present judge with respect to past judges is conditioned on its recognition in turn by future ones.

Trusting is both acknowledging the authority of those trusted to forgive and invoking their responsibility to do so. Prospective trust that one will be forgiven for what one confesses is the recognitive attitude complementary to forgiveness. Together these reciprocal practical attitudes produce a community with a symmetrical, *edelmütig* recognitive structure.

"Whomsoever I trust, his certainty of himself is for me the certainty of myself; I recognize in him my own being-for-self, know that he acknowledges it and that it is for him purpose and essence." [*PG* 549]

"With this, we already have before us the Notion of Spirit. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: "I" that is "We" and "We" that is "I." " [*PG* 177]

The explicit acknowledgment of this sharing of responsibility for what is done between the confessing and trusting agent and the forgiving community expresses an expanded practical conception of how *happenings* qualify as *doings.* The unity of actions (what defines their identity) that both the agent who trusts and the community that forgives identify with and

produce by adopting these reciprocal recognitive stances (relinquishing claims to merely particular subjective authority not balanced by a correlative responsibility) is a complex, internally articulated unity that comprises both aspects of the disparity that action involves. For it combines as essential, mutually presupposing aspects the action as something that qualifies as such only because it has both specifications under which it is intentional and consequential specifications in terms of actual effects that unroll unforeseeably to the infinite horizon. Both the prospective exercise of authority by the agent and the retrospective exercise of authority by the forgiving community are required to bring about this unity: to make what *happens* into something *done*.

"The deed is not imperishable; it is taken back by Spirit into itself, and the aspect of individuality present in it, whether as intention or as an existent negativity and limitation, straightway vanishes. The self that carries out the action, the form of its act, is only a moment of the whole." [*PG* 669]

This third, post-modern normative structure would just be the traditional heroic conception of agency, except that the fact that what the agent has done is understood not just as having made *her* responsible for the doing, but as having made us *all* responsible for it (has imposed a responsibility concretely and practically to forgive it) means that the reachievement of the heroic conception now takes a higher form. That higher form does not essentially involve the tragedy that is a confrontation with an alien destiny. Though the agent cannot know what she does, others are committed to and responsible for its not turning out to be a crime. She trusts that they will forgive, will exercise their power to heal the wounds of the Spirit inflicted by the stubborn recalcitrance of cause, contingency, actuality, immediacy, and particularity, by giving it the form of the conceptual, necessity, normativity, mediation, and universality.

Part Five **Hegel on the Historicity of Normativity**

Lecture 18

Confession and Forgiveness, Recollection and Trust

I. *Niederträchtig* Assessment

The final movement of the long *Spirit* chapter of the *Phenomenology* is discussed in its concluding eleven paragraphs. It is here that Hegel sketches the way forward out of modernity to a more adequately self-conscious structure of recognition, and so of selves, norms, and communities. The text that describes the transition to the third stage in the development of Spirit is gnomic, dark, and allegorical. It takes the form of a parable, a narrative recounting sequential stages in the relationship between an "evil consciousness" [*PG* 661] and a "hard-hearted judge" [*PG* 669–670]: evil [*PG* 661–662], judgment [*PG* 662–666], confession [666], refusal of reciprocal confession [*PG* 667–668], the breaking of the hard heart and confession by the judge [*PG* 669], forgiveness [*PG* 669–671], and the achievement of a new kind of community. ("The reconciling Yea, in which the two 'I's let go their antithetical existence, is the existence of the 'I' which has expanded into a duality." [*PG* 671]) Our task is to read the allegory—in this case, so as to understand the nature of this final form of mutual recognition as reciprocal confession and forgiveness. Unlike the earlier stories, this one outlines something that has not happened yet: a future development of Spirit, of which Hegel is the prophet: the making explicit of something already implicit, whose occurrence is to usher in the next phase in our history.

The two parties to this morality tale, the judged and the judging consciousness, personify the two social perspectives on the application of concepts in judgment and exercises of practical agency that are familiar to us from our consideration of Hegel's theory of action. These are the first-person context of deliberation and the third-person context of assessment. The one judged makes himself responsible, by applying a concept, and the judge holds him responsible for that application. The relations between the judging and the judged individuals are recognitive ones: the relations that articulate their self-consciousness and structure their community. As our story

begins, the recognitive attitudes in virtue of which the acting consciousness is denominated "evil" or "wicked" [böse], and the judge "hard-hearted," are *niederträchtig* ones.

> The consciousness that judges in this way is itself base [niederträchtig], because it divides up the action, producing and holding fast to the disparity of the action with itself. [*PG* 666]

What is wrong with *Niederträchtigkeit* is that such attitudes institute *alienated* recognitive structures. In a social structure of self-consciousness of this kind, an individual's judgments and actions are not intelligible as such, to himself or to others. For what he does cannot be practically understood as the application of (the binding of himself by) determinately contentful conceptual norms. We need to be clear about the relations between

1. *Niederträchtigkeit,* as a practical attitude of identification with, hence sacrifice for, the disparity that action and consciousness involve, which *produces* that disparity in a distinctively alienated form;
2. *Alienation,* as a recognitive structure that is defective in making incomprehensible the normative dimension of the activities of individuals and the practices of communities that exhibit that structure (a failure of self-consciousness); and
3. *Asymmetry* of recognition as its characteristic structural defect, and as resulting from practically applying categories of immediacy or pure independence (the conception of authority and responsibility epitomized by the Master).

The first observation to make is that one way recognition can be nonreciprocal or nonsymmetrical is if the norms that are applied by the people who are deliberating about what to do and justifying what they are doing are not the same norms that are applied by the people attributing those doings and assessing those justifications. Against this background, let us look at what Hegel says about how the judging consciousness applies different standards to the assessment of action than does the agent himself. "The consciousness of an act declares its specific action to be a duty." [*PG* 665] This is how the agent justifies his action: by saying (here using Kantian terminology) that it falls under a norm, that it is correct or required. Doing this is exhibiting a normative attitude, portraying what is done as an acknowledgment of a norm as binding. In a certain sense, this attitude is the end of the matter for the agent. He can do only what he *takes* to be his duty. When he has settled that, he has settled what to do. His normative attitude, his *acknowledgment* of a commitment, is the form in which his normative status, what

he is really committed to, shows up for him. "Conscience" [Gewissen] is Hegel's term for the metanormative conception according to which that attitude ought also to settle things (be authoritative for) those who *assess* the correctness of what the agent does. As long as he did what he *took* to be his duty, he acted conscientiously (i.e., out of respect for duty), and that is supposed to be the only basis on which he can be assessed. Having seen the fatal structural flaw in this strategy—the way the notion of duty goes missing in it—we (the phenomenological "we," Hegel's readers) are moving on to consider a successor strategy that does retain a difference between the context of assessment and that of appraisal.

> Now the judging consciousness does not stop short at the former aspect of duty, at the doers knowledge of it that this is his duty, and the fact that the doer knows it to be his duty, the condition and status of his reality. On the contrary, it holds to the other aspect, looks at what the action is in itself, and explains it as resulting from an intention different from the action itself, and from selfish motives. Just as every action is capable of being looked at from the point of view of conformity to duty, so too can it be considered from the point of view of the particularity [of the doer]. . . . No action can escape such judgement, for duty for duty's sake, this pure purpose, is an unreality; it becomes a reality in the deed of an individuality, and the action is thereby charged with the aspect of particularity. . . . Thus, for the judging consciousness, there is no action in which it could not oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality, and play the part of the moral valet towards the agent. [*PG* 665]

It is from the point of view of such a judging consciousness, assessing the conformity of a performance to duty, that the performance—*any* actual performance—shows up as *wrong,* and the acting consciousness as *bad.* The concept of evil in play here is of actions that disregard normative considerations of what the agent ought to do, what it would be right to do, and respond only to the agent's personal wants, desires, and other attitudes. In this case, assessing the doing as evil is taking it *not* to have been performed out of a pure respect for duty—that is, not being just the application of a norm, the acknowledgment of a commitment. We know enough by now to see that the problem is going to be with the "purity" required of the purpose: that the action stem from "duty for duty's sake" *alone.* An insistence on those characteristics expresses an understanding of authority on the one-sided model of independence (mastery): unless *only* the

norm is authoritative, unless it is *wholly* authoritative, it cannot be understood as authoritative at all.

But what, exactly, is the content of the indictment delivered by the judging consciousness and, at the next stage in the parable, confessed by the acting consciousness? I think we should understand it as comprising two related, but distinct claims. First, and most obviously, it is always possible to offer a reductive, *Kammerdiener*'s account of the etiology of an action in terms of attitudes rather than norms, inclinations rather than obligations, causes rather than reasons ("selfish motives," "particularity," "the personal aspect"). We need not accept the agent's claim to be sensitive to norms, reasons, the standards of correctness for the application of concepts. In place of a kantian explanation in terms of what are often called "external reasons," we can always give a humean explanation in terms of "internal reasons": appeal to the subjective desires of the agent as motives instead of to the agent's obligations as reasons. From this point of view the agent shows up not only as bad, in the sense of not really responsive to norms, but also as hypocritical. [*PG* 663–664] For it *claims* to be responsive to norms. But in fact—according to the *niederträchtig* assessment—it is responsive really only to its own inclinations and attitudes. The claim is that counterfactually, if the norms determining the content of one's real commitments *were* different, but one's attitudes and inclinations were the same, one *would* act in the same way. So what should one count as sensitive to? Because norms are actually efficacious only via attitudes, it is always possible to see agents as sensitive only to their own attitudes. Construing that fact as meaning that those attitudes are not properly to be understood as acknowledgments of *commitments,* as applications of (bindings of oneself by) conceptual *norms,* is *Niederträchtigkeit.*

Second, Hegel characterizes the *niederträchtig* judge as holding to the moment of disparity that action necessarily involves, looking "at what the action is in itself," what is actually achieved, rather than what it is for the agent, "and explains it as resulting from an intention different from the action itself." It is part of the basic metaphysics of agency that one can never *merely* fulfill a purpose. Whatever one does admits of an indefinite number of

specifications.[334] The *niederträchtig* assessor and attributor of the doing rejects the authoritativeness of the agent's privileging of one of these (indeed, often, as we have seen, one that is not even true of what was done, but stands to those that are true only in a much weaker, retrospectively discerned, broadly anaphoric relation) as what he was trying to do. The judge exercises his own authority, attributing and holding the agent responsible for the action under a different kind of description, seeing it not as the acknowledgment of a norm but only as the evincing of an attitude of desire or inclination. By acting this way, the judge in fact adopts an asymmetrical recognitive stance toward the agent. For he insists on his own authority over action-specifications, while not acknowledging any corresponding authority on the part of the agent. And that asymmetry is the direct result of understanding authority and responsibility on the model of independence: as precluding *any* kind of reciprocal dependence (taking authority to be incompatible with any correlative responsibility).

The *Kammerdiener*'s sort of assessment is always possible, and in the expressively progressive parable of confession and forgiveness, the agent himself eventually comes to assess his own actions this way. He confesses to being evil—confesses that his apparent respect for the norms (universals) is a guise for the pursuit of personal (particular) ends. Adopting this reductive naturalistic characterization of his own doings is the *ne plus ultra* of alienation. For the self-consciousness that makes this confession (recognizing itself in *niederträchtig* terms) becomes unintelligible to itself as a creature and creator of norms, hence as a knower and agent at all. The reductive stance acknowledges only attitudes. It is not just that the indefinite multiplicity of unique circumstances accompanying every particular candidate for application of a conceptual norm makes it impossible to be sure whether it is correct to apply the universal to that particular, what one's use of that term commits one to do, and so what attitude one would be *justified* or *entitled* to adopt by the norms in play. It is rather that the very idea of a norm that settles the question one way or another for novel cases (the idea of normative "rails laid out to infinity") seems unintelligible—a metaphysical, rather than an epistemic problem. Instead of genuine

[334] "Action, in virtue of the antithesis it essentially contains, is related to a negative of consciousness, to a reality possessing intrinsic being. Contrasted with the simplicity of pure consciousness, with the absolute other or implicit manifoldness, this reality is a plurality of circumstances which breaks up and spreads out endlessly in all directions, backwards into their conditions, sideways into their connections, forwards in their consequences." [*PG* 642]

conceptual norms, which, when applied by adopting an attitude toward them, institute genuine normative statuses, paradigmatically commitments, there are just cases where a term has been applied in the past (by oneself and by others), cases where such application has been withheld, and the inclinations and dispositions that various practitioners have as a matter of fact acquired in response to those prior uses, in the context of how they are all wired up and trained. Using a term in some cases and not others is expressing a practical attitude. But on this reductive conception, it is not a *normative* attitude. There are no norms in play that could determine what one was really committing oneself to by doing so (what normative status one had undertaken by adopting that attitude).

Again, the counterfactuals also point to the reality and explanatory sufficiency of attitudes rather than norms. *Had* individual practitioners, as a result of their own particular, contingent motivations, applied terms differently in the past, their heirs *would* be disposed to apply them differently now. Current attitudes (uses) are sensitive to past attitudes (uses). No notion of normative necessity (what one has *reason*) to do emerges from this picture of massive contingency, in which current applications are explicable in terms of "what the judge had for breakfast." In this sense it is attitudes "all the way down." This reductive naturalism is the culmination of modern alienation. In it, what was all along the dark side of the implicit core of modernity—its discovery of the constitutive significance of individual attitudes—comes into the explicit light of day.

As Hegel tells the story, the acting consciousness, which "declares its specific action to be duty," and both the judging and the confessing consciousnesses, which explain actions in terms of nonnormatively characterized motives (attitudes), see the issue about which they disagree as a *cognitive* one: a matter of who is right about an objective fact. Is the agent in fact acknowledging the bindingness of a norm (being sensitive to a normative necessity), or merely responding to other attitudes (so the performance belongs in a box with other phenomena explicable by appeal to contingent matters of fact)? Is naturalism about motives true? If it is, then it applies in the context of assessment just as much as in the context of deliberation, and so to the judge who assesses and attributes actions as much as to the agent who produces them. If the agent cannot intelligibly be supposed to be undertaking commitments, acknowledging norms as

binding, binding himself by norms, trying to do what is right, then neither can the judge. Or again, if the fact that one *can* adopt the *Kammerdiener* stance means that one *must* (that that is the right way to think of things) in the case of the consciousness being assessed, why does not the same thing apply to the consciousness doing the assessing? But at this stage in the parable, the judging consciousness "is hypocrisy, because it passes off such judging, not as another manner of being wicked, but as the correct consciousness of the action." [*PG* 666] The judge takes it that though the acting consciousness is evil, responding to the particular rather than the universal, the contingencies of his subjective situation and dispositions rather than acknowledging what is normatively necessary, he himself *is* responsive to the universal, to norms. What the judge says is *correct,* the *right* way to describe what is going on, the way one is *obliged* to think about it. The judge still takes it that he can "oppose to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality," because *he* still perceives that universal aspect. So the assessor and attributor of actions applies quite different standards to his own activities than he does to those of the ones he assesses. This is an *a*symmetrical *re*cognitive relation.

II. Confession

The first step toward a symmetrical, genuinely reciprocal interpersonal recognitive relation is taken by the individual who is judged, who *confesses* its particularity and the contingency of its attitudes. [*PG* 666] Confessing is acknowledging and accepting the correctness of the indictment of the *niederträchtig* judge. It is a speech act, because "language as the existence of Spirit . . . is self-consciousness existing for others," [*PG* 652] "it is the self which as such is actual in language, which declares itself to be the truth, and just by so doing acknowledges all other selves and is acknowledged by them." [*PG* 654] The content of the confession is accordingly something like this:

> I confess that my judgments and actions have not been just what I was obliged or permitted (committed or entitled) to do by the norms implicit in the concepts applied therein; they were not simply responses acknowledging the normative necessity embodied in those concepts. They also express, reflect, and are sensitive to my subjective attitudes—the doxastic and practical commitments, the particular contingent course of experience I have undergone, the beliefs that I have contingently acquired and

> rejected or retained during this historical-experiential process of development, my contingent practical ends, projects, and plans and their evolution—everything that makes me the distinctive individual I am. They are, in the end, *my* commitments, *my* attitudes, shot through and through with particularity that is not a mere reflection of the universals I took myself to be applying.

To say that is to express the structural distinction and disparity that cognition and action involve. That is the distinction between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves. What is confessed is that what things are for consciousness is not just whatever they are in themselves. What things are for me is influenced not only by what they are in themselves, but also by considerations particular to my actual, embodied subjectivity: the residual effects of the contingent trajectory of my training and experience, collateral attitudes, inclinations, concerns, and emphases of attention. Indeed, my decision to apply or not apply a given concept in some actual circumstances can be explained by appeal to such contingencies concerning prior applications of concepts, quite apart from consideration of the true content of the conceptual norm being applied, the norm I in fact bound myself by in the sense that makes it relevant to assessments of correctness and success.

Making such a confession is *identifying* with that structural disparity that knowing and acting consciousness involves. For it is *sacrificing* the claim to entitlement for or justification of the judgment or action by appeal to the content of the conceptual norm being applied. It is identification with one's own attitudes (particularity), rather than with the normative statuses (individuality) that are adopted in virtue of applying concepts, binding oneself by norms (universals). That universal dimension is no longer acknowledged as being in play—only attitudes. So the confessor, too, adopts a *niederträchtig* attitude, now toward his own commitments. Like the judge, he "opposes to the universal aspect of the action, the personal aspect of the individuality." Doing that is a step toward the achievement of mutual, symmetrical recognition, because the confession consists in adopting the standards of assessment deployed by the judging consciousness, ceasing to insist on his own. And that means that the same standards are brought to bear by the agent as by the assessor—even though they are *niederträchtig* ones, basely identifying with the disparity of form that cognition and action involve, rather than nobly identifying with their identity of content.

But there is a residual asymmetry. For if the *Kammerdiener*'s reductive naturalism is correct, then it applies to the judge too.

> Perceiving this identity and giving utterance to it, he confesses this to the other, and equally expects that the other, having in fact put himself on the same level, will also respond in words in which he will give utterance to this identity with him, and expects that this mutual recognition will now exist in fact. [*PG* 666]

Yet the judge need not (though he ought) acknowledge this identity. He can persist in applying different standards to the concrete actions of others than he does to his own assessments: understanding what they do genealogically, as the result of peculiarities of their particular cognitive-practical experiential trajectory, while understanding his own judgments just as correct applications of universals, whose determinate contents necessitate those applications. The details of his own breakfast, he insists, are irrelevant to his assessment.

> The confession of the one who is wicked, "I am so," is not followed by a reciprocal similar confession. This was not what the judging consciousness meant: quite the contrary. It repels this community of nature, and is the hard heart that is for itself, and which rejects any continuity with the other. [*PG* 667]

At this stage, the judge in the allegory does not appear as impartially applying universals, simply responding appropriately to their normative demands. What he is doing shows up as adopting a *stance,* rather than just cognitively apprehending how things objectively are. For he *decides* to adopt a *different* stance toward his own sayings and doings than he does to those of others. This is an optional attitude on his part. Further, in "rejecting any continuity with the other" he is adopting a *recognitive* stance: rejecting an offer of reciprocal recognition. That is a further kind of doing, for which he is responsible.

Hegel says:

> As a result, the situation is reversed. The one who made the confession sees himself repulsed, and sees the other to be in the wrong when he refuses to let his own inner being come forth into the outer existence of speech, when the other contrasts the beauty of his own soul with the penitent's wickedness, yet confronts the confession of the

> penitent with his own stiff-necked unrepentant character, mutely keeping himself to himself and refusing to throw himself away for someone else. [*PG* 667]

The hard-hearted judge is doing what he originally indicted the other for. He is letting particularity affect his application of universals: applying different normative standards to doings just because they happen to be *his* doings. And in doing so, he is *producing* a recognitive disparity, allowing his particular being-for-self (attachment to his own attitudes) to disrupt the achievement of a community (universal) by reciprocal recognition.

> It is thus its own self which hinders that other's return from the deed into the spiritual existence of speech and into the identity of Spirit, and by this hardness of heart produces the disparity which still exists. [*PG* 667]

What is normatively called for—in the sense that it would be the explicit acknowledgment (what things are for the judge) of what is implicitly (in itself) going on—is a reciprocal confession. That would be the judge's recognition of himself in the one who confessed. (As the Firesign Theatre puts it: "We're all bozos on this bus.") For "[t]he breaking of the hard heart, and the raising of it to universality, is the same movement which was expressed in the consciousness that made confession of itself." [*PG* 669] The judge's acknowledgment that his judgments, too, can be explained as resulting from contingent features of his experience, that everybody is in the same boat in this regard, would be a *sacrifice* of his particularity—his attachment to his own prior attitude of privileging himself over others in the standards of assessment he applies—that is an *identification* with and production of a symmetrical recognitive *unity* or *identity,* rather than a recognitive *disparity.*

Reciprocal confession is not yet the achievement of absolute Spirit, [*PG* 670] "the true, i.e. the self-conscious and existent, equalization of the two sides," [*PG* 669] however, so long as what is achieved is just reciprocal *Niederträchtigkeit.* Having a whole community of knowers and agents symmetrically and even-handedly playing the moral valet to each other—reciprocally confessing the justice of assessments of the sort originally made by the hard-hearted judge—does not yet abolish alienation, but only raises it to the level of universality. For norms are still invisible. And because they are, so are attitudes as *normative* attitudes. What people are doing is not intelligible as acknowledging and attributing commitments, binding oneself and taking others

to be bound by norms. So the reciprocal *niederträchtig* recognitive attitudes are not intelligible as *normative* attitudes either, but only as natural states of individuals (inclinations, dispositions), causally brought about by and bringing about other such states. From this point of view, the performances individuals produce cannot properly be seen as intentional doings or claims to knowledge, nor the individuals as agents or knowers, hence not really as self-conscious selves. What they are for themselves is accordingly not yet what they are in themselves.

III. Forgiveness

The stage is set for the transition to the next and final stage in the development of self-conscious Spirit by the allegorical judge traversing the four meta-meta-attitudes laid out in my previous lecture:

a) First, the judge acknowledges that he is adopting a *stance,* rather than simply acknowledging a *fact;*
b) Second, the judge acknowledges that the stance is a *recognitive* one;
c) So the judge acknowledges that which stance he adopts *produces* a community of a certain kind;
d) Next, the judge must acknowledge that acting and judging (acknowledging and attributing, deliberating and assessing) implicitly presuppose (are intelligible only in the context of) *edelmütig* recognitive stances.
e) Finally, the judge must explicitly adopt such a recognitive stance and institute an *edelmütig* recognitive community.

Edelmütigkeit, generosity or magnanimity, the noble recognitive stance that contrasts with the mean-spiritedness or pusillanimity, *Niederträchtigkeit,* the base recognitive stance, consists in treating oneself and others in practice as adopting normative statuses, rather than just changing natural states. Achieving the kind of self-consciousness that overcomes the alienation distinctive of modernity and moves us decisively into the postmodern phase in the development of Spirit requires first realizing that in taking or treating ourselves and each other as selves, as able to make claims expressing beliefs and pursue plans expressing intentions, we are implicitly

adopting *edelmütig* recognitive attitudes. Then we have to adopt such attitudes explicitly, acknowledging those commitments as governing norms in practice. That requires more than confession, even reciprocal confession. In Hegel's allegory, what it requires is *forgiveness.* Hegel introduces this notion in the penultimate paragraph of *Spirit:*

> The forgiveness which it extends to the other is the renunciation of itself, of its unreal essential being which it put on a level with that other which was a real action, and acknowledges that what thought characterized as bad, viz. action, is good; or rather it abandons this distinction of the specific thought and its subjectively determined judgement, just as the other abandons its subjective characterization of action. The word of reconciliation is the objectively existent Spirit, which beholds the pure knowledge of itself qua universal essence, in its opposite, in the pure knowledge of itself qua absolutely self-contained and exclusive individuality—a reciprocal recognition which is absolute Spirit. [*PG* 670]

Forgiveness [Verzeihung] is a recognitive attitude that practically acknowledges the complementary contributions of particularity and universality to individuality—both the way the application of the universal raises the particular to the level of the individual and the way application to particulars actualizes the universal in an individual. It is a practical, community-instituting form of self-consciousness that is structured by the metaconceptual categories of *Vernunft,* rather than *Verstand.* It is *sittlich,* rather than alienated, in understanding the complex interdependence of norms (universals, on the side of content; necessity, on the side of force) and attitudes and the process by which together they institute and articulate normative statuses (commitments). It is, in short, what ushers in the form of community Hegel calls "absolute Spirit," and the form of self-consciousness he calls "absolute knowing." Understanding this is what the whole *Phenomenology* has been aiming at: "that one far-off divine event, toward which the whole creation moves."

So what is forgiveness? Forgiving, like confessing, is a *speech* act, something done in *language.* It is doing something by saying something. That is why Hegel talks about it in terms of the "word of reconciliation [Versöhnung]." [*PG* 670] Indeed, all the recognitive relations discussed in the last part of *Spirit* are linguistic performances—from the distinctive language by which the lacerated consciousness gives utterance to its disrupted state to the warrant of sincerity

and conviction that is the core of the conscientious consciousness's claim to justification for what it does. "Here again, then, we see language as the existence of Spirit. Language is self-consciousness existing for others." [*PG* 652] That forgiveness necessarily takes a linguistic form can tempt one to suppose that it is an *easy* speech act to perform: that it consists just in *saying* "I forgive you," uttering the word of reconciliation. But that cannot be right, given what is at stake here, the weight this concept must bear in Hegel's project. The form of reciprocal recognition that consists of confession, forgiveness by the judge of the confessor for what is confessed, and confession on the part of the judge is the *final* form of recognition Hegel envisages. It is to be the overcoming of modern alienation, reachieving *Sittlichkeit* in a higher, self-conscious form. For a form of words to accomplish that simply by being pronounced, it would have to be a *magic* formula.

If the speech act of forgiving is not to be construed in this way as the casting of a spell, what one does by producing it must be *hard*—at least in the sense that one can try to do it and fail. By way of comparison, consider the speech act of *demonstrating* that some mathematical proposition is true—that is, exhibiting or producing a *proof* of it. That is doing something (proving a claim) by saying something, but the question of whether the words produced succeed in performing the speech act in question is the topic of serious assessment. Proving something in this sense is hard, even though pronouncing the words is not. We want to know what standards of assessment are appropriate to determine whether the speech act someone performs in response to a confession succeeds in qualifying it as expressing *forgiveness* for what is confessed.

The key question we must ask in order to extract the point of the allegory then is: What is it one must *do* in order to qualify as *forgiving* an individual for an action—the application of a concept? As a way of thinking about what could count as an answer to this question, think by analogy of the corresponding question asked about another key concept, that of identification. What, we asked, must one *do* in order to count as *identifying with* some aspect of what one is *for* oneself, rather than with something one actually is, *in* oneself (paradigmatically, with something normative rather than natural, oneself as authoritative and responsible, rather than as alive)? And the answer was: One must be willing to *risk* and if need be *sacrifice* the one for the other.

Appealing to this model, a more specific way of putting the question before us now is: What is to *forgiving* as *sacrificing for* is to *identifying with?*

IV. Recollection

The most important clues concerning the nature of forgiveness are contained in a few gnomic, aphoristic sentences:

> Spirit, in the absolute certainty of itself, is lord and master over every deed and actuality, and can cast them off, and make them as if they had never happened. [*PG* 667]
>
> The wounds of the Spirit heal, and leave no scars behind. The deed is not imperishable; it is taken back by Spirit into itself, and the aspect of individuality present in it, whether as intention or as an existent negativity and limitation, straightway vanishes. [*PG* 669]

The invocation of mastery indicates that the forgiving that accomplishes this healing is the exercise of some sort of constitutive authority: the capacity of making something so by taking it to be so. The "wounds" are the contingent particular attitudes ("the aspect of individuality") and the errors and failures they bring about ("existent negativity and limitation"), which are confessed. The question is what one must do in order to "cast them off and make them as if they had never happened," to heal the wounds, "leaving no scars behind," what the forgiving individual must do in order to count as having successfully exercised that constitutive healing authority.

I think the answer is that *forgiveness* is a kind of *recollection* (*Erinnerung*—cf. [*PG* 808]). What one must do in order to forgive the confessor for what is confessed is to offer a rational reconstruction of a tradition to which the concept-application (theoretically in judgment or practically in intention) in question belongs, in which it figures as an expressively progressive episode. Telling such a story is a substantive undertaking, one that the magnanimous *(edelmütig)* would-be forgiving assessor may well not be able to accomplish. Indeed, what the assessor

confesses, in his turn, is his subjective inability successfully to forgive everything he is committed to forgiving.

By way of a model, think of the situation of the judge at common law. The judge is charged with deciding whether a novel set of facts warrants the application of a concept, according to the norm implicit in the tradition of prior applications of it and its inferential relatives that he inherits from previous judges. What a judge who makes such a decision *confesses* is that his decision could be explained by what he had for breakfast—or, less figuratively, by attitudes of his that are extraneous to the facts at hand and the law he is applying: by features of his training, reading, or mood, by the cases he happens to have adjudicated recently, the political climate, and so on. More generally, he confesses that the *Kammerdiener* would not be wrong about him, in that his decision to apply or not to apply the universal (concept) to these particulars can be explained by appeal just to factors that are *contingent* in the sense that they are not acknowledgments of the *necessity* that is the normative force articulated by the actual content of the concept. He confesses that one need not see his decision as suitably responsive to the content of the norm he is supposed to supply, which is what would *justify* the decision. For one can instead see it as *caused* by various extraneous circumstances. The decision is infected with "the aspect of individuality." For collateral attitudes that just *happen* to be acknowledgments of commitments by the same individual affect his decision as to whether to apply the concept in each new case. In making such a confession the judge need not admit (and for the confession to be in order it need not be true) that he was not in the new case *trying* or *intending correctly* to apply the norm (universal, concept) he inherited. Rather, what is confessed is that the result of doing that expressed what the content of the concept was *for him,* rather than just what it was *in itself,* an appearance to him of the reality, rather than the reality itself. What drives a wedge between the two is precisely that his decisions are always in part responsive to contingencies of his particular subjective attitudes, circumstances, and prior experience. It follows that the confession is also an acknowledgment of the necessity and ubiquity of the distinction that consciousness and action involve, the "negativity" that shows up when one finds oneself with incompatible commitments, an acknowledgment that concept application necessarily has the shape of the experience of error and failure ("limitation").

For a later judge concretely to *forgive* the earlier judge is to incorporate the decision that was the subject of confession into a retrospective rational reconstruction of the tradition of applying the concept in question, as having *precedential* significance. Doing that is recharacterizing and re-presenting the content of the concept (what it really is, what it is in itself) as gradually emerging into the daylight of explicitness through a sequence of applications of it to novel cases, each of which reveals some hitherto hidden feature of it, and exhibiting the forgiven judge's decision as having played that role. From the point of view of such a reconstructive recollection, though the decision might have been caused by contingent subjective attitudes and justificatorily irrelevant circumstances, *what* was so caused was an application that was both correct and expressively progressive. That is, it was just what was needed for us to find out more about the real content of the concept. The experience of incompatibility is exhibited in its capacity as the engine of conceptual, cognitive, and practical *progress,* rather than in its capacity as the mark of error and failure. Forgiving is the recollective labor of finding a concept that is being expressed (now less, now more fully and faithfully) by the conceptions endorsed by those whose judgments and actions are being forgiven.

Characterizing recollecting as forgiving emphasizes that it is not only a cognitive and practical enterprise—reconstruing judgments and actions—but also the adoption of a recognitive stance toward the ones whose judgments and actions are so construed. As a recognitive relation, the *edelmütig* stance is an *identification* with that higher unity. By contrast, the *niederträchtig* stance is identification with the moment of disparity that consciousness and agency necessarily involve: the collision of incompatible commitments that eventually shows the inadequacy of each set of cognitive and practical commitments and the conceptions that articulate them. Speaking of the relation between the individual who confesses and the individual who forgives, Hegel says:

> But just as the former has to surrender its one-sided, unacknowledged existence of its particular being-for-self, so too must this other set aside its one-sided, unacknowledged judgement. And just as the former exhibits the power of Spirit over its actual existence, so does this other exhibit the power of Spirit over its determinate concept [seinen bestimmten Begriff]. [*PG* 669]

What is "surrendered" or "set aside" is *sacrificed.* What the one who confesses gives up is his "particular being for self," his "actual existence." That is to say that he ceases to assert the authority of his actual attitudes, acknowledging that he has bound himself by an objective conceptual norm that differs from his subjective conception of it. For that authority was not recognized or acknowledged. What the judge relinquishes is his insistence on the authority of his hard-hearted assessment, which, as a one-sided assertion of disparity was also not reciprocally acknowledged. Sacrificing the authority of these one-sided, subjective attitudes—what things are for one—is identifying with what one has sacrificed for: what things are in themselves, the content that unifies the disparate forms in which it was expressed (showed up for individual consciousnesses). Both sides acknowledge that what recollectively shows up as what was really being talked or thought about (the objective concept) has authority over their attitudes and applications of the concept (subjective conceptions). Unlike the attitudes that each sacrifices, *this* authority *is* acknowledged by both. Recognition as confession and forgiveness is reciprocal.

The one who confesses "exhibits the power of Spirit over its actual existence" by acknowledging that in adopting particular attitudes—contingent and explicable by causes or nonnormatively characterizable impulses and motives though they may be—he has nonetheless succeeded in binding himself by (making himself responsible to) objective conceptual norms, and so instituted normative statuses (undertaken commitments, both cognitive and practical, by applying those norms) whose content outruns his subjective conceptions of them. The forgiving judge "exhibits the power of Spirit over its determinate concept" by recollectively reconstruing the content of that concept, so as to show it as authoritative over subjective conceptions and attitudes. Magnanimous forgiving recollection is the exercise of the power of Spirit over the determinate concept. Hegel summarizes, in the penultimate paragraph of *Spirit:*

> The forgiveness which it extends to the other is the renunciation of itself, of its unreal essential being which it put on a level with that other which was a real action, and acknowledges that what thought characterized as bad, viz. action, is good; or rather it abandons this distinction of the specific thought and its *subjectively* determined judgement, just as the other abandons its subjective characterization of action. The word of reconciliation is the *objectively* existent Spirit, which beholds the pure knowledge of itself qua universal essence, in its opposite, in the pure knowledge of itself qua

absolutely self-contained and exclusive individuality—a reciprocal recognition which is *absolute* Spirit. [*PG* 670]

Forgiveness is a "renunciation" of the previous identification of the hard-hearted judge with the disparity between his "subjectively determined judgment" and the "determinate thought—that is, of the distinction between what things are for the judge and what they are in themselves, the subjective conception or attitude and the objective concept or thought. Through forgiveness—the "word of reconciliation," which is not just *saying* that the other is forgiven, but actually going through the recollective labor of *making* it so—the judge brings about the unity that he identifies with. On the cognitive and practical dimensions of activity it is the unity of actual particularity (the causally explicable and efficacious attitudes and behavior of subjects) and universal essence (the conceptual norms whose application in attitude and act institute normative statuses) visible when what is said and done by subjects is understood as applying, binding themselves by, making themselves responsible to determinately contentful concepts or conceptual norms. On the recognitive dimension, it is the unity of particular, acting subjects and the normative community they synthesize by reciprocal recognition. Explaining forgiveness as recollection displays the fine structure underlying the general claim that recognition serves both as the *model* of and as the *context* within which the application of conceptual universals to actual particulars is to be understood.

We can be sure on general grounds that the kind of recognition that moves us beyond alienation must be reciprocal and symmetrical. Recollection, however, is at base an *a*symmetrical relation, because it incorporates a temporal relation in which the recollecting comes essentially *later* than what is recollected. Just so, forgiveness is essentially a *later* phase in a sequence. In the parable, that is the sequence: crime, confession, forgiveness. Indeed, lining up these temporal-developmental dimensions is one of the motors of the reading of forgiveness as expressively progressive recollective reconstrual of the content of conceptual norms. So: whence the symmetry?

Even though the recollecting event of forgiving must, in the paradigmatic case, come later than the recollected event forgiven, forgiving as a recognitive relation between *agents* could

still be symmetrical and reciprocal. You and I might simultaneously forgive each other's earlier confessed transgressions. As William Blake has it: "Through all eternity, / I forgive you, and you forgive me." But recognition need not be *synchronic* in order to be *symmetrical.* A conceptual tradition can exhibit a symmetrical recognitive structure of reciprocal authority and responsibility *diachronically* too. In our model of judges determining conceptual contents by developing case law, the present judge exercises authority over past applications of a legal concept, assessing their correctness by accepting (or rejecting) them as precedential, which is acknowledging them as having genuine normative authority over future applications. Finding a way to construe the conceptual content in such a way that an earlier ruling—even one that can be explained perfectly well by what the judge had for breakfast—is displayed both as correct according to the binding norm the earlier judge inherited and as revelatory of some hitherto obscure aspect of the concept is the paradigm of a forgiving recollection and magnanimous specific recognition. But that authority of the present judge to recognize is balanced by her responsibility to the past. For her entitlement to that authority derives wholly from her claim to be not innovating (clothing contingencies of her own attitudes in the guise of necessity), but *only* applying the conceptual norms she has inherited. The quality of her recollective rational reconstrual of the tradition is the only warrant for the authority she claims for her own assessments and applications of the concept. And that responsibility of the present judge to the past—to the actual content of the concept in question—is administered by future judges, who will assess in turn the precedential authority of the present judge's construal of precedent, in terms of its fidelity to the content they recollectively discern as having been all along implicitly setting the standards of correctness of applications and assessments of applications of the concept. So the recognitive authority of the present judge with respect to past judges is conditioned on its recognition in turn by future ones.

The reciprocal recognitive structure of confession and forgiveness is of this diachronic, historical type. When concept users have fully achieved the sort of semantic self-consciousness that Hegel gives us the metaconcepts for (the philosophical categories of *Vernunft*), we will each confess that our applications of concepts and assessments of such applications are no doubt influenced by contingencies of our collateral subjective attitudes and stray causal factors of which we are not aware or not in intentional control. ("No doubt," "not aware," and "not in . . .

control" because any specific such influences of which we are aware and have control over we are obliged to take account of, altering our particular applications of concepts in belief and intention accordingly.) And we will each acknowledge our *(edelmütig)* commitment to find ways concretely and specifically to forgive in the judgments and actions of others what first shows up as the confessed disparity between what things are for those concept-users and what they are in themselves—ways to display their applications of concepts as precedential. This is acknowledging commitment to a new *kind* of recognition of others. And we will also confess that this recognitive commitment, too, exhibits the disparity that consciousness and action involve: the disparity between what we are committed to do and what we actually do. That is, we confess that we have not succeeded in fulfilling this recognitive commitment. We are not capable of retrospectively bringing about the total unity of norm and actual performance in each case we are committed to forgive. Our recollective reconstrual of the contents of the concepts involved inevitably fails to exhibit every use as correct and expressively progressive. We confess that though our generous, forgiving recollective recognitive spirit is willing, our flesh is weak. We have not fully healed the wounds of the Spirit, have not made the aspect of particularity present in every actuality wholly vanish, have not made the disparity of all the deeds as if it had never happened.

Those confessions, both of residual ground-level disparity of norm and actual attitude and of the higher-level recognitive failures adequately and completely concretely to forgive the confessed failures of others are themselves petitions for recognition in the form of forgiveness. The focus of the parable of the hard-hearted judge and the breaking of his hard heart, with which Hegel closes *Spirit,* is the normative expectation, on the part of the one who confesses, of forgiveness from those who judge him. Confession is not just a *petition* for recognition as forgiveness, it is the assertion of a *right* to recognition through forgiveness. It creates a *responsibility* to treat the one who confesses generously, and not meanly, not to play the moral valet. This is the responsibility to reciprocate recognition. By using *forgiveness* as the axis around which revolves the parable he uses to introduce the final form of reciprocal recognition, Hegel is intentionally invoking the central concept of Christianity, and depending on its epitome

in the petition of the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass before us."[335]

V. Trust and Magnanimous Agency

Confession and forgiveness are both at base performances that express backward-looking attitudes. Hegel's telling of his parable of recognition does not include an explicit term for the forward-looking attitude that is the recognitive *petition* for forgiveness, with its attendant institution of a corresponding recognitive *obligation* to forgive on the part of those to whom it is addressed. I use the term "trust" for that purpose. In confessing, one not only expresses retrospective acknowledgment of the residual disparity in one's beliefs and actions between what things are in themselves and what they are for one, between norm and subjective attitude; one also expresses prospective trust in others to find ways of forgiving that disparity, forging / finding a unity of referent behind the disparity of sense, healing the wound. Such trust is an acknowledgment of dependence on others for recognition in the form of forgiveness.

"Dependence" here is used in Hegel's normative sense. What is acknowledged is the recognitive *authority* of those on whom one depends for forgiveness. And *what* depends on the forgiveness of those to whom one has confessed is just the authority of one's own concept applications (about which one confessed)—just as is the case with the precedential authority of an earlier judge's adjudications in the legal case that is our model. Trusting is both acknowledging the authority of those trusted to forgive and invoking their responsibility to do so. Prospective trust that one will be forgiven for what one confesses is the recognitive attitude complementary to forgiveness. Together these reciprocal practical attitudes produce a community with a symmetrical, *edelmütig* recognitive structure. The choice of the term "trust" is motivated by Hegel's use of it [Vertrauen / vertrauen] to describe what was progressive about Faith, in spite of the cognitive errors for which it stands condemned by Enlightenment: the reciprocal recognitive structure of the religious community.

[335] Matthew 6:9–13. A variant is at Luke 11:2–4.

> Whomsoever I trust, his certainty of himself is for me the certainty of myself; I recognize in him my own being-for-self, know that he acknowledges it and that it is for him purpose and essence. [*PG* 549]

I take it that this describes the recognitive ideal Hegel foreshadowed already when he first introduced the notion of reciprocal recognition in *Self-Consciousness:*

> With this, we already have before us the Notion of Spirit. What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: "I" that is "We" and "We" that is "I." [*PG* 177]

The kind of individual self-consciousness and community recognitively synthesized by prospective trust and recollective forgiveness are an "I" and a "we" that are identical in Hegel's holistic, "speculative" sense: distinct, but mutually presupposing elements whose relations articulate a larger unity, and which are unintelligible apart from the role they play in that whole. This new sort of recognitive structure is unalienated, *sittlich,* in virtue of the division of normative labor it exhibits between the "I" and the "we." The mistake characteristic of modernity was the practical conviction that justice could be done to the essential contribution of the actual activities and subjective attitudes of individuals to the institution of normative statuses—their authority over what they are responsible for—only if those individuals are conceived of as wholly *independent:* as fully and solely authoritative, as *constitutively* authoritative. Within the confines enforced by the atomistic metaconceptual categories of *Verstand,* the sense in which what I believe and do is up to me could be acknowledged only by identifying practically just with whatever is *entirely* up to me. For independence (authority) is so understood as to be incompatible with any and every sort of dependence (corresponding responsibility).

We have followed Hegel's rehearsal, in the body of the *Phenomenology,* of how the logic of the modern form of this defective practical and theoretical conception of the normative statuses of authority and responsibility requires a *contraction strategy* culminating in the self-conceptions and conceptions of agency epitomized by the honest consciousness and the conscientious consciousness. The only doings for which the former takes responsibility are pure

acts of will: what it *tries* to do. For these are the only ones over which it has total authority—the only things it cannot try to do and fail. By contrast, forgiveness and trust embody an *expansion strategy,* by which self-conscious individuals identify with actual goings-on over which they exert some real, but always only partial authority, identify themselves as the seats of responsibilities that outrun their own capacity to fulfill. Confession of the need for forgiveness and trust that it will be forthcoming both acknowledge the sense in which *others* are in a distinctive way also *responsible* for what *I* have done. For the eventual significance of my performance, the content of the commitment I have adopted, practically as intention or cognitively as belief, is now left in their care. In one sense, I as agent am responsible for what are in the ordinary sense *my* doings. For it is my adoption of an attitude, my endorsement of a purpose *(Vorsatz)* that opens the process that proceeds and develops therefrom to normative assessment in the first place. I must play the counter in the game for a move to have been made. But then, in another sense—visible from the point of view of *Vernunft* as a *complementary* sense—my fellow community members, those whom I recognize in the sense of trusting them to forgive my performance, are responsible for finding a way to make it have been a *successful* application of the concept expressed by the counter I played. That is, they are responsible for the imputation of an intention *(Absicht)* that can be seen retrospectively as having been carried out as the sequence of consequential specifications of the doing unfolds. That intention sets the normative standard for the success of the action and, as the content expressed by the purpose that is the actually efficacious attitude, is construed as guiding the process that is the execution of the plan. Concretely forgiving the action is finding a way to reconstrue the content of the concept applied in the *Vorsatz* so that the resulting *Absicht* turns out to be successful.

So the explicit acknowledgment of this sharing of responsibility for what is done between the confessing and trusting agent and the forgiving community expresses an expanded practical conception of how *happenings* qualify as *doings.* The unity of actions (what defines their identity) that both the agent who trusts and the community that forgives identify with and produce by adopting these reciprocal recognitive stances (relinquishing claims to merely particular subjective authority not balanced by a correlative responsibility) is a complex, internally articulated unity that comprises both aspects of the disparity that action involves. For it combines as essential, mutually presupposing aspects the action as something that qualifies as

such only because it has both specifications under which it is intentional and consequential specifications in terms of actual effects that unroll unforeseeably to the infinite horizon. Both the prospective exercise of authority by the agent and the retrospective exercise of authority by the forgiving community are required to bring about this unity: to make what *happens* into something *done*.

The consequential specifications of a doing are not something simply *given,* available only for theoretical reinterpretation. Concrete practical forgiveness involves *doing* things to *change* what the consequences of the act turn out to be. For example, one might trust one's successors to *make* it the case that one's inadvertent revelation, one's sacrifice, or the decision to go to war was worthwhile, because of what it eventually led to—because of what *we* made of it by doing things differently afterward. Something I have done should not be treated as an error or a crime, as the hard-hearted *niederträchtig* judge does, because it is not yet settled *what* I have done. Subsequent actions by others can affect its consequences, and hence the content of what I have done. The hard-hearted judgment wrongly assumes that the action is a finished thing, sitting there fully formed, as a possible object of assessment independent of what is done later. The *Kammerdiener*'s minifying ascription of the hero's action to low, self-interested motives rather than acknowledgment of a norm as binding in the situation depends on a defective atomistic conception of what an intention is. Recall the model of agency discussed in connection with the *Reason* section. Whether any particular event that occurs consequentially downstream from the adoption of a practical attitude *(Vorsatz)* makes an expressively progressive contribution to the fulfillment of an intention depends on its role in the development of a retrospectively imputed plan. And the role of a given event in the evolving plan depends on *what else happens.*

The significance of one event is never fully and finally settled. It is always open to influence by later events. The magnanimous commitment to concrete practical forgiveness is a commitment to act so as to *make* the act forgiven *have been* correct as the acknowledgment of the norm that can now be imputed as the content of the governing intention. In a community with the recognitive structure of trust and forgiveness, there is a real sense in which everything is done by everyone. For everyone takes responsibility for what each one does, and each takes

responsibility for what everyone does. This is what I meant by talking about an "expansion strategy" for *edelmütig* self-consciousness, by contrast to the "contraction strategy" of alienated self-consciousness. The conception of the agent in the sense of the doer who is responsible for what is done is expanded so that the self-conscious individual is just one element in a larger constellation including those he recognizes through trust and who recognize him through forgiveness.

> The deed is not imperishable; it is taken back by Spirit into itself, and the aspect of individuality present in it, whether as intention or as an existent negativity and limitation, straightway vanishes. The self that carries out the action, the form of its act, is only a moment of the whole. [*PG* 669]

In the sphere of agency, the modern rise of subjectivity takes the form of the assertion of what Hegel calls the "rights of intention and knowledge." These are the rights of the individual self-consciousness to be held responsible for what it does only under the specifications under which it was intentional, together with consequential specifications it could foresee. This modern notion of agency contrasted with the heroic conception of agency characteristic of traditional, premodern practical self-consciousness. On that conception, the individual agent was responsible for what is done under all of its specifications, whether intended or envisaged or not. ("I do what happens.") As we have seen, Hegel's emblematic example is Oedipus, who is held responsible (and holds himself responsible) for committing the crimes of killing his father and marrying his mother, in spite of not having intended to do anything under those descriptions, and having no way of knowing that what he intended under other descriptions would have those consequences. Those facts do not excuse or exculpate him. They merely illustrate the *tragic* character of *heroically* taking responsibility for what one does in this extensive sense: that we do not and cannot know what we are doing, that any action opens us up to the vagaries of fate. ("The stone belongs to the devil when it leaves the hand that threw it.")

Hegel is clear that modernity's acknowledgment of the rights of intention and knowledge is expressively progressive. But by itself it leaves us alienated from our doings, unable satisfactorily to unify the various aspects of agency: the normative and the actual, the intentional and the consequential. Working within the categories of independence, of *Verstand,* the modern view can attribute genuine responsibility only where the authority of the agent is complete. The

result is the contraction strategy, where our doings are contracted to mere willings. What was lost is what the heroic conception of agency had right: the kind of responsibility that extends to our doings under *all* their specifications, including consequential ones that were not explicitly envisaged or endorsed. The normative status one enters into by acting—what the agent makes herself responsible for, what she has committed herself to—outruns the subjective attitude in virtue of which it is her doing. The traditional view is wrong in not acknowledging the sense in which the agent's responsibility is limited by the rights of intention and knowledge. The modern view is wrong in thinking that there is no responsibility for what was not part of the individual's purpose or knowledge. The recognitive structure of trust and forgiveness, in virtue of its division of normative labor, its sharing of responsibility between agent and community, incorporates versions of both the individual rights of intention and knowledge characteristic of modernity and the heroic conception of agency characteristic of traditional society. The agent and the community together are responsible for the action under all its specifications. The rights of intention and knowledge mark the sense in which the doing is the agent's doing, expressing the fact that it is the attitudes of individual agents that are the source of actualizing any norm, adopting any normative status. But what the agent has done—the content of the status entered into—is not understood as restricted by what is explicit in those attitudes.

This third, post-modern normative structure would just be the traditional heroic conception of agency, except that the fact that what the agent has done is understood not just as having made *her* responsible for the doing, but as having made us *all* responsible for it (has imposed a responsibility concretely and practically to forgive it) means that the reachievement of the heroic conception now takes a higher form. That higher form does not essentially involve the tragedy that is a confrontation with an alien destiny. Though the agent cannot know what she does, others are committed to and responsible for its not turning out to be a crime. She trusts that they will forgive, will exercise their power to heal the wounds of the Spirit inflicted by the stubborn recalcitrance of cause, contingency, actuality, immediacy, and particularity, by giving it the form of the conceptual, necessity, normativity, mediation, and universality. Heroism is the genuine bindingness of norms on actuality: the agent's being genuinely (but not wholly independently) authoritative over and responsible for what actually happens. The sharing of responsibility between the confessing and trusting knower-and-agent and forgiving and

confessing assessors of claims and deeds, which articulates the historical-perspectival (prospective / retrospective) division of normative labor within the magnanimous recognitive community, is what makes subjective attitudes intelligible as the application (binding of oneself by) objective norms, and so as the institution of normative statuses (cognitive and practical commitments) whose contents outrun the subjective conceptions of any of the participants. Through his adoption of attitudes, the application of concepts, hence the acknowledgment of objectively determinately contentful conceptual norms as governing the assessment of the resulting performances, the agent both exercises real (though incomplete) authority over what happens and makes herself (though not herself alone) responsible for what actually happens, under all its specifications, consequential as well as intentional. The magnanimous sharing of responsibility that is the execution of the expansion strategy is what makes possible *heroism* (what no man is to his valet) without *tragedy*.

End