

Hegel's Ontology
and the
Theory of Historicity

Herbert Marcuse

translated by Seyla Benhabib

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Translator's Introduction

I

Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity was originally published in 1932 in Frankfurt as *Hegels Ontologie und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit*. It was reissued without revisions and under an abridged title in 1968 and 1975. Although French and Italian translations of this work have existed since the beginning of the seventies,¹ various attempts to render it into English since the late sixties were never completed; hence the present translation is the first English version of this text.

Hegel's Ontology culminates a period in Herbert Marcuse's intellectual development variously characterized as "Heideggerian Marxism," "phenomenological" or "existential Marxism."² Marcuse had received his doctorate at the University of Freiburg in 1922 with a thesis on *Der Deutsche Künstlerroman*.³ He had subsequently returned to Berlin and worked for several years in an antiquarian book-dealer and publishing firm. The publication of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* in 1927 led Marcuse, in his own words, "to go back to Freiburg . . . in order to work with Heidegger. I stayed in Freiburg and worked with Heidegger until December 1932, when I left Germany a few days before Hitler's ascent to power, and that ended the personal relationship."⁴ Marcuse had originally intended the present work to be his *Habilitationsschrift*, which would have earned him the *venia legendi*, the right to teach, thus completing the major step toward an academic career in a German university.

There appear to be two versions of the circumstances surrounding the fate of *Hegel's Ontology* as a *Habilitationsschrift*. According to the *Philosophisches Lexicon*, edited by E. Lange and D. Alexander and published in East Berlin in 1982, Heidegger rejected the work on the basis of political differences.⁵ This version is repeated by J. Mittelstrass in the *Philosophisches Lexicon* edited by him as well.⁶ Both sources agree that Edmund Husserl, who had been a member of Marcuse's doctoral dissertation examining committee, had intervened on Marcuse's behalf at this time and had recommended him to Director Max Horkheimer as a future coworker of the *Institut für Sozialforschung*.

According to a second version, which is the one more commonly followed by the Anglo-American scholars of Marcuse's work, Marcuse, who had seen the writing on the wall by the end of 1932, thought "it perfectly clear that I would never be able to qualify for a professorship [*mich habilitieren können*] under the Nazi regime,"⁷ and thus possibly never formally submitted the work to the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Freiburg. Barry Katz cites Marcuse as stating that to the best of his knowledge Martin Heidegger had never read the work.⁸

Despite some evidence to the contrary,⁹ this second version of events surrounding Marcuse's *Habilitationsschrift* appears more plausible, because according to the first version, political differences, and particularly Heidegger's pro-Nazi political sympathies, which became amply public with his "Rektoratsrede" of May 27, 1933,¹⁰ are projected backward to characterize earlier attitudes. Actually, Marcuse himself, although acknowledging that after the fact one could see the "repressive" aspects of *Being and Time*, emphatically disputes that prior to 1933 one could notice any hint of Heidegger's sympathies for National Socialism.¹¹

Whether it is the passage of time, however, that has led Marcuse to this more generous interpretation of Heidegger's politics, is hard to say. In a letter written to Heidegger on August 28, 1947, from Washington, D.C., for example, Marcuse is more conflicted about how to assess the break before

and after May 1933 in Heidegger's life. Recognizing in himself the tortured attempts of a former student to come to grips with the devastating disappointment caused by someone honored, he writes:

This week I will send you a package [Marcuse must be referring to "aid packages" sent to Germany after the war]. My friends have very much resisted this and have accused me of helping a man who has identified with a regime that has sent millions of my cobelievers to the gas chambers. . . . I can say nothing against this charge. Before my own conscience I have justified myself to myself with the argument that I send this package to a man from whom I learned philosophy from 1928 to 1932. I know that this is a poor excuse. The philosopher of 1933–34 cannot be completely different than the one before 1933, and this can even be less so, since you have philosophically justified, and expressed your enthusiastic support for the Nazi state and for the Führer.¹²

We have to conclude that at this point, given the evidence available to us, the events surrounding the academic fate of *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity* remain obscure. While it appears that Marcuse never *formally* submitted the work to Heidegger himself or to the Philosophical Faculty at the University of Freiburg, informally he may have supplied Heidegger with a copy, either before or after publication. Subsequently, Marcuse appears to have contradicted himself on how Heidegger did or could have reacted to *Hegel's Ontology*. Stating in some cases that Heidegger had probably never read the work, he appears to have told Jürgen Habermas that Heidegger had rejected this work as a *Habilitationsschrift*. And when one compares the letter from 1946 with later statements from the Olafson interview and the short recollection of Heidegger entitled "Enttäuschung," both from 1977, Marcuse seems to have changed his mind on how to assess Heidegger's "turn" to Nazism in 1933.

II

Despite the obscurity surrounding the circumstances of its academic fate, *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity* remains pivotal not only for understanding Marcuse's philosophical re-

lationship to Heidegger but equally for illuminating his highly original and creative reading of Hegel and for assessing his Hegelian brand of critical Marxism. While the detailed and careful commentary on Hegel's *Logic* and *Phenomenology of Spirit* stand in the foreground of *Hegel's Ontology*, neither the philosophical relation to Heidegger nor the Hegelian foundations of Marxism is directly addressed. Rather, they constitute the oblique intention of this work and may add to its initially daunting character for the contemporary reader. In a postcard to Karl Löwith dated July 28, 1931, Marcuse himself briefly summarizes his intentions:

It is true that a longer work of mine on Hegel will appear this fall: it is an interpretation of the *Logic* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as foundations for a theory of historicity. The *Hegel-Marx* question is not explicitly addressed, although I hope that this interpretation will throw some new light on this connection. Neither does this work contain a critical discussion of Heidegger nor is it intended to do so. Rather, the whole is a necessary preparation for articulating the fundamental nature [*die Grundcharaktere*] of historical happening [*geschichtliches Geschehen*].¹³

This lack of explicit reference to Marx and to historical materialism distinguishes *Hegel's Ontology* from Marcuse's other writings of this period, which seek a synthesis between Heideggerian existential phenomenology and Marxist theory.¹⁴ This may also be why, with few exceptions, *Hegel's Ontology* has been by and large ignored in the literature on Marcuse and Critical Theory, and why commentators have chosen to focus on other more accessible essays of this period.¹⁵ Nonetheless, to understand the set of concerns that form the background of *Hegel's Ontology*, it is necessary to consider briefly Marcuse's "phenomenological Marxism."

Like Lukács and Korsch, whose work he explicitly praises,¹⁶ between 1928 and 1933 Marcuse develops an interpretation of Marxist theory that is opposed to the outlook of the communist orthodoxy of the period as well as to that of the Second International. In a two-part review essay of Siegfried Marck's book, *Die Dialektik in der Philosophie der Gegenwart*, Marcuse characterizes the sad state of Marxist theory and philosophy with the following words:

The word and concept, "dialectic," has been so abused in recent philosophy and in Marxist theory and practice that it has become unavoidable *to come to one's senses* [*sich zu besinnen*] *again about the origin of dialectics*. Philosophy seems to see in "dialectic" a universal panacea to save itself from the helpless confusion or lifelessness into which it has brought itself. . . . everything somehow can be brought into a "dialectical system" and everything can remain hanging in the air. Within Marxism as well one treats dialectics similarly. For some it is "only a historically contingent" remainder of frozen Hegelianisms in Marx's works which can thus be removed from Marxist theory and practice with benefit; for others it is an essential component of Marxism, but — and this is decisive — what once constituted the meaning and essence of the historical movement for Marx becomes now its chain: through a bad dialectic every mistake, every step backward can be justified and shown to be a necessary link in the dialectical chain, so that at the end the result is the same as in bourgeois philosophy, namely, the avoidance of decisions.¹⁷

This lengthy passage expresses quite clearly Marcuse's preoccupations in this period. On the one hand, he criticizes the lack of rigor and sloppiness in the usage of "dialectic" in contemporary philosophy; on the the other hand, he argues against vulgar materialist interpretations of Marxism that seek to purge it of its dialectical-Hegelian elements. Such misuses of the dialectic often result in historical mindlessness and fatalism. This characterization clearly refers to the abuse of Marxist theory in the hands of the communist and Stalinist orthodoxy of the 1930s. While the first characterization applies to a more general trend prevalent in the philosophy of the period,¹⁸ it becomes clear from his long review of Max Adler's work on Marx and Kant that Marcuse sees attempts at developing a Kantian Marxism and Kantian socialism, characteristic of adherents of the Second International, as being equally philosophically eclectic and sloppy. Commenting of the futility of Adler's efforts to synthesize Marx and Kant, Marcuse insists that given the principles of Kantian critical philosophy the world of social being cannot be thematized.¹⁹ While admitting that in some of his historical essays Kant discusses genuine categories of social existence, Marcuse asserts that "Transcendental philosophy essentially can offer no grounding [*Begründung*] of social experience, because through its methodical

procedure, it precludes *concrete reality* [*die konkrete Wirklichkeit*] upon which alone social experience can be based. . . . In all eternity no road can lead transcendental philosophy from the world of pure consciousness and its constitution of experience to the world of social being; the transcendental grounding of social experience remains a chimera [*ein Unding*].”²⁰

Marcuse’s guiding aim in this period is “coming to one’s senses about the origin of dialectics” in a manner that is both philosophically rigorous and politically desirable. In Marxist philosophy one should not regress behind the level of systematicity and problem consciousness attained by the most advanced “bourgeois philosophy” — represented for Marcuse by Dilthey, Husserl, and Heidegger — while politically two different pitfalls should be avoided. Communist orthodoxy uses “dialectics” blindly to justify all political acts as being historically necessary links in a dialectical chain, while Kantian Marxism tries to make of Marxism a scientific sociology “which removes it from the concrete exigencies of the historical situation, freezes it cold, and devalues radical praxis.”²¹

This attempt to come to “one’s senses about the origin of dialectics” while not regressing behind the level reached by the best of bourgeois philosophy is best exemplified by Marcuse’s critical review essay of Karl Korsch’s *Marxismus und Philosophie*, entitled “Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit; Wilhelm Dilthey.” This discussion is particularly important for understanding *Hegel’s Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*, for it reveals how Marcuse’s conception of Marxist philosophy leads him to the problem of “historicity” in the work of Dilthey, and further back to Hegel himself.

Marcuse opens his review with general praise for Korsch’s work on Marxism and philosophy. Korsch has once more recognized and treated this issue as a genuine problem.²² Despite this agreement, however, Marcuse will choose to handle the problem of Marxism and philosophy differently by showing how “philosophy by itself and on its own moves toward an actualization which sublates it [*aufhebende Verwirklichung*] or a sublation which actualizes it [*verwirklichende Aufhebung*].”²³ Marcuse explains that *Aufhebung*, a crucial concept of Hegel’s *Logic*, means elimination [*Beseitigung*], conservation [*Aufbewahrung*],

and raising to a higher level [*Hinaufhebung*] of what is to be sublated. In the process of *Aufhebung* first the immediate, still inauthentic and untrue form, of the phenomena are eliminated; second, what is most authentic and truest in this form is preserved; and finally, this most authentic element is raised to that intrinsic form most appropriate to the phenomena. This last step "is the inner goal of the process of *Aufhebung*, and contains thus within itself its relation to actualization [*Verwirklichung*]: sublation as actualization."²⁴ In this sense, philosophy can be realized neither in its practical application and consequences nor in its dissolution into the individual sciences nor in its reduction to formal logic and dialectics.

Having outlined this ambitious program of demonstrating the self-sublating actualization of philosophy, Marcuse then fits historical characters into this scenario. The turn of philosophical theory to societal praxis, completed by Marxism, is only possible on the basis of the "ground prepared by Hegel and by holding unto tendencies intrinsic to Hegelian philosophy."²⁵ But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, the appropriation of Hegelian philosophy initiates a new mode of the actualization of philosophy, alongside Marxism, and this is the *Lebensphilosophie* of Wilhelm Dilthey. Marcuse defines *Lebensphilosophie* as that school of thought that has recognized "the Being of human life as belonging to the foundation of philosophy and which has investigated it along these lines."²⁶ Its sole true representative is Wilhelm Dilthey.

The very special interpretation that Marcuse gives to the thesis of the "actualization of philosophy through its sublation" explains his otherwise puzzlingly detailed discussion of Dilthey in the midst of what is ostensibly a Karl Korsch review. According to Marcuse, philosophy in Dilthey's work reaches a situation that brings it to the limits of its "sublating actualization." At this stage, it thematizes that very dimension of reality disclosed by Hegel and Marx, namely "historical-social actuality" [*geschichtlich-gesellschaftliche Wirklichkeit*].²⁷ In the remainder of this essay, Marcuse is concerned to show how Dilthey has led philosophy forward and away from pure epistemology. Dilthey's efforts to delimit the human [*Geisteswissenschaften*]

from the natural sciences culminate in the reformulation of the very foundations of philosophy itself. "Not by assuming a frozen a priori constitutive of our cognitive capacity can we answer the questions which we all direct to philosophy, but only the developmental history [*Entwicklungsgeschichte*] which proceeds from the totality of our knowledge can do so."²⁸ Having taken this step, Dilthey has not only laid a new foundation for philosophy but has also disclosed the ontological character [*Seinscharakter*] of the object domain of the human sciences, of historical-social reality. This ontological character is to be defined as "Life." *Life is that Being, the nature of which most authentically defines the historical-social world.*²⁹ This claim already reaches the heart of the argument in *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*. Before turning to this work, however, it is necessary to explicate the relationship between the ontological character of Life and historicity, and to complete Marcuse's account of the sublation of philosophy through Dilthey's work. A clarification of these issues will prove extremely helpful in evaluating some of the more condensed and abrupt formulations concerning Dilthey's philosophy with which Marcuse begins his introduction to the present text.

Life, as Marcuse interprets Dilthey, means neither a stage of nature nor the opposite of Spirit, logos, or reason, but the "way in which certain 'facts' exist and are given amidst the totality of the given world (thus also in nature)."³⁰ In order to understand the mode of existence of these "facts," one must refer them back to a consciousness that is itself "understandable" [*verstehbar*], and which experiences [*erleben*] an "inner world" of meanings as opposed to the "external" and "mute" [*stumm*] one of causal relations. These facts exist within a network of effective relations [*ein Wirkungszusammenhang*] constituted by meaning contexts [*Bedeutung*]. The totality of effective relations, of meaning contexts, within which facts exist is history. "Historicity" designates the mode in which these effective relations become embodied in *objectivations* [*Objektivationen*] of Life such as social and cultural institutions and practices, objects and artifacts, states and constitutions, juridical and economic systems, artistic and cultural creations. All these objectivations emerge out of Life and form clusters of meaning,

the emergence, development, and passing away of which is history. Marcuse cites a passage from Dilthey that reminds one unmistakably of the *German Ideology*: "From the distribution of trees in a park to the organization of houses on a street, from the appropriate tool of the craftsman to the verdict in the court of justice, all that surrounds us is in constant historical becoming [*stündlich geschichtlich gewordenes*]." ³¹

The final question posed by Marcuse in this essay returns to the issue of the sublation and actualization of philosophy. If, as is the case with Dilthey's thought, the problems of Life, Life's historicity, and the actuality of the historical-social world move to the center of philosophy and, as Marcuse states in the introduction to *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*, come to define the "foundations of philosophy itself," then what particular form has the sublation and actualization of philosophy taken? Has philosophy become social theory, cultural anthropology, historical aesthetics, or even a general theory of world-constitution in the various sciences? According to Marcuse, for Dilthey philosophy is the permanently renewed human attempt at "coming to one's senses" [*Selbstbesinnung*] about one's historical situation in the world. By "situation" is meant the totality of lived relations and attitudes, while "coming to one's senses" is understood as a mode of being, acting, and becoming grounded in the possibilities and necessities of such a situation. ³²

With this interpretation Marcuse returns to the philosophy of the "radical act" [*die radikale Tat*] of his first published essay, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism."³³ Although in his later essay he does not identify this radical act, which emerges from the possibilities as well as necessities of the historical situation with the engagement for the proletariat as such, historically Marcuse could hardly have been ignorant of Dilthey's more moderate conservative-liberal interpretation of the meaning of *Selbstbesinnung*. Undoubtedly, Marcuse's rejoinder would be, as it was with his interpretation of Heidegger,³⁴ that the best of bourgeois philosophers at such points in their thought revealed the need to go beyond their own framework to a more radical one in order to realize it.

Marcuse's answer as to what constitutes the "sublating actualization" of philosophy, although consistent with his earlier claims in this essay, reveals nonetheless an unresolved tension between Wilhelm Dilthey's *Lebensphilosophie* on the one hand and Heidegger's existential ontology on the other. If, as Marcuse himself has argued, philosophy cannot be actualized through its practical consequences or through a leap into action, then the "radical act" may be a *consequence* of the philosophical process of "coming to one's senses," but can be no *substitute* for it. If this is so, however, the question still remains as to what kind of investigation is to count as philosophical *Selbstbesinnung*. Here Marcuse provides an answer that is not Dilthey's own; he leads *Lebensphilosophie* back to the domain of ontology.

The most concise definition of philosophy is given not at the end of the Korsch review but at the beginning of the essay on "Transcendental Marxism." Here Marcuse cites Lukács in support of his definition, but the stamp of Heidegger is hard to miss. "Philosophy is the scientific expression of a certain fundamental human attitude [*menschliche Grundhaltung*]; indeed an attitude toward Being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seienden*) in general, and through which a historical-social situation often can express itself more clearly and deeply than in the reified [*dinglich erstarrten*] practical spheres of life."³⁵

In his careful study of Dilthey and Heidegger, *Lebensphilosophie und Phänomenologie*, Dilthey's son-in-law, George Misch, has made clear, however, that Heidegger's own reading of Dilthey through an ontological lens has distorted some of the basic principles of Dilthey's philosophy.³⁶ A philosophy for which historical-social actuality and Life's objectivations form the center cannot be interpreted as an "ontology" without doing violence to its focus on concrete, historical phenomena and its rejection of ahistorical generalities. Whatever the problems of historicism and relativism that may lurk in Dilthey's work,³⁷ an existential ontology of the kind presented by Heidegger replaces the fundamental category of Life with that of Being. But in this process the foundations as well as the self-understanding of the philosophical project change.

The young Marcuse is not unaware of Georg Misch's pow-

erful objections to Heidegger's reading of Dilthey, and in another context refers positively to this work.³⁸ Nonetheless, in *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity* he attempts to ground Dilthey's concept of historicity in Hegelian ontology. Hegel, he maintains, had originally formulated the meaning of Being with the phenomenon of Life in view. "Grounding" here signifies disclosing the historical and conceptual basis upon which something rests and from which it proceeds. Through this interpretation as well, Marcuse does not succeed in resolving the tensions between the approaches of Dilthey and Heidegger which have already become visible. They permeate the crucial concept of "historicity" at the center of the present study and remain with it to the end.

III

Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity opens with the statement:

This work attempts to disclose and to ascertain the fundamental characteristics of historicity. Historicity is what defines history and thus distinguishes it from "nature" or from the "economy." Historicity signifies the meaning we intend when we say of something that it is "historical." Historicity signifies the meaning of this "is," namely the meaning of the Being [*Seinssinn*] of the historical.

This opening statement shows Marcuse applying the lessons of Heideggerian ontology to the theme of historicity, which has dominated his articles from 1928 to 1932. The question that concerns him is neither historiography nor history as an object of research but the mode of Being, the *Seinsweise*, of the historical.

In section 3 of the introduction to *Being and Time* Heidegger had clarified how the investigation of the question of Being takes priority over the questions of the individual sciences. All sciences proceed from a demarcation and initial fixing of the areas of their subject matter. But "the basic structures of any such area have already been worked out after a fashion in our prescientific ways of experiencing and interpreting the domain of Being in which the area of the subject-matter is itself con-

fined.”³⁹ All sciences thus gain access to their subject matter by projecting a certain mode of experiencing and interpreting their object domain. These experiential and interpretive assumptions form the hermeneutical presuppositions of any horizon of inquiry. Being is always experienced as “being as,” “being such and such.”

In posing the question of the mode of Being of the historical, then, Marcuse is asking what those presuppositions are that lead us to experience and interpret historicity as a mode of “being as.” We can thus distinguish two levels of inquiry. At the level of everyday experience and interpretation, history means something for us and we live through it, we experience it in a certain way. We are surrounded, as Dilthey has expressed it, by objects, buildings, artifacts, and institutions that are in the process of perpetual historical becoming. This is the *ontic* level of the existence of individual beings as “such and such,” “thus and not otherwise.” This ontic level of meaning and experience “always already” presupposes an “orientation” to Being, an orientation that is the fundamental component of the world within which any Being comes to be and is experienced as what it is. This is disclosed by the *ontological* level of investigation, and at the beginning of his inquiry Marcuse clarifies that this is the level to be pursued in the present work. The distinction between *ontic* and *ontological* levels of questioning is the first respect in which Marcuse’s problematic is indebted to Heidegger’s teaching.

The second Heideggerian aspect of this problematic is suggested by the phrase “the meaning of the Being [*Seinssinn*] of the historical.” The question of Being in general has meaning only for a certain kind of being, and this is *Dasein*. “*Dasein* is an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an *issue* for it.”⁴⁰ For Heidegger, this “ontical priority of the question of Being” for *Dasein* leads to an “existential analytic” as the primary focus. In this context Robert Pippin has argued that “In *Hegels Ontologie*, a similar orientation leads Marcuse to pose the problem of Being in terms of the concept of ‘Leben’ in Hegel, a notion that Marcuse, interpreting rather freely, treats very much like Heideggerian

Existenz.”⁴¹ Although I think that Pippin is right in this respect, the parallels between the Heideggerian categories of Dasein or *Existenz* and the Diltheyan one of *Leben* give rise to problems. As Pippin asserts, Marcuse himself may have thought that systematically Dasein and Life occupied the same ontological space, but his own investigation nevertheless betrays differences that persist as ambiguities throughout the central concept of “historicity.” This claim, however, takes us too far ahead in the analysis of *Hegel's Ontology*. Prior to assessing its cogency, we need to gain a general overview of Marcuse's argument in the present work. Let me first summarize this argument in stepwise fashion:

1. The question concerning the meaning of the Being of the historical must be posed in relation to the most advanced investigation of historicity at the present; Wilhelm Dilthey's work defines this most advanced stage.
2. In investigating Dilthey's work one confronts certain unclarified presuppositions. Life, for example, which is the central category for Dilthey, is understood as a process that unifies I and world, Spirit and nature. But Life is also further defined as Spirit, and the world is described as the world of Spirit.
3. These presuppositions are indebted to Hegelian ontology; the most advanced theory of historicity at the present is based upon a meaning of Being derived from Hegelian ontology. Dilthey himself, however, did not clarify his indebtedness to Hegel in this respect.
4. The ontological concept of Life is central for understanding Hegel's concept of historicity. Life does not refer to a specific mode or region of beings, animate vs. inanimate nature, for example, but orients the very meaning of Being in a certain direction.
5. The original and fundamental definition of Being, as oriented toward the ontological reality of Life, has been obscured and repressed by Hegel himself. There is a tension throughout Hegelian ontology between a definition of Being oriented to the ideas of cognition [*Erkennen*] and Absolute Knowledge on the one hand and a definition of Being oriented toward the meaning of Life on the other.

6. In order to reveal this tension and to document Hegel's vacillations regarding the foundations of his ontology, the present work begins with an investigation of the meaning of Being in Hegel's *Logic*. Once the ambivalence in this ontological framework becomes visible, it is necessary to go back to writings that preceded the *Logic* and in which the ontological orientation toward the Being of Life is explicit. These are the *Early Theological Writings* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which are examined in part II.

7. In his first published writings, such as the "Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's Systems of Philosophy" and "Faith and Knowledge," Hegel defines the task of philosophy as the overcoming of the "bifurcation" [*Entzweiung*] characteristic of Life and philosophy in the modern period. The oppositions of subject and object, self and world, reason and sensibility, for-itselfness and in-itselfness, knowledge and faith, must be overcome, and philosophy must reveal their unity. This unity, however, cannot be regained by some dogmatic metaphysics that falls behind the achievements of Kantian critical philosophy. Rather, one must show the common ground from which these oppositions proceed and in which alone they can subsist. This is the self-producing and self-sustaining totality of beings out of which alone subjectivity and objectivity, in-itselfness and for-itselfness, can first issue. As opposed to the world of *Verstand*, which consists of fixed opposites, the totality is only disclosed to *Vernunft*, to reason.

8. Hegel defines the meaning of Being as "unity," and he views both the lowest and the highest forms of being, a stone as well as the Absolute Idea, as forms of unity, between in-itselfness and for-itselfness — more precisely, in the case of inanimate beings, as a unity between their in-itselfness and their being-there [*Dasein*]. Such unity is processual; it is not given and fixed but is attained and sustained through the motility [*Bewegtheit*] characteristic of each being. Such motility is intrinsic to beings themselves, for all being contains difference within itself. The degree to which such difference belongs to the very constitution of a being or is merely imposed upon it from without as "change" varies. While the simplest form of being experiences

absolute difference as something that “happens” to it, as “change,” the highest forms of being initiate such difference as “activity.” The various categories of the *Logic* are but conceptualizations of different modes of unifying unity [*einigende Einheit*] or unifying motility.

9. Because beings are understood as structures of unifying unity in movement, their past is a decisive aspect of their present. The dimension of essence [*Wesen*] first reveals the historicity intrinsic to all beings. Essence is disclosed when beings retreat from their present back into themselves; essence is the sphere of “mediation” wherein beings show their existence to be but a “presupposition” [*Voraussetzung*] that needs repositing.⁴² When existence is repositated as a result of the mediation with essence, it becomes actuality [*Wirklichkeit*]. By grasping being as actuality, as a structure of activity having the power to effectuate itself, to bring itself about, Hegel goes back to Aristotelian ontology and to the Aristotelian category of *energeia*. The categories of mediation, presupposition, and repositing show the *historicity* intrinsic to all beings in Hegelian ontology, while the category of actuality shows how Life and its reality guide Hegel's understanding of being as a form equality-with-self-in-otherness.

10. In the *Logic* Life is treated as the first form of the “Idea,” which has not yet reached truth and freedom. Only conceptual thought can realize this highest meaning of being as equality-with-self-in-otherness. Only in the communion of the Absolute Idea with itself, of thought thinking itself, can the true form of the latter be attained. By treating Life as an inferior form of the Absolute Idea, however, in the final sections of his *Logic* Hegel displays the ambivalence characteristic of his entire ontology. Although he has oriented his entire definition of Being toward the phenomenon of Life, he also argues that only cognition and conceptual thought actualize the highest meaning of unifying unity. But as the investigation of Hegel's *Early Theological Writings* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit* shows, Life is that form of being that can only sustain itself by initiating difference, by externalizing itself, and by reabsorbing such difference and externality once more into its unity. *Activity* is

thus central to the mode of being of Life, and it is on account of such activity that Life always unfolds in a “world.” An active being changes the externality in which it finds itself in a manner appropriate to its life-form, makes it its own, animates it [*verlebendigen*]. Desire and labor, therefore, are categories of Life; they describe the activities of a self-conscious being who is also alive.

11. The tension that has characterized the relation of Life to Absolute Idea in the *Logic* recurs in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* via the relation of Life to Spirit. Spirit for Hegel necessarily has a “we-like” [*wirhaftige*] character, and because Life is the ground from which Spirit emerges, Spirit also unfolds in a “world,” transformed by desire and labor, and possessing a “we-like” character. The world of Spirit reveals what Spirit is, namely a process of self-externalizing letting-go [*geschehen lassen*]. It is through this process that Spirit displays itself and attains power and freedom. Yet Hegel views this self-externalization of Spirit also as the mere “externality” of Spirit. The truth of Spirit, then, is not its externalization [*Entäußerung*] but its inwardization [*Verinnerlichung*]. Not history as it is lived through, but history as it is remembered constitutes its truth for Hegel. Thus, when cognition is defined as an aspect of Life, then historicity follows, when Life is defined as an inadequate form of cognition, history is repressed.

12. This dualism in the ontological foundation influences Hegel's concept of historicity and is fully manifest in the closing sections of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Here one finds that the two tendencies — one emerging out of the Idea of Absolute Knowledge and leading to the repression of historicity, the other emerging out of the ontological concept of Life and leading to the culmination of historicity — are pushed together. Viewed from the standpoint of Absolute Knowledge, its history appears as a “sacrifice” and “externalization”; history is Spirit “emptied into time.” For Absolute Spirit, however, time is necessarily negative; its fulfillment consists in its withdrawal into itself, in the inwardizing of its negativity. History, as a process of recollection, is the condition of the possibility of Absolute Spirit, but Absolute Spirit comes to itself only by overcoming its own condition of possibility.

We can see now that one of Marcuse's main purposes is to uncover the intrinsic relation between historicity and Spirit, temporality and Life, in Hegel's work.⁴³ In undertaking this task, Marcuse may have been inspired by a criticism of Hegel voiced by Heidegger in *Being and Time*. Heidegger maintains that Hegel had established merely an "external" and "empty formal-ontological" equivalence between time and Spirit, "by going back to the *selfsameness of the formal structure which both Spirit and time possess as the negation of a negation.*"⁴⁴ Heidegger is particularly critical of Hegel's phrase that "Spirit falls into time," which, he claims, obscures the fact that Spirit is already *in time*.

Marcuse's answer to this critique would be the following: Indeed, in many of his formulations Hegel has obfuscated the relation between time and Spirit, for he has repressed the temporality and historicity permeating his entire ontology, but if we place the concept of Life at the center of this ontology, these repressed dimensions become visible once more. In defining being as a structure of equality-with-self-in-otherness Hegel makes the dimension of essence a fundamental constituent of this structure. Such equality-with-self-in-otherness can only come about insofar as beings are capable of mediating their past with their present, of defining their present in a way that opens up to their future. All forms of being, although potentially divided into mere being-thereness and intrinsic being, are not equally capable of such self-mediation and self-relation [*Sich-verhalten*]. Only beings capable of activity [*Tun*], and this means primarily living beings, can attain this mode of mediation and self-relation. Spirit, insofar as it is the universal self-consciousness of a being that is alive, is essentially temporal. Spirit does not "fall" into time, but is in time, for Life, out of which Spirit emerges, is through and through temporal.

As a reading of Hegel, Marcuse's present work has met with some skepticism, and the centrality of the term "historicity" to Hegel's concerns has been questioned.⁴⁵ Having acquired its distinctive meaning first through the Dilthey-Yorck correspondence and Heidegger's subsequent interpretation of this,⁴⁶ "historicity" is a term that Hegel himself used only on a few occasions. Nevertheless, as Leonhard von Renthe-Fink's pains-

taking analysis of the history of this term shows, such a reading of Hegel is not anachronistic insofar as Hegel can be viewed as the originator of the concerns suggested by this term even if not of the term itself.⁴⁷ Most significant in this regard is the conceptual shift in the assessment of historicity. For Enlightenment thinkers, historicity was roughly equivalent to “positivity,” to the mere fact that something was given in a certain way in space and time; the given as such had little to do with reason and rationality. This is the sense in which the term is still used by Hegel in the phrase “the positivity of the Christian religion.”⁴⁸ However, as Marcuse notes, one of Hegel’s major discoveries in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is that every “given” is a “having become,” that every “positivity” is the “product” of a process of negativity, of activity that brings it about. In the language of the Doctrine of Essence, the posit is always already something repositated. But if essence itself is not outside positivity, but shows itself through it as appearance, then the process of becoming of beings, their historicity, is fundamental to their rational comprehension. Reason is not ahistorical but grasps the rationality implicit in historicity. This is the conceptual transformation effected by Hegel, and clearly, even in the absence of the term “historicity,” the relations between reason and history, time and the concept, Spirit and its becoming, implied by this transformation are not peripheral but central issues of Hegelian philosophy.

Nonetheless, the fact that in the present work Marcuse nowhere defines “historicity” adds to the obliqueness if not the obscurity of some of his intentions. I have suggested that there is a central ambiguity in this term that reveals Marcuse’s unresolved vacillation between Dilthey and Heidegger, between a quasi-materialist, proto-Marxist reading of Dilthey’s *Lebensphilosophie* and Heidegger’s existential ontology. The issue can be put as follows: According to the Diltheyan reading, the term “historicity” is only meaningful when viewed in relation to Life’s *objectivations*, but according to the Heideggerian analysis, historicity derives from temporality, from the essential being-toward-death and finitude of the individual *Dasein*.

The historicity of beings, which Marcuse, following Hegel, interprets as their containing their having-become in their

present, is best manifested by those *objectivations* of Life that indeed are the product of the activity of living and self-conscious beings. Read in this fashion, the Diltheyan concept of objectivation can be easily linked with the Marxian concept of *praxis* as world-constitutive activity. The concept of *objectivation* that is at the center of Marcuse's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* in chapters 22 and 23 of the present work is also one of those points in the text where the differences between the concept of *historical actuality*, common to Dilthey and Marx and ultimately derived from Hegel's teaching of "objektiver Geist," and the Heideggerian category of *Dasein* become visible.

Much like Kojève's lectures on Hegel, which were held in Paris a few years after the publication of the present work (in 1933–1939),⁴⁹ Marcuse draws attention to the dialectic of labor and desire in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. But the centrality of constitutive or objectifying activity is revealed not in the section on Lordship and Bondage but in Marcuse's interpretation of an episode entitled "Der geistige Tierreich und der Betrug oder 'die Sache selbst'" (The Spiritual Animal Kingdom and Deceit or the "Thing Itself").

The importance of this episode to the argument of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the following: The preceding sections of chapter 5 on Observing Reason and ethically active Rational Self-Consciousness have established that for self-consciousness "the world constitutes the cycle of its activity, and that essentially it had to manifest and prove itself in the world. It recognized that actuality is in essence an object of 'work' [*ein Werk*]" (chapter 23 below). Yet the self-consciousness in possession of this knowledge still acted as a single individual, despite the fact that the episode on Lordship and Bondage had established some form of "unity" among different selves. Yet this unity of selves, according to Marcuse, "has not become the living subject of this process." It first becomes so as the life of a whole people that allows "the merely individual deed and striving of each . . . to take place on the basis of *its own* 'power'" (ibid.).

The problem that this episode of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is addressing can be described as *the intersubjective constitution of a shared world, a social world of objects as well as of*

actions. This must be a world that individuals can recognize as their own “work,” and in so doing recognize themselves *in* this world. But this recognition cannot consist in the mere certainty of a single individual that this happens to be the case. As Hegel’s previous discussions of “Virtue and the Way of the World” and “Pleasure and Necessity” make clear, the mere certainty of self-consciousness merely continues the dialectic of intention and consequence. I may be certain that my work, my objectivation in the world, stands for such and such a meaning and that the true intention of my actions is thus and not otherwise, but my certainty is merely pitted against those of others that this is not as I see it but otherwise.⁵⁰ How can we generate intersubjective agreement and understanding that these objects stand for these meanings or are to be utilized in such and such contexts and that these acts embody these and not other intentions? Let me quote a crucial passage of Marcuse’s reading of Hegel here:

Work is always the work of a specific individual that realizes itself through it. . . . Every individual thereby places in the “space of being” its own *determinate work*. For every other individual, however, this is “alien” and must be sublated through transformative action. It then follows that every individual must defend and prove *itself* against all others. . . . The work thereby becomes an object of struggle in the reciprocal opposition of individuals. . . . The reality of the individual and its work, which were originally determinate, prove themselves as unreal and vanishing moments. (chapter 23 below)

It is not necessary to follow in detail the resolution of the dialectic of “work” and “recognition.” According to Marcuse’s reading of Hegel — which I would term brilliant on this issue — this dialectic is resolved only because in this process both the object of work and the subject are transformed. By a series of successive totalizations, the object of work becomes *die Sache selbst* and no longer refers to a single thing but rather to a context of relations, an objective reality formed by cumulative human activity and the cumulative product of such activities. Paralleling this transition from *object* to *objectivity*, from thing to world, activity also loses its individualistic character and comes to stand not for individual deeds but for the doings and

accomplishments of a whole people, of a plural rather than singular subject. And as if to leave no doubt about the general intentions of this interpretation, Marcuse refers to *pragma*: “Nowhere in Western philosophy since the Greeks have Life and its activity and the world of Life as work and *pragma* been placed at the center of ontology” (chapter 23 below).

Compare this emphasis on intersubjective world-constitution through work and action with Heidegger's own account of the origins of historicity. Certainly the prominence of the category of world as well as the emphasis on the “we-like” character of this world are reminiscent of Heideggerian “Being-in-the-world” and “Being-with.”⁵¹ Whereas in Marcuse's reading of Hegel the constituted quality of the world, the fact that it is what it is only because a living being has acted upon it and has appropriated it to make it its very own, is essential to its historicity, for Heidegger historicity is not grounded in the dimension of world-constitution but in that of individual temporality:

Dasein factually has its 'history', and it can have something of the sort because the Being of this entity is constituted by historicality. . . . The Being of Dasein has been defined as care. Care is grounded in temporality. Within the range of temporality, therefore, the kind of historizing which gives existence its definitely historical character, must be sought. Thus the Interpretation of Dasein's historicity [*Geschichtlichkeit*] will prove to be, at bottom, just a more concrete working out of temporality.⁵²

Heidegger is careful to emphasize that one should not interpret this claim as if to mean that the subject without the world could still be historical, but he insists nevertheless that what is historical are not entities encountered in the world but rather that “entity that exists as Being-in-the-world.”⁵³ Certainly what Heidegger is aiming at is avoiding placing the character of historicity on either the subject or the object pole; he is seeking to ground historicity in the temporality of Dasein, which itself can only be understood as a mode of Being-in-the-world. Nonetheless, it cannot escape our attention that, unlike Heidegger, nowhere in the present work does Marcuse explicate the structure of temporality unique to *Dasein*, and that the historicity Marcuse discloses in Hegel's work is an “objective”

historicity, characteristic of all entities — of institutions no less than of human beings — and that this “objective” historicity stands in sharp contrast to Heidegger’s “subjective” or “existential” understanding of historicity. In fact, a Heideggerian objection to the present work would be that it contains no clear distinction between the “world-historical” dimension, the historicity of entities and of our shared world, which unfolds in public space, and the “historicity” proper to Dasein, grounded in the openness of the future and the thrownness [*Geworfenheit*] of Dasein toward the future. The problem of world-constitution, to which Marcuse returns again and again in his reading of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is a problem belonging to the domain of the world-historical, but for Heidegger to base the phenomenon of historicity on this dimension of beings would be to fall into inauthenticity. In this case, one would simply assume, à la Hegel, that world-historical time, which is public time, and the temporality of Dasein, which is existential time, were somehow continuous.⁵⁴ By not distinguishing between temporality and historicity, and within historicity between world-historical time and Dasein’s own temporality; by emphasizing the worldliness of historicity; and finally by moving in unproblematic fashion from the ‘I’ to the ‘we’, from ‘self-consciousness’ to the ‘people’ [*das Volk*], Marcuse in the present work departs significantly from Heidegger’s teaching even if the initial problem, the method, and the categorial framework used are indebted to Heidegger. Depending on what degree of individual self-reliance and autonomy of thought Heidegger could tolerate among his disciples, he might have had grounds to reject this work as a *Habilitationsschrift*, which he fully endorsed, even if it appears that historically he never had to do so. Marcuse’s proto-Marxist reading of Hegel and Dilthey could have hardly escaped Heidegger’s acute knowledge of and sense for the history of philosophy.

IV

The first to note that Marcuse’s interpretation of historicity in *Hegel’s Ontology and the Theory of Historicity* did not quite correspond to its ostensibly Heideggerian vocabulary and intentions

was Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno. In a rather terse but penetrating review of the present book in the first issue of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* Adorno wrote:

With this thesis, Marcuse appears to depart decisively from Heidegger's public teaching, which he otherwise represents with the strictness of a disciple: he tends from the "meaning of Being" toward the disclosure of beings; from fundamental ontology toward the philosophy of history; from historicity toward history. This is what makes the work significant as well as vulnerable to criticism. If Marcuse goes so far as not only to give an ontological exposition of the possibility of factual being but deduces the possibility of the exposition of factual being from the ontological structure itself, it would have been consistent to ask: why indeed should the "ontological" question precede that of the interpretation of real, historical facts, since Marcuse himself would like to bridge the gap between ontology and facticity?⁵⁵

"Bridging the gap between ontology and facticity" is an implicit desideratum of the present work, insofar as the emphasis, noted above, on Life's objectivations and the meaning structures embodied in the *world* already indicates that for Marcuse these possess a significance that goes far beyond their mere *Zuhandensein* (readiness-to-hand) in Heideggerian terms. It is also interesting to note that this is one point where Marcuse defends Dilthey against Heidegger. Arguing that Heidegger's philosophy does not allow one to define the "boundaries of the historical situation at the present," he pleads for an investigation of "the material constitution of historicity."⁵⁶ Dilthey, he maintains, went further in this direction by distinguishing among different epochs in terms of their material structure.⁵⁷ Of course, Adorno is right that Marcuse does not go so far as to ask if the question of the "material constitution of historicity" is compatible with an ontological investigation or if this question must lead to a materialist theory of society and history. But if we take into consideration the implicit and unresolved tensions in the present work, then Marcuse's transition, shortly after the publication of *Hegel's Ontology*, from "phenomenological" or "Heideggerian Marxism" to critical social theory, as formulated by Max Horkheimer in particular, appears less abrupt and unintelligible.

Nonetheless, in reading *Hegel's Ontology* we must resist two temptations: first the temptation to see more continuity between this book and the rest of Marcuse's oeuvre than is in fact the case, and second the temptation to treat the present work as a piece of juvenilia that was to be rejected even as early as *Reason and Revolution* in 1941.⁵⁸ It does not seem to me that the present work "begins to lay a foundation for many elements of Marcuse's (and others') full Critical Theory," as Pippin argues,⁵⁹ since, as Adorno notes, the ontological investigation and a materialist theory of society are incompatible insofar as the former tends to see the present as mere facticity exemplifying or revealing some eternal, ahistorical, and transcendental structure. Insofar as we place the problems of objectivation and world-constitution at the center of the present study, however, there is little question of the continuity between Horkheimer's appropriation of Hegel in his famous "Traditional and Critical Theory" essay of 1937⁶⁰ and Marcuse's reading of Hegel in *Hegel's Ontology*. But such continuity is hardly sufficient to justify the claim that the present work lays the foundations for many elements of a full Critical Theory.

Undoubtedly, as Palmier maintains, the reading of Hegel offered by Marcuse in his second Hegel book places in the foreground a number of texts such as the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, which occupy a backseat in the present work.⁶¹ Yet the concept of *Bewegtheit*, which characterizes the movement intrinsic to all being, is clearly at the origin of the concept of *negativity* so prominent in the latter work. Likewise, Marcuse's emphasis on the profound radicalism of Hegel's claim that the "rational is the actual," while his recognition of the quietism and accommodation implied by its converse, "the actual is rational," points to the same problem in Hegel's thought and has the same origins as the relationship of history and Absolute Knowledge discussed extensively in the present work. Insofar as the rational is to become actual, history is open to the future as a human project and philosophy occupies an essential role in reminding humans of the possibilities toward the future implicit in the present. Insofar as the actual is already rational, however, history is closed off to future transformation; the task of philosophy is

no longer to project future possibility but by an act of memory to reveal the rationality already implicit in the present and the given. Thus a careful reading of the two Hegel interpretations along these lines would reveal, contrary to Palmier, more continuities than breaks.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that at the center of Marcuse's analysis of historicity in the present work may lie an omission that can be made good neither by Dilthey's nor by Heidegger's philosophies. In order to reveal the tension between their projects and Marcuse's proto-Marxist reading of Dilthey, I have emphasized the relationship between Life and its objectivations as constitutive of historicity. In the case of Heidegger, as we saw, historicity was grounded in temporality, in the finitude and future-orientation of the individual Dasein. But neither objectivation nor temporality captures that dimension of human existence most closely related to the sense and structure of historicity, namely, *narrativity*. The etymological relation between story and history in almost all European languages and the centrality of the human narrative capacity in defining both individual and collective identity are sufficient evidence that any search for the basic structure of historicity that ignores the fact that humanity consists of animals not only tool-making and mortal but also story-telling and yarn-spinning, will be one-sided.

This aspect of historicity reveals itself in Marcuse's work much later, with his interpretation of the sources of disobedience and revolt as rooted in *collective memory*.⁶² One of Marcuse's central claims concerning contemporary civilization is that the sources of disobedience and revolt dry up in a culture as the collective memory of struggles fades and historical memory, much like consumer goods, is caught in a process of planned obsolescence. This theme of collective memory, which runs through some of Marcuse's later works and was probably formulated under Walter Benjamin's influence,⁶³ indicates that historicity can be understood neither solely in terms of cultural and institutional objectivations nor in terms of the care and concern of an individual finite being, but must be searched for as well in those shared, communicative, and narrative webs

that make up the structure of our lifeworld. In this sense, the present work should not be considered Marcuse's last word on the problem of historicity, a problem that recurs throughout his works but is treated, in *Eros and Civilization* in particular, in the context of narrativity, culture, and collective memory.

V

The dictum that "every translation is an interpretation" is almost a truism, and in the case of the present translation this truism is more true than ever. Those readers familiar with the German original will know the tortured and convoluted character of Marcuse's style, a combination, undoubtedly, of academic conformism, Heideggerian neologisms, and philosophical profundity at times bordering on obscurity. However, despite these problems, as a reading of Hegel the present work is also characterized by a conciseness, cogency, and frequent brilliance of formulation rarely encountered in the secondary literature. Marcuse's readings of Hegel's *Logic* and *Phenomenology of Spirit* remain exemplary in this respect. Whether the present translation has succeeded in capturing this conciseness and cogency while avoiding obscurity, repetition, and neologisms is, of course, up to the reader to judge.

As a translator, in order to bring out what I considered distinctive in the present work, I had to make a number of controversial interpretive choices. Although consulting existing English translations of Hegel and Heidegger, I have not followed them. I did so not because I found these to be inadequate but because Marcuse's attempt to forge a unified reading of Hegel, Heidegger, and Dilthey obliged me to concentrate primarily on how Marcuse was using certain terms and why he was doing so. Whereas in a normal Hegel translation the distinction between *Sein* and *Seiende* may not require systematic attention, for example,⁶⁴ to have ignored it in the present work would have been fatal. Likewise, in A. V. Miller's translation of the *Logic* two distinct terms are not used to designate the difference between *Bestimmung* and *Bestimmtheit*, whereas to have ignored this distinction in part I of this work would have made

Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel unintelligible. Since I found myself diverging from Miller's translation of the *Logic* on so many instances, I did not give page references to this translation. In the case of his translation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, however, I found his rendition closer to my reading of Marcuse's Hegel interpretation and have provided frequent page citations of the English. Other references to existing English translations of Hegel and Heidegger are given in the text. More complete information about terminology as well as an explanation of Marcuse's frequent puns can be found in the glossary. Since it would be cumbersome to repeat here the terminological choices and analyses presented there, I would recommend that the more philosophically specialized reader begin this text by consulting the glossary.

The present translation took a longer time to complete than is the norm. I would like to thank Thomas McCarthy, the series editor, and Larry Cohen of MIT Press for their patience and sense of humor during these delays, and for their ultimate faith that the project would be completed, even when I myself, under the combined weight of Marcuse, Hegel, and Heidegger, many times despaired of the possibility of rendering this text into English. Wolf Schäfer came to my aid numerous times with his native German and acquaintance with Greek and Latin; Sharon Slodki went over my transliterations of original Greek terms in chapter 19 and helped me tune some renditions more finely. In writing the introduction, I was most inspired by frequent conversations with Hauke Brunkhorst from the University of Frankfurt and with Thomas Rentsch from the University of Konstanz, both of whom also provided me with copies of documentation on the early Marcuse.

Although somewhat belated, this translation is dedicated to my teacher, friend, and colleague R.S. Cohen, a good friend of Herbert Marcuse's, in honor of his sixtieth birthday.

Seyla Benhabib
Brookline, Massachusetts
September 1986

Notes

1. *L'Ontologie de Hegel et la Théorie de l'Historicité*, G. Raulot and H. A. Baatsch, trans. (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972); *L'Ontologia di Hegel e la fondazione di una teoria della storicità*, E. Arnaud, trans. (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1969).

2. For discussions of this period see Alfred Schmidt, "Existential-Ontologie und historischer Materialismus bei Herbert Marcuse," in H. Marcuse and A. Schmidt, *Existentialistische Marx-Interpretation* (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1973), 111–142; Douglas Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 38–69; Paul Piccone and Alexander Delfini, "Herbert Marcuse's Heideggerian Marxism," *Telos*, No. 6 (Fall 1970), 36–46; Paul Piccone, "Phenomenological Marxism," *Telos*, No. 9 (Fall 1971), 3–31; Hauke Brunkhorst, *Marcuse* (unpub. ms.), ch. 2. For more general accounts, see Barry Katz, *Herbert Marcuse and the Art of Liberation* (London: New Left Books, 1982) and Morton Schoolman, *The Imaginary Witness* (New York: Free Press, 1970).

3. This work has been published in Herbert Marcuse, *Schriften*, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1978).

4. Herbert Marcuse and Frederick Olafson, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview," *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1977), 28.

5. E. Lange and D. Alexander, *Philosophisches Lexicon* (East Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1982).

6. Cf. *Enzyklopädie der Philosophie und Wissenschaftstheorie*, J. Mittelstrass, ed. (Mannheim/Wien/Zurich, 1980), entry on Herbert Marcuse. In the most recent and till now the most detailed account of the history of the Frankfurt School by Rolf Wiggershaus, it is also stated that Heidegger had declined to accept Marcuse's present work as a *Habilitationsschrift*. However, Wiggershaus as well provides no documentation for this claim, but asserts that this follows from a letter of Husserl's to Kurt Riezler, who in turn would consult Horkheimer on Marcuse's behalf. Cf. Rolf Wiggershaus, *Die Frankfurter Schule. Geschichte, Theoretische Entwicklung, Politische Bedeutung* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1986), 122.

7. Herbert Marcuse, "Theory and Politics: A Discussion," *Telos*, No. 38 (Winter 1978–79), 126; first published as *Gespräche mit Herbert Marcuse*, by J. Habermas, S. Bovenschen, and others (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981), 9–65.

8. Barry Katz, "Praxis and Poiesis," *New German Critique*, No. 18 (Fall 1979), 16.

9. See Douglas Kellner's claim that Habermas reported to him in a personal conversation that Heidegger had rejected the work, in *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism*, 406, n.1.

10. See Martin Heidegger, *Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität. Das Rektorat 1933/34*, Hermann Heidegger, ed. (Frankfurt: V. Klostermann, 1983), this is a reprint of texts from 1933 and 1945.

11. Marcuse and Olafson, "Heidegger's Politics," 32–33; Herbert Marcuse, "Enttäuschung," in *Erinnerung an Martin Heidegger*, Günther Neske, ed. (Pfullingen: Günther Neske Verlag, 1977), 162. Compare, however, Günther (Stern) Anders's assessment of Frau Heidegger's politics as early as 1925; apparently deceived by Anders's "aryan" appearance, she proposed to him that he join the National Socialist Youth Group in

Marburg; see Elizabeth Young-Breuhl, *For Love of the World: Hannah Arendt* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 61.

12. This letter has been reprinted along with a second one, dated 13 May 1948, in which Marcuse responds to a letter by Heidegger in *Pflasterstrand*, No. 209 (May 4, 1985) under the title "Gegen die Aufrechnung des Leidens," 43–44. Until an authorized version of Marcuse's correspondence appears, however, it will be difficult to assess the accuracy and reliability of this source.

13. A typed copy of this handwritten postcard has been made available to me through the courtesy of Mr. Jürgen Dinter, Antiquar für Philosophie. I would like to thank Dr. Thomas Rentsch for having made me aware of the existence of this postcard and for having procured a copy.

14. See the essays "Beiträge zu einer Phänomenologie des historischen Materialismus" (1928), *Philosophische Hefte*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Berlin), 45–68 [translated as "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," *Telos*, No. 4 (1969), 3–34]; "Über Konkrete Philosophie," (1929), *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, No. 62 (Tübingen), 111–128; "Neue Quellen zur Grundlegung des historischen Materialismus" (1932), *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. 9 (Part 2), No. 8 (Berlin), 136–174 [translated as "The Foundations of Historical Materialism," in Herbert Marcuse, *Studies in Critical Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), 1–48]; "Über die philosophischen Grundlagen des wissenschaftlichen Arbeitsbegriffs" (1933), *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, No. 69, 257–292 [translated as "On the Philosophical Foundations of the Concept of Labor in Economics," *Telos*, No. 16 (Summer 1973), 9–37].

15. Cf. Kellner's brief discussion in *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism*, 75–77; Alfred Schmidt's excellent essay on this period, "Existential-Ontologie und historischer Materialismus," mainly reconstructs the meaning of historicity with reference to essays cited in the preceding note. The most extensive recent discussion of this work is Robert Pippin, "Marcuse on Hegel and Historicity," *The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Spring 1985), 181–206.

16. On Lukács see "Zum Problem der Dialektik," *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. 7 (Part 1), No. 1 (Berlin, 1930), 15–30; reprinted in Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse, *Kritische Theorie der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt, 1970, unauthorized reprint), 243–261. On Korsch see note 22 below.

17. See Marcuse, "Zum Problem der Dialektik", here 245–246; emphasis added.

18. Marcuse is frustrated, for example, with the eclecticism of a thinker like Siegfried Marck, who brings together Rickert, Lask, Kroner, as well as Kierkegaard, Barth, Tillich, Lenin, Lukács, Heidegger, and others under the heading of "critical [*kritisistische*] dialectics." Marcuse comments: "What on earth does the philosophy of Rickert have to do with that of religious socialists, Heidegger with J. Cohn, Lukács with Natorp, Barth with Adler?" (*Ibid.*, 244).

19. Marcuse, "Transzendentaler Marxismus," *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. 7 (Part 2), No. 10 (Berlin, 1930), 304–326; reprinted in Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse, *Kritische Theorie der Gesellschaft*, 284–309, here, 293ff

20. *Ibid.*, 301–302; emphasis added.

21. *Ibid.*, 309.

22. Marcuse, "Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit: Wilhelm Dilthey," *Die Gesellschaft*, Vol. 8 (Part 1), No. 4 (Berlin, 1931), 350–367; reprinted in Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse, *Kritische Theorie der Gesellschaft*, 340–360, here 340.
23. *Ibid.*, 342.
24. *Ibid.*, 343.
25. *Ibid.*, 345.
26. *Ibid.* See Herbert Schnädelbach's very instructive discussion, *Philosophy in Germany 1831–1933*, Eric Matthews, trans. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 54ff.; on Hegel and Dilthey see 141ff. After the publication in 1921 of *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels* in Dilthey's *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 4, Lukács's review, "Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels" [*Die Rote Fahne*, Berlin, 3 May 1922], drew attention to the significance of this work for Marxist theory. On Korsch's interest in Dilthey and his citation of Lukács's review in support of the relevance of Dilthey for Marxist theory, see an episode from mid-1922 as reported by Andrew Arato and Paul Breines, *The Young Lukács and the Origins of Western Marxism* (New York: Pluto Press, 1979), 174–175. I would like to thank Paul Breines for drawing my attention to this point.
27. Marcuse, "Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit," 346.
28. Wilhelm Dilthey, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 1, xviii, as quoted in Marcuse, "Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit," 350.
29. *Ibid.*, 351.
30. *Ibid.* Marcuse is insistent that one must not interpret Dilthey as a metaphysical dualist and that the distinction between the *Natur-* and the *Geisteswissenschaften* must not be understood as referring to two distinct kinds of substances. Rather, Marcuse bases this distinction, as the above quote indicates, upon the "mode of givenness of certain facts themselves," meaning thereby the phenomenological way in which we experience certain meaning contexts and already always interpret them in the everyday lifeworld. In the recent debates between Richard Rorty, Hubert Dreyfus, and Charles Taylor this question has been taken up once more. As opposed to Rorty, who maintains that this distinction must ultimately rest on a metaphysics of two substances, Charles Taylor in particular defends a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach, much like Marcuse, emphasizing meaning constitution and experiential relations in the lifeworld to be the legitimizing basis for drawing this distinction. Cf. C. Taylor, "Understanding in Human Science," *Review of Metaphysics*, No. 34 (September 1980), 25–39.
31. The quote is from Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 7, 147.
32. *Ibid.*, 360.
33. Marcuse, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 3–34.
34. Cf. *Ibid.*, 17.
35. Marcuse, "Transzendentaler Marxismus," 283 Cf. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, Rodney Livingstone, trans. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), 110ff., 148.

36. See G. Misch, *Lebensphilosophie und Phänomenologie* (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1967, reprint of 2nd ed. of 1931; originally published in 1930), 5ff.; 41–56.
37. For a critique of Dilthey see H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, John Cumming and G. Banderi, trans. (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 192ff.
38. Marcuse, “Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit,” 345.
39. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, trans. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 29.
40. *Ibid.*, 32.
41. Pippin, “Marcuse on Hegel and Historicity,” 183.
42. For an explication of the circular movement of essence and the etymological play in German upon *Wesen* and *Gewesenheit* (having been), consult the glossary.
43. It is significant that throughout no explicit distinction is drawn between “temporality” and “historicity.” I return to this problem below.
44. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 485. Emphasis in the text.
45. Pippin, “Marcuse on Hegel and Historicity,” 180.
46. Wilhelm Dilthey and Graf Paul Yorck von Wartenburg, *Briefwechsel. 1877–1897* (Halle: Verlag M. Niemener, 1923); cf. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 449ff.
47. See Leonhard von Renthe-Fink, *Geschichtlichkeit. Ihr terminologischer und begrifflicher Ursprung bei Hegel, Haym, Dilthey und Yorck*, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, No. 59 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1968). Fink maintains that “historicity” is used by Hegel himself only twice, and both times in the context of the interpretation of the historical veracity of Jesus’s life and teaching, 17ff., 39ff.
48. G. W. F. Hegel, “The Positivity of the Christian Religion,” T.M. Knox, trans., in *Early Theological Writings* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 71ff.
49. A. Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, Allan Bloom, ed., James H. Nichols, Jr., trans. (New York: Basic Books, 1969).
50. See my discussion of Hegel’s analysis of the dialectic of intention and consequence in *Critique, Norm and Utopia: A Study of the Foundations of Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 87ff.
51. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 78ff., 149–169.
52. *Ibid.*, 434
53. *Ibid.*, 440.
54. Cf. Heidegger’s charge that Hegel never explains the “source of the time which has . . . been levelled off” as world-historical time (*Ibid.*, 485).

55. Theodor W. Adorno, "Review of *Hegels Ontologie und die Grundlegung einer Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit*," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. 1 (1932), 409–410. My translation.

56. Marcuse, "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," 18.

57. Ibid.

58. The first tendency is presented by Pippin in his "Marcuse on Hegel and Historicity"; the second by Jean-Michel Palmier, *Herbert Marcuse et la Nouvelle Gauche* (Paris: Belfond, 1973), 42–98.

59. Pippin, "Marcuse on Hegel and Historicity," 186.

60. See Max Horkheimer, "Traditionelle und Kritische Theorie," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. 6 (1937), 245–295 [translated as "Traditional and Critical Theory," in *Critical Theory*, M. J. O'Connell et al., trans. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 188–214].

61. Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941; reissued with a new preface, Boston: Beacon Press, 1960).

62. See Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962).

63. See Marcuse's 1964 afterword to Walter Benjamin, *Zur Kritik der Gewalt und andere Aufsätze* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1965), 97–107.

64. See, for example, T. M. Knox's translation of John the Baptist's evangelism in "The Spirit of Christianity," in *Early Theological Writings*, 257ff., in comparison to Marcuse's interpretation of this same passage in chapter 19 below.

Bibliographic Note

Hegel's writings are cited according to the old edition of the *Werke* (Berlin, 1832). The volume numbers of the completed works are not given. The pagination of this old volume can also be found in the Jubilee edition of Hegel's works by Hermann Glockner (1930).

I have checked Marcuse's references against the third edition of the *Sämtliche Werke*, Hermann Glockner, ed. (Stuttgart: Frommanns Verlag, 1956) in which the pagination of the old edition cited by Marcuse has been provided.

The following works are cited according to the Lasson edition:

G. W. F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, Bd. III and IV in *Sämtliche Werke*, Georg Lasson, ed. (Leipzig: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1923). The first edition of the *Logic* is cited according to the original: G. W. F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik* (Nürnberg: bei Johann Leonhard Schrag, 1813).

G. W. F. Hegel, *Jenenser Logik, Metaphysik und Naturphilosophie*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, G. Lasson, ed., Bd. XVIIIa.

G. W. F. Hegel, *Erste Druckschriften*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, G. Lasson, ed., Bd. I.

G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, G. Lasson, ed., Bd. VIII.

G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse und andere Schriften aus der Heidelberger Zeit*, in *Werke*, Hermann Glockner, ed. (1930). Abbreviated in the text as *HE*.

To distinguish this from the *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, cited according to the old edition of the *Werke*, Marcuse gives the volume numbers after the latter. It is abbreviated in the text as *E*, followed by a Roman numeral.

List of Bibliographic Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in the text to refer to the works cited by Marcuse. The Roman numeral following the abbreviation refers to the volume when provided, and the Latin numerals to page references.

- L* G. W. F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*
- ED* G. W. F. Hegel, *Erste Druckschriften*
- E* G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*
- HE* G. W. F. Hegel, *Heidelberger Enzyklopädie*
- JL* G. W. F. Hegel, *Jenenser Logik, Metaphysik und Naturphilosophie*
- GPh* G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*
- PhG* G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*
- G* G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*
- TJ* G. W. F. Hegel, *Theologische Jugendschriften*, H. Nohl, ed. (1907)

Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity

Introduction: The Problem of Historicity as the Starting Point and Goal of This Work. The Purpose of the Present Interpretation

This work attempts to disclose and to ascertain the fundamental characteristics of historicity.

Historicity is what defines history and thus distinguishes it from “nature” or from the “economy.” Historicity signifies the meaning we intend when we say of something that it is “historical.” Historicity signifies the meaning of this “is,” namely the meaning of the Being of the historical.

With respect to the historical, therefore, the problem is the manner in which it *is*. The question is not history as a science or as the object of a science but history as a mode of Being.

We inquire into the *happening* (*das Geschehen*) or the motility of this form of being. This line of questioning is not arbitrary: it is suggested by the very word “history” (*Geschichte*). What is historical (*geschichtlich*), happens (*geschicht*) in a certain a manner. History will be our problem as a process of happening and as a form of motility. It will be argued that a specific form of motility is constitutive of the being of the historical.

These preliminary remarks on the concept of historicity are intended to indicate only the future orientation of this work.

The current *philosophical* investigation of historicity provides the analytical and historical starting point for our attempt to clarify the fundamental characteristics of this phenomenon. Dilthey’s research forms the most advanced stage of these investigations, and even today they define the basis and the limits of this problem. The question of historicity, therefore, is treated [in this work — Tr.] in relation to Dilthey’s investigations.

In a critical evaluation of the theory of historicity worked out by Dilthey, one soon confronts fundamental difficulties arising from the fact that certain decisive presuppositions of his work are never explicitly articulated. The ontological concept (*Seinsbegriff*) of Life as the center of the problematic, the characterization of the motility of Life in terms of the unity of the I and the world (Nature and Spirit), the ontological meaning of this unity, the definition of historical Life as that mode of being which “actualizes” all that is (*das Seiende*), the determination of Life as Spirit and of its world as the “world of Spirit” — all these are problems that *take* one well *beyond* a philosophical discipline like the philosophy of history and beyond the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) to a fundamental *groundwork* of philosophy itself. Dilthey states that for him the “basic fact” of Life is “not only the beginning point for the human sciences but for *philosophy* as well.”¹ But when historicity is thematized in this fashion, when historical *Life* moves to the *center* of what is (*die Seienden*), and when this center is assigned to Spirit, this means that a certain meaning of Being in general and a certain ordering and systematization of various modes of being in light of this general concept have been *presupposed* already.

At this point we can hypothetically state the conclusions we have reached in pursuing Dilthey’s “presuppositions.” *Hegelian ontology*² is the ground and basis of the theory of historicity developed by Dilthey and thereby the basis of the current tradition of philosophical questioning about historicity. To regain access to the fundamental character of historical being, which in Dilthey’s work is present only in the form of assertions — albeit decisive ones — we must first expose and clear this ground, and this entails a critical evaluation of Hegelian ontology. The ontological concept of Life, the concepts of happening and Spirit, serve as bridges leading back from Dilthey. The interpretation of the ontological meaning of human life as historicity and its determination as Spirit are intimately related to a basic philosophical framework. This philosophy gains the meaning of Being by its orientation to the idea of Life and defines the process of development of beings as a form of “living” motility. Human life, moreover, is viewed only as a

privileged form of this process of development. It is precisely the concept of Being developed by Hegel that once again has given us the possibility of disclosing the process of historical happening in its proper and original source and that has decisively influenced this perspective on the problem. The present work attempts to explicate Hegelian ontology in the light of its original orientation to the ontological concept of Life and to Life's historicity.

In order to clarify the connections suggested, a new interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* must be attempted, for the traditional interpretations, already widespread in the older Hegelian school,³ have sought the basic principles of historicity first and foremost in Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. These, however, present a forced and frozen modification of the discoveries made in the *Logic* and in the *Phenomenology*. In our opinion this school of Hegel interpretation has also avoided developing Hegelian logic by placing the newly acquired concept of Being at its center and by taking account of the rootedness of this logic in a fundamental groundwork oriented to the ontological concept of Life and its historicity. In this respect their evasion followed a tendency later dominant in Hegel himself of modifying his original position.

An interpretation that wishes to reestablish these connections has definite presuppositions from which it proceeds and which reflect the changed history of the problem today. Such an interpretation must reilluminate all that was a living reality for Hegel, corresponding to the completely different situation out of which his philosophy originated, and which precisely because of this difference has remained unarticulated. This interpretation must further guide its object in accordance with its own intentions and questions, and this implies already a "transformation." The purpose and questions of this work do not aim at an all-sided and complete interpretation of Hegelian logic. Rather, a certain fundamental theme in Hegel's work is traced while others are necessarily pushed to the background. This theme concerns the unfolding of the concept of Being and the process of happening implied by it.

The analysis proceeds as follows. Starting from the analytical and historical situation at the origin of Hegelian philosophy,

we trace how Hegel develops a new concept of Being through his critical confrontation with Kant. The ontological meaning of this concept of Being is the original unity between “subjectivity” and “objectivity,” that is, being-for-itself, consciousness and being-in-itself, being as object (*Gegenständlich-sein*). Insofar as Hegel comprehends this unity as a process of *unification*, conceptualizing it thereby as a process inherent to beings themselves, *motility* is also acknowledged thereby as a fundamental character of Being. The manifold regions of beings are then developed on this basis as representing various modalities of the movement of this unifying unity. Each region constitutes itself through its proper form of motility, and Hegel interprets this process as the ontological exposition of the categories of traditional logic. He thus delineates the *history of beings* as that process through which all being comes to be.

Hegel's exposition is guided by a central idea, namely, the idea of that most unique form of motility which is the culmination of the meaning of Being and, which moreover, is truly a unity that unifies, thereby actualizing the history of beings. This motility is defined as the being that comprehends, as the concept: thus the concept is Being in its most authentic sense.

Hegel then shows that only with the Being of Life can the history of beings be so fulfilled that here beings come to exist in their true actuality. Life is the “first” and “immediate” form of the Idea, of the concept that is realized in its “freedom” and “truth.” Life is such a unity of “subjectivity” and “objectivity” that for it this unity is actualized as the “ground” and “essence” of beings. Only on this account can the Idea of Life display this truly unifying unity in the course of the free development of the concept, and only for this reason can the Ideas of Cognition and Absolute Knowledge develop out of the concept of Life as the highest forms of the Idea itself.

In the course of the development of the Idea of Life in Hegel's *Logic*, a remarkable schism occurs. The determinations of the Being of Life given there refer to the process of Life in its *historicity*. But the *Logic* had supposedly transcended all categories of historicity. Life overcomes its own historicity on the road to the essentially ahistorical form of Absolute Knowledge; Life passes *beyond* its own historicity. The schism that becomes

visible at this point is the upshot of a decisive transformation in the basic ontological framework. Admittedly, this transformation was completed already with the *Logic*, but its consequences reverberate throughout the entire system of Hegelian philosophy. From this point on, our analysis returns to the already traversed stages of this ontological framework. These stages are marked by the *Early Theological Writings* and by the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and their result is still preserved in the concept of Life in the *Logic*. Our interpretation of the crucial sections of these works will show that Hegel's ontological framework was originally governed by the full *ontological concept of Life*. Included in this concept was also an analysis of historicity as the ontological character of Life. Precisely through its historicity Life had been grasped as the "all-present substance" and as the "universal middle" (*Medium*) of beings, and regions of being had been disclosed and defined in their relation to it.

With this step, however, the stage was cleared for developing a new perspective on the problems of the historicity of Life. But the premise of the original dualism of subjectivity and objectivity and the related assumption that the subjective is prior, which have dominated since Descartes and which Hegel had considered even Kant not to have overcome, led in another direction: historicity as the mode of being of subjectivity was either completely overlooked or was only defined in *opposition* to the mode of being of objectivity. By discovering their original unity and by demonstrating how they were actualized with the Being of Life, Hegel had offered the possibility of developing the historicity of Life in its *oneness* with the historicity of beings (the "world") first actualized by Life.

Any contribution this work may make to the development and clarification of problems is indebted to the philosophical work of Martin Heidegger. This is emphasized at the beginning instead of being indicated throughout with special references.

I

Interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* in the Light of Its Ontological Problematic: Being as Motility

The Analytical and Historical Problem at the Origin of Hegel's First Published Writings

We begin with the “Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s Systems of Philosophy” (1801), where Hegel himself presented for the first time the original situation out of which his philosophy arose. “When the power of unification disappears from the life of men, when opposites lose their living relation to, and reciprocal influence upon, one another and become self-contained [*Selbstständig*], the need for philosophy arises” (*Erste Druckschriften*, 14). Viewed as a need originating within and as a necessity brought forward by human life, philosophy can “emerge” only out of a definite historical condition, namely, that of “bifurcation” (*Entzweiung*; division, sundering).

This bifurcation is the source of the need for philosophy, and as the spiritual, cultural education of the epoch it is also the unfree and given aspect of the appearing form [*Gestalt*]. In the course of spiritual, cultural formation what is an appearance of the absolute has isolated itself from the absolute, and has fixed itself as something that is self-contained. At the same time, however, this appearance cannot deny its origin, and must proceed to reconstitute the manifold of its limitations into a whole. (ED, 12)

We ask first of all, What does bifurcation mean as a condition, and what has sundered itself in two?

Hegel defines bifurcation through the opposites of spirit and matter, soul and body, faith and understanding, freedom and necessity (ED, 13), being and not-being, concept and being, finitude and infinity (ED, 16). These opposites are then concretized in relation to the historical situation of the times: in “the course of spiritual, cultural formation,” they have assumed

“the opposite forms of reason and sensibility, intelligence and nature, or expressed in terms of the universal concept [*der allgemeine Begriff*], of absolute subjectivity and absolute objectivity” (ED, 13).

In this condition of bifurcation human life flows in a world of rigid oppositions and limitations. The world is a sphere of univocal and isolated determinations, each of which is cut off and shielded from the other. This is a world of total appeasement in which the “understanding” (*Verstand*), which Hegel here equates with “common sense,” completely dominates. The understanding creates the “indifference of security,” the universal “fixedness,” the pausing at “the right points” which “enables the human being to get along reasonably through life,” “from which he begins and to which he returns” (ED, 21). The understanding considers all encountered beings (*begegnende Seiende*) to be at peace, fixed, limited, univocally defined, individual, and positive. It is satisfied with establishing relations between these beings, with fixing them unequivocally, and with treating limitations as if they were complete in themselves. Thus it projects ever new divisions and juxtapositions: “Lost in the parts, the understanding is instead driven to the endless development of its manifold; thus while striving to extend itself to the absolute, the understanding ceaselessly reproduces itself, thereby becoming its own laughing stock” (ED, 13).

At first we confront each being (*Seiende*) in clear and univocal determinateness, as a stable point in and beneath the manifoldness of the world, in secure boundaries, as a “limited moment of the present,” here and now (ED, 33). The relations between individual beings appear equally fixed and unequivocal: this being is this; it is this and *not* that, it is positive, determined to be so and so. It in turn excludes from itself what it is not as its negative. On a deeper glance this world of stability and clear meanings begins to sway. Each being is a positive, that is to say, something that is “posited”; because it is posited as such and such a being, however, at the same time a horizon (*Umkreis*) of other beings, which this such and such is not, are also posited; in fact in such a way that “what it is not,” the negative, belongs to the being of the positive, because it is its negative which makes the positive as one that is so and

so first possible. (The chair as chair is only what it is, where there is a table which it is not — or, to give an example used by Hegel himself, this field is only a field in its “juxtaposition” (*Entgegensetzung*) to the forest, to the cultivated land, etc.) “Each being,¹ because it is posited, is at the same time one that is juxtaposed to another, determined and determining” (ED, 17). In being such and such, it reaches over and beyond itself; it is not self-sufficient but in need of becoming complete. Common sense “gives completeness to these limitations by means of positing the limitations which are juxtaposed to the first to be conditions of the first: but the latter are in need of the same completion, and thus its task extends itself endlessly” (ED 17 ff.). Just as in the two-dimensional sphere of extension, in the being-next-to-each-other of space, the determinate positivity of being constitutes itself out of an unending and indeterminate negativity; the same occurs in the sphere of depth, in the being-after-one-another of time, as well. All “being” is a having become (*Gewordensein*) and a becoming (*Werden*) of another “being.” All being is related to an unending multiplicity of other beings through its origins, and springing forth out of its origins (*entspringenlassend*), it reenters a new, unending manifold.

Each being that the understanding produces is something determinate, and the determinate has something indeterminate before and after it, and the manifoldness of being lies between two nights indifferently; it rests upon nothing, for the indeterminate is nothing for the understanding and ends in nothingness. (ED, 18)

But what is this infinite wealth into which the appeased and stable world of the understanding, the world of fixed bifurcations, dissolves? From the standpoint of the understanding, of course, it is “merely” nothingness:

Seen from the standpoint of bifurcating cognition, the absolute synthesis is a mere beyond; it is simply that indeterminate and formless sphere juxtaposed to its determinations. The absolute is the night. But the light is younger than the night, and this distinction between night and light, as well as the emergence of light out of darkness, is an absolute difference. It means the nothingness of the first, of the night, out of which all being, all manifoldness of the finite has proceeded. (ED, 16)

At this point we must leave the concept of the “absolute” just as undefined as it is in Hegel’s first writings. For the time being, the absolute can be understood in contrast to the essentially “relative” and “determinate” *being* (*bestimmtes Seiende*) linked with the understanding and its posits. As the negation of this being, it is in essence the “negative absolute” (ED, 17). The absolute is not being or a sphere of being at all. Precisely for this reason, the mere understanding considers it to be simply “indeterminate and formless,” the “night,” the “nothingness” (*das Nichts*). Yet this night is not unpopulated, and this nothingness is not empty. For “all determinate being, all the manifoldness of finitude has emerged out of it.” The absolute is the unity and totality of *Being* (*Sein*) which encompasses each individual being (*Seiende*), in relation to which each being can be determined as this determinateness, and which contains all positings and juxtaposition in itself. This unity and totality of Being, which lies at the basis of the relativity of beings, is the absolute, free from any reference or relation to another besides itself. It is the ground and basis of each relation; all positings and juxtapositions already taken place within its sphere; it is that out of which they spring and to which they lead back.

Hegel’s claim that nothingness and the night are the truth of the intelligible world places this nothingness and this night at the beginnings of *philosophy*. In order to become aware of its task, philosophy must first have experienced the dissolution of the intelligible world. In contrast to the “upright” world, the world of philosophy is an “upside down” (*verkehrte*) world; in contrast to total appeasement, it is one of total restlessness.

Looking ahead, we can define the task of philosophy as the “reconstitution of the totality” of the bifurcated world (ED, 16), and the “construction of the absolute” (ED, 17). As we saw above, the world of bifurcation, of fixed oppositions and limitations finds its own dissolution through its own course. And what remains is not a mere nothing — being (*das Seiende*) does not evaporate, but returns back to its origin (*Ursprung*), and it discloses its origin precisely in its process of dissolution. Bifurcation is “appearance” (*Erscheinung*); something appears through it, something shines forth; “appearance cannot conceal its origin” (ED, 12). At first, nothingness, the “night of the

totality” seemed to be this origin and as origin, as the “unending activity of becoming and producing,” and as the “utmost liveliness,” it seemed to be able to let something spring forth out of itself (ED, 14).

What has bifurcated itself has attained thereby a first determination. “The necessary bifurcation is an aspect of Life which constitutes itself by eternally juxtaposing itself to itself” (ED, 14). The product of bifurcation is the result of a self-sundering entity. It is the bifurcation of an original oneness in whose unity and totality alone it is contained. This unity and totality is the primary “origin” which allows the world of oppositions and limitations to spring forth from itself. As this original unity it is also that unifying unity, which first makes this world into the world, and which allows it to happen (*geschehen*) as the world. The first characterizations through which the “absolute” as “absolute synthesis” becomes visible are *unity* and *totality*. As this unity and totality the absolute is the origin, it is “becoming and producing,” *happening* and *motility* (*Bewegtheit*).

If, however, this bifurcation is necessary, if in fact, it is constitutive of the happening of the absolute, if the absolute can only be as bifurcating itself, then the task of philosophy, which is the “recreation of the totality” and the construction of the absolute, cannot mean the elimination and leveling of opposites. Neither can it mean setting oneself “over and against juxtaposition and limitation in general” (ED, 14). Rather, what is an appearance of the origin must be identified as the appearing of the origin, for only thereby will it be revealed in its truth. The recreation of the totality promises precisely the construction of the absolute as necessarily bifurcating itself. “The task of philosophy consists of . . . positing being into not-being — as becoming, as bifurcation in the absolute and as the appearance of the latter — and of positing the finite into the infinite — as Life” (ED, 16). What is not-being, infinite, and absolute can only be determined as the unity and totality of Being, as distinguished from “the infinite multiplicity” of beings. The “construction of the absolute” which is the task of philosophy means from the very beginning, therefore, the construction of *being as motility*, as “becoming,” “appearance,” and “Life.”

The form in which philosophy undertakes and accomplishes this task is temporal; it is “a contingency in time” (ED, 14). Just as philosophy emerges out of a specific condition of human life as a necessity and need brought about by this life, it is likewise dependent on the specific form in which bifurcation has become actual and dominates human life. With this, Hegel already defines his original problematic to be the critique of *Kantian* philosophy, which for him was the contemporary manifestation of bifurcation. Bifurcation itself is necessary and “eternal,” in fact it is just as “eternal” as philosophy itself, but the specific form bifurcation assumes has its “climatic condition” (ED, 14). As the leading theme of Hegel’s critical analysis of Kant, this form of bifurcation is defined as the cleavage between the intelligible and the real worlds, between reason and sensibility, and from the standpoint “of the universal concept as the separation of absolute subjectivity from absolute objectivity” (ED, 13).

Here the basis of Hegel’s original problematic becomes visible, and he formulates the claims of his philosophy on this already given basis:

Under the given condition of bifurcation, the necessary attempt to overcome [*aufheben*] the juxtaposition of a fixed subjectivity to a fixed objectivity; to grasp the having-become of the intelligible and the real worlds as a becoming, to grasp their being as product and as a producing. (ED, 14)

This sentence already touches the core of Hegelian ontology. The urge to recover a meaning of Being that reaches beyond — one could also say that remains on the same side as — the traditional opposition of subjectivity and objectivity, that “sublates” (*aufhebt*) both and contains them within itself. Becoming and motion (*Bewegung*) are not predicated of being as vague generalities, as in “all being is in movement” or “all being is a becoming”. Motility (*Bewegtheit*) is presented here as a determination of the Being of the absolute in a very specific conceptual sense. The concepts of “producing” and “product” return once more in the final sections of Hegel’s *Logic*; they are to be found numerous times in Schelling’s writings of this period. Their occurrence at this point is no accident and ex-

presses the definitive form of the motility of the absolute (in the sentence immediately following the one cited above (ED, 14) Hegel names becoming and producing the “activity of reason” qua the absolute). Under the circumstances, a tentative interpretation of these concepts must be attempted at this stage.

The “being of the intellectual and of the real world” is to be grasped as a product, as a producing. As “product” means not merely as something that is there (*Da-seiendes*) and at peace with itself in its mere being there, but as something that is first and foremost driven, led, and “posited” to be-there. *Whose* product is this being then? The next answer is: of the absolute. Yet this is nothing outside, behind, or over “being”; the bifurcated “being” is the “being” of the absolute bifurcating itself, the absolute “appears” as the absolute only through this bifurcation. Thus the product has its “origin” in the absolute. But the product does not lie outside the absolute; in a manner that still needs to be explored, it lies within it. As this product, “being” is a producing, a driving on, a leading further, a “positing.” But *what* produces the product? Nothing other than the product *itself*. Qua product, qua something already once posited, “being” produces itself, posits itself as what it is, drives itself forth, and maintains itself so in its being there (*Dasein*). Producing is also actually a reproducing: a recurrent producing, a reproducing of the already produced. In fact, the concept of “self-production” and “self-reproduction” already make their appearance in this context (ED, 14; 34). Later in the *Phenomenology*, and especially in the *Logic*, they emerge as more significant determinations of this mode of being.

Thus the “being” of both worlds is projected back onto the absolute; they posit themselves as what they already are. This is not merely “becoming,” but a specific manner of becoming, the becoming of what has been. Hegel says explicitly that not being but having been (*Gewordensein*) is to be grasped as a becoming. What has already been is qua having been a becoming; it must become what it already always was and what it is.

Hegel provides the fundamental meaning of these determinations and their proper ontological identity first in the *Logic*.

Yet the central Hegelian concept of Being, *Being as motility*, is already specified at this stage and remains the leading motif of Hegel's entire ontology. Viewing the manifold of bifurcated and juxtaposed beings within the totality of the absolute out of which they spring forth and in which they are contained is one with grasping the absolute to be motility, to be a process of springing forth. All that exists is being here and now, only in virtue of having emerged out of the totality and through its "relation to the absolute" (ED, 22). The being of the intelligible and the real worlds is the becoming of what has already been, the self-positing of what was already posited. This being is first in and through this process of *happening*.

We said above: the characterization of the absolute in light of the form of its motility, as the self-bifurcation of an original unity, and as the self-positing of an already posited, presupposes a specific approach. Our task is to delineate the original problem of Hegelian philosophy at least to the extent that this approach becomes clearer. At the same time, we give the concept of the absolute its first comprehensive definition.

The first characteristic through which the absolute became visible was that of *unity*. It appeared to be the original unity of bifurcation and opposites. In all subsequent determinations of the absolute this aspect will be preserved and made prominent. As this unity, the absolute is the totality, which unifies the multiplicity of being in itself. Out of this totality all beings spring forth in a form of motility, which in turn is characterized by unity in special sense: the motility of "remaining-by-one-self" of self-positing posits.

Our question is, How does one arrive at this remarkable vision of unity whose radical claim to be the task of philosophy is simply striking?

1. First, we repeat that this intention and the corresponding task of philosophy as Hegel understands them emerge completely out of a necessity, out of a need created by human life in a specific, historical situation which is characterized by bifurcation. In an essay published in the *Critical Journal of Philosophy* ("On the Essence of Philosophical Critique," 1802) Hegel speaks of

a dualism universally spreading all around one in the culture of the recent history of our northwestern world — the quieter transformations of public life, as well as the louder political and religious revolutions in general, which indicate the decline of the old way of life, are nothing but the external manifestations of this dualism. (ED, 128)

Likewise, in the already discussed section of the “Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s Systems” entitled “The Need for Philosophy,” the condition of bifurcation is characterized through “the development of Life’s exteriorizations” and in terms “of the systems of lived relationships” (ED, 14 ff). This compels one to understand the situation with reference to which the task of philosophy and its intentions to unity are formulated — here Hegel agrees with Fichte and Schelling — as a lived, historical experience (*lebendig-geschichtliches Erlebnis*), and to view the undertaking of this task as a necessity required by Life itself. These brief remarks must suffice for the moment.

2. The *philosophical* situation in light of which this task first becomes a concrete problem leads us back to *Kant’s* discovery of the common root of the two sources of cognition, of understanding and sensibility, in pure apperception or in the transcendental faculty of the imagination (claimed by Hegel himself to be the actual basic problematic of his philosophy; ED, 30 ff, and the essay “Faith and Knowledge,” esp. ED, 238, 240 ff).

According to Hegel, with this discovery Kant had not only indicated the internally possible unity between understanding and sensibility, but also between thought and being, subjectivity and objectivity as well (more on this in the next chapter). Kant had thus recovered a desideratum of philosophy lost since Descartes. For Hegel, it is precisely Descartes who “has expressed in philosophical form . . . the dualism universally spreading around one,” (128) and who has made it into philosophical truth. One must therefore reach further back into the past beyond Cartesianism.

3. But Kant has merely seen the internal possibility of this unity and has not actually demonstrated it. Indeed, in the course of his deduction, he himself has lost sight of it entirely (Hegel’s justification of this thesis is outlined in the next chapter). If this unity is indeed the original unifying unity, it cannot

be fixed and rooted in the dimension of subjectivity alone or, as in Kant's case, in cognition. For, subjectivity and cognition are themselves only *one* dimension of being. Such a unity would be no more than one *juxtaposed* to another equally basic unity — subjectivity *against* objectivity.

It is of no help that the “I,” full of life and agility, is itself the deed and the act, and the most real and the most immediate in the consciousness of each. As long as it is absolutely juxtaposed to the object it is not a real, but merely a thought thing; it is purely a product of reflection, an empty form of cognizing. And out of mere products of reflection, identity cannot constitute itself as a totality. (ED, 78)

Hegel's turn away from *Fichte* is also expressed in this quote. True unity must constitute simultaneously the origin of subjectivity and objectivity; it must not be posited “merely in the form of cognition, but also in the form of being.” True unity must be understood as the meaning of Being of what is in general. Hence true unity can only be the *totality*: “So everything is only in *one* totality: the objective and subjective totality, or the system of nature and the system of the intellect are one and the same” (ED, 85). Grasped at a deeper level, the Kantian problematic turns by itself into universal ontology. Hegel acquires the ontological framework of his analysis through an examination of Aristotle's work.

4. The true absolute unity, which no longer stands over and against another and which has no other outside it, is the unity of subjectivity and objectivity or of thought and being. It is the unity of the necessary *difference*. Hegel insists on this original phenomenon: whenever being is encountered, it appears through the difference between subjectivity and objectivity. That is to say, it appears through difference in general and in a condition of bifurcation. Whenever the absolute “posits itself in the form of existence, it must posit itself in a duality of form. For appearing and self-bifurcation are one” (ED, 85). Neither should subjectivity be manipulated into objectivity, nor objectivity into subjectivity. “Subject and object are sublated in absolute identity; however, they persist nonetheless. And it is this persistence which makes knowing possible” (ED, 76).

5. The implicit framework of this whole problematic now

becomes visible. Hegel, just like Fichte and Schelling, proceeds from the shared basis of Kantian transcendental philosophy. It is for this reason that all being as objectivity, and according to the meaning of its Being, at its origin calls forth subjectivity; being, qua *objectivity*, in whatever sense, is also already subjectivity. "The disengagement of consciousness from the totality" is defined by Hegel as the "presupposition" of philosophy (ED, 16). The paradoxical nature of this claim, one which we must hold unto in all its strikingness, now shows itself; such a unity of subjectivity and objectivity, in which both simultaneously persist and nonetheless are one, is only given in *knowledge*. This means that the absolute unity of subjectivity and objectivity *demands* the meaning of the Being of *subjectivity*, of knowledge. It must be a knowing being, and knowledge that is being! "Substance" must be a subject, but a "subject" in a completely different sense than the human subjectivity which is sublated in this knowledge that is being. (The more precise determinations of this subject as substance are followed at a later point.)

6. Through the reference to knowledge, absolute unity and totality are now given a more specific determination. Knowledge is exactly this "conscious identity of the finite and the infinite; the unification of both worlds, the sensory and the intelligible, or of the necessary and the free worlds in consciousness" (ED, 19). Schelling is even more explicit in this regard in the first paragraphs of the "System of Transcendental Idealism": "In knowledge — through the fact that I know — the objective and the subjective are so united that one cannot say to which priority must be attributed. There is here no first and second, both are at the same time, and they are one."² The question is to explain what kind of knowledge this is, for not every form of knowing can fulfill this unity. First, this must be knowledge that *knows* itself as such, because all immediate knowledge still has objectivity outside itself, as an another and as an object. Second, just as little can this unity be realized in mere self-consciousness. For in this mode of self-knowledge objectivity is brought back to its full meaning and is reduced to subjectivity. Only a knowing which knows itself to be the totality of being, which knows itself as objectivity, and which at the same time is the subjectivity of this objectivity, only such a

knowing fulfills simultaneously and originally the ontological meaning of subjectivity and objectivity as their absolute unity. This absolute unity and totality is "Absolute Knowledge": reason.

7. All the characteristics of absolute unity and totality are now taken over by reason and dominated by one fundamental feature of *motility* and happening. The absolute unity is in itself "absolute difference" (ED, 16) and can exist further only as the unity of this difference (ED, 76). The absolute has its opposite, its otherness, or its negativity in itself: as subject, the object, and as object, the subject. In the final analysis, qua this "concrete" [reality — Tr.] which forms a coherent self-developing unity it is self-moved: it is "the most intense liveliness," the "infinite activity." For this absolute can only *be* in that it lets this difference happen, in that it bifurcates itself, in that it posits and holds unto this opposition. At its origin, therefore, it is a *faculty* (ED, 35): the faculty to be its own negative and to act on its negative; for it can only be in that it first becomes objectivity and thereby appears. As this capacity, it is only capable of acting on itself: as posited (by itself), it is only a positing (of itself). Because in positing the opposite of itself, it only posits itself, and is what it can be only through this happening, in all happening it remains by itself, bound to itself via itself. This form of its being and of its motility is a fulfilled unity in a perfect sense. It is freedom and necessity at one and the same time. "*Freedom* is the character of the absolute. When it is posited from within, insofar as it posits itself in a limited form and at a definite point of the objective totality, it remains what it is, namely one that is not limited" (ED, 86 ff). Furthermore, "necessity is an aspect of the absolute, insofar as it is viewed as an external, objective totality, external to itself and whose parts attain no being except within the wholeness of objectivity" (ED, 87).

8. As reason, the absolute should reach the *meaning of Being* of what is. The remarkable conflation of the highest with the most common meanings of Being, which this claim contains, is explained later. Indeed, without this presupposition the transformation of the Kantian problematic into one of "unity" and "totality" is hardly intelligible, but the actual demonstration of

this claim can only be given after an interpretation of the *Logic*. At this point we rest satisfied with explicating Hegel's ontological framework with reference to the concept of the totality alone. Hegel addresses the absolute as the "totality." In the "form of being," it is the "objective totality" (ED, 12; 16; 25; 85 ff and 87). Hegel does not mean thereby a sum total, nor that the entirety of beings is a reasonable whole, but he addresses the manner in which, reason as the absolute, *is* itself: "The one whole which is sustained and fulfilled by itself; which has no ground outside itself, but is grounded by itself in its beginning, middle and end" (ED, 34). The absolute is not the totality, but can only be *as* the totality (of beings). In Schelling's writings of this period, the concept of the totality carries the same ontological significance and is defined in an ontological sense exactly in these writings. For example, in "The Exposition of My System of Philosophy" of 1801, Schelling writes: "Absolute identity is the absolute totality, because it itself is all that is, or it cannot be conceived of separately from all that is. It *is* therefore only as being all; that is, it is the absolute totality" (WW, I. Abtlg. IV. 125). In the additions to § 30 of this same text, the absolute totality will be named "simply that which is all and in all" (Ibid., 127), and further as "the *first being*" and "this being, which has never been produced, but is, in the same way that something can be at all" (Ibid., 127). This brief reference should suffice here; the entire interpretation that follows will attempt to lend it more exact meaning.

These eight "stages," which sketch the original problematic of Hegel's philosophy, as brought to light through the "Differenzschrift," are not to be understood as successive or as adjacent. Their delineation serves only as a helpful device of interpretation which analyzes an originally unified problem domain into its elements. Our next step is to show Hegel's proper beginning point: his critical analysis of Kantian philosophy, as developed in his second major writing, "Faith and Knowledge."

The Attainment of a New Concept of Being through an Analysis of Kant's Concept of Transcendental Synthesis

We determined that for Hegel the task of philosophy is to attain that original totality out of which the multiplicity of encountered beings emerges and in which it is contained. "Speculation recognizes as the reality of knowledge only the being of knowledge in the totality; for speculation all that is determinate has reality and truth in this acknowledged relation to the absolute" (ED, 22). The absolute is not something "beyond" being. On the contrary, as the "origin" of being it allows it to spring forth out of itself, and as the "original identity," it first gives all that is a unity over and against opposites while remaining present in all the multiplicity of being as this unity. The absolute as totality, therefore, is not a sum total; it is not the entirety of all beings. It is what constitutes the proper being of all that is. The totality is that *Being (Sein)* which lies at the ground of all beings (*das Seiende*), which is present in them, and which gives unity to the multiplicity of all that is. Hegel's intention is to attain an "absolute" meaning of Being in relation to which all that is can be understood in its mode of Being without presupposing, however, a generalized unitary ontological meaning from the outset. On the contrary, the plurality of all oppositions among beings should be preserved in and be a part of this meaning. This meaning of Being should at the same time provide the possibility of overcoming the fixed oppositions of subjectivity and objectivity, consciousness and "being" through an originally unified principle which would allow us to understand this duality in its proper unity as proceeding from itself.

Once the problem is articulated in this fashion, a question immediately arises: Has not Kantian philosophy already achieved this task? Has not transcendental idealism overcome precisely the current dualism of consciousness and “being” via the theory of the a priori constitution of the objective world through transcendental subjectivity, and given back to philosophy the claim and the ground of original unity? Hegel himself says:

When intuition becomes transcendental, the identity of the subjective and the objective, which are separated in empirical intuition, enter consciousness; knowledge, insofar as it is transcendental, posits not merely the concept and its conditions . . . but also at the same time the objective, being itself. (ED, 31)

Furthermore:

In transcendental intuition all juxtaposition is sublated [*aufgehoben*]. All distinction between the construction of the universe through and for intelligence, and its seemingly independent organization, intuited as if it were objective, is destroyed. (ED, 32)

This transcendental intuition or transcendental knowledge — for Hegel both are “one and the same” — has “united both being and intelligence.” Transcendental intuition is actually at the center of the philosophical ground, at the center of the original unity, or of the “absolute.” But it is Hegel’s thesis that Kant had quickly abandoned on this ground and had speedily let go of this already attained truth. Furthermore, in the course of his investigations Kant had fallen back into the pure philosophy of the understanding and into the futile subjectivity of reflexive “understanding.” Kant himself had thus once more, and in the crassest form, recreated the untrue dualism of consciousness and “being,” of subjectivity and objectivity. This thesis is demonstrated by Hegel in his essay on “Faith and Knowledge,” in the section called “Kantian Philosophy.” Through this critical analysis of Kant Hegel succeeds in securing his own ground, in clarifying the darkness surrounding the dimension of original unity or of the absolute, and attains for the first time that concept of Being which remains at the basis of all his future investigations and conclusions. We must add parenthetically that Hegel’s achievement assimilates the

decisive gains of Kant's critique of reason and does not lose any of its attainments.

Already with his first sentences, Hegel characterizes the futility and untruth of Kantian philosophy with unusual pointedness, which in the introduction to this text, he had already described as a philosophy of "contentment and good conscience" (ED, 229):

Kantian philosophy frankly admits to its principles of subjectivity and of formal thinking, and in the certainty of its own point of view, which makes the unity of reflection the highest [claim — Tr.], it reveals in the smuggest manner possible, what it is and what it wants. (ED, 235)

Besides the charges of certainty and appeasement, which are for Hegel the deathly enemies of genuine philosophizing, the subjectivism and formalism of common understanding also constitute the philosophical untruth of Kantian philosophy. To justify this assertion Hegel refers to the "highest result" and deepest truth of Kantian philosophy, in order to show how exactly here, at the center of the genuine problematic, the decisive and ominous turn takes place.

Hegel finds that this highest result and the "truthful idea of reason" are expressed in Kant's formula, "how are synthetic judgments a priori possible?" (ED, 237).

This problem expresses nothing besides the idea that in the synthetic judgment, subject and predicate, the former qua particular and the latter qua universal, the former in the form of being and the latter in the form of thought, that these unlikes are at the same time a priori, that is, absolutely identical.

This problem expresses nothing less than the "original synthetic unity of thought and being" and of the original unity of opposites which Hegel had defined to be the basis and goal of philosophy. What is new in this first sketch of the absolute is the concept of the *synthetical*. This concept will be Hegel's beginning point for the more precise conceptualization of the meaning of being and must therefore be analyzed more closely.

We must recall the orientation which Hegel brings to his critical evaluation of Kant. Hegel searches for and demands that original "absolute" unity which precedes the difference

between subjectivity and objectivity, “thought and being” in virtue of being their ground, and to which qua difference these distinctions themselves refer. Had Kantian philosophy actually provided for this unity, then according to the transcendental mode of inquiry and the investigation of the critique of reason, it would have to be found at that point which constituted the final ground of the possibility of all experience, and thereby, the ground of the possibility of synthetic judgments a priori.

In the section called “The Highest Principle of All Synthetic Judgments,” Kant writes (Hegel cites the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*):

The possibility of experience is, then, what gives objective reality to all our a priori modes of knowledge. Experience, however, rests on the synthetic unity of appearances, that is, on a synthesis according to concepts of objects of appearances in general. Without such a synthesis it would not be knowledge, but a rhapsody of perceptions. . . . At the basis of experience, therefore, lie principles of an a priori form,* that is, universal rules of unity in the synthesis of appearances. . . . (B, 195)

. . . The highest principle of all synthetic judgments is therefore this: every object stands under the necessary conditions of the synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition in a possible experience. (B, 197)

We must briefly outline here how for Kant the problematic culminates in “synthesis.” This development is also decisive for Hegel and becomes incorporated into the foundations of his metaphysics.

All human knowledge, understood in its broadest sense, from empirical intuition to the pure concept, is the “combination” (*Verbindung*) of the representations of a given manifold into the *unity* of something standing over against us (*Gegenstand*), namely, into an “object”: “An object is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is *united*” (B, 137). What is given in each case is a specific manifold which, simultaneously with the knowledge of the intuition receiving this manifold (and therefore not subsequently), will be connected into the unity of an “object.” Each object *is* for us only a unity which grasps a manifold. For Kant this unity which first and foremost constitutes the object is based upon a *combination* carried out by us.

* Norman Kemp-Smith renders “Die Erfahrung hat also Principien ihrer Form a priori zum Grunde liegen” as “Experience depends, therefore, upon a priori principles of its form. . . .” Cf. I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, N. Kemp-Smith, trans. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1965), 193. — Tr.

Such a unity is never and in no case given in the objects themselves, but is “an act of spontaneity of the faculty of representation; and since this faculty, to distinguish it from sensibility, must be entitled understanding, all combination, whether we are conscious of it or not, is an act of the understanding. To this act the general title ‘synthesis’ may be assigned” (B, 130). (“Among all our representations,” “this combination” is “the only one that is never given through objects, but one which can only be performed by the subject.” Hegel’s own claims against Kant concerning the problem of synthesis deny this thesis!) Now all combination refers back to a pre-given unity of the combined manifold itself: “But the concept of combination includes, besides the concept of the manifold and of its synthesis, also the concept of the *unity of the manifold*” (B, 130). Emphasis added. Combination is possible only with reference to a unity into which it will be combined. “The representation of this unity therefore, cannot arise out of the combination. On the contrary, by adding itself to the representation of the manifold, it is what first makes possible the concept of the combination....” [This representation — Tr.] is a unity therefore, which “precedes *a priori* all concepts of combination” (B, 131).

The pure concepts of the understanding already exhibit an *a priori* synthesis, which in accordance with the dependence of all synthesis upon a prior unity, “itself rests upon the basis of an *a priori* synthetic unity” (B, 104). The pure synthesis of the categories, which already precedes all experience, itself presupposes an even more basic unity which first makes possible the synthesis of the pure concepts of the understanding, namely, the original synthetic unity of apperception.

All unity, however, is only a process of unifying (*Vereinigung*), an activity which unifies (“spontaneity”), or in general, synthesis! The original unity, therefore, is a *synthetic* unity. It is synthetic in itself; it is unity only in that it unifies. Unifying (combining; *Verbinden*), and that already given content which will be unified, or spontaneity and receptivity, lie indissolubly together in the original synthetic unity: it is “given *a priori*” (B, 134). (This dualism contained in the final unity that grounds all is only hinted at by Kant and becomes the center of the problematic for Hegel.)

This final unity, which makes all knowledge and thereby all “objectivity” and “objective reality” for human subjectivity possible, has the structural unity of a *happening* (*Geschehen*), namely, of a *unifying* unity. Kant defines it as the unifying unity of pure self-consciousness, the *I think*.

Hegel takes the original synthetic unity of pure apperception as the beginning point for his own definition of the problem. But to what extent can this transcendental unity provide the

basis for the origin of the difference between subjectivity and objectivity and for their unification? To what extent is it “the truly necessary, absolute and original identity of juxtaposed opposites?” (ED, 238).

For Hegel it is decisive that at this “highest point of transcendental philosophy,” the intrinsically synthetic nature of self-consciousness is considered to make all objectivity possible. This synthetic nature for him is not like the “empty identity” of the pure I-think; rather, it is a concrete, actual synthetic happening, to which “manifoldness, body, matter or however one wishes to express it” already belong (ED, 239). Hegel cites Kant in this sense: “Kant says very well... through the empty I as a simple representation nothing manifold is given”; nothing manifold, and therefore also no unity. Hegel’s own claim against Kant becomes manifest for the first time: in the transcendental unity of pure self-consciousness Hegel includes the full Being of *Life*. According to the original foundation of his metaphysics, as can also be observed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pure self-consciousness is posited as “pure Life” and “Life” is determined as “self-consciousness.” “Life” in this context is to be understood not as one being among others, but in a completely “transcendental” sense as that Being (*Sein*) which first makes possible for a self-consciousness all that is.¹ But with this thesis we have advanced too far, for it can only be justified in the second half of our work. We return to the interpretation of Hegel’s exegesis of Kant in “Faith and Knowledge.”

If Hegel aims his critical analysis of Kantian philosophy at the problem of the possible unity of subjectivity and objectivity, of “thought and being,” this should not be taken to mean that with this definition of the problem he has regressed behind transcendental philosophy by presupposing two original substances juxtaposed to one another, like a *res cogitans* and a *res extensa* which must subsequently be joined together. Exactly by defining the question in this manner, Hegel assumes the ground of transcendental philosophy. For him the real issue concerns the difference between subjectivity and objectivity as made possible by an *original unity*, and this original unity itself as the condition of the possibility of difference. The fact that Hegel himself accepts Kant’s assumptions as the basis of his

problem must be taken into account, or the focus on the problem of synthesis and the reference back to the synthetic unity of apperception becomes unintelligible.

For Kant the original synthetic unity of apperception was the final condition of the possibility of human knowledge in general, that is to say, it was the final condition of the possible unity, more exactly of the unification of "the given and the thought," of "concept and intuition," of "understanding and sensibility." By formulating this unity as the unification of "thought and being," of the "subjective and the objective," Hegel does not dogmatically break loose from the transcendental dimension. "Thought and being," "subjective and objective" themselves have a "transcendental" meaning here — admittedly, the meaning of this transcendental already implies the turn away from Kant characteristic for Hegel. "Being" means for Hegel already being-for-thought, "objective" means objective-for-subjective, and vice versa. The problem will be developed precisely out of this specific context as expressed by synthetic judgments a priori (ED, 237 ff).

What is given in intuition is given as determinate being, or as Hegel says, it is given "in the form of being," as something that lies before us, as "objective." It is always given as a "particular," as a manifold being here and now, as single, as individual. As a determinate being within knowledge, this given stands under laws and rules that themselves are *never* present and are never to be encountered in "the form of being," but only always as "thought" and "in the form of thought." The given, as the manifold that is always "particular," stands under a "universality" which grasps this manifold under the unity of the concept, itself a universality which is always "in the form of thought." And as standing "in this form of thought," determinate being (*das Seiende*) appears exactly as it is in truth. This unity of "thought and being" is not arbitrary and accidental, a subsequent unification of what was originally separated; rather, because "thought and being" first unite themselves in this manner, thinking and being first attain their truth. The "subjective" thereby becomes something subjective, and the "objective" something objective.

The question concerning the possibility of such a unity

merges from the outset with the problem of synthesis: this unity can first *be* through the occurrence of a *synthesis*, and through this synthesis it both *is*, and at the same time, it is only a difference. When Hegel repeatedly returns to the question of the possibility of synthetic judgments a priori, therefore, this implies more than a mere “historical” taking over of Kant’s beginning point. In Hegel’s analysis judgments no longer function as the most prominent forms of *knowledge*, but rather as expressions of the various syntheses of “thought and being” which are capable of being known. The problem is transformed then right away from the possibility of judgments to what actually happens in judging, to the essential content (*Sachverhalt*) of the judged being itself.* From this point on it becomes clear that judgment is not really at the origin of the matter, for judgment is not unity but the “overwhelming appearance of difference” (ED, 240), and that the true a priori element in the original synthetic unity of judgment appears only in its “product”: “As one of the two terms of opposites subject and object, and only they are in the form of judgment. Their being one is not posited as the object of thought” (ED, 241).

Concerning the synthetic a priori judgments which he has interpreted in this manner, Hegel now says that in them “subject and predicate, the former particular, and the latter universal, or the one in the form of being, the other in the form of thought — these unlikes are also a priori, that is to say, absolutely identical” (ED, 237 ff). And he inquires into the possibility of this absolute identity of “thought and being,” of “the subjective and the objective.”

But instead of, like Kant, investigating the knowable unity of concept and intuition, Hegel asks for that “absolute identity” of “thought and being!” And nonetheless, as already noted, Hegel’s question also concerns the “transcendental” unity which is already given with the being of thinking subjectivity, and not merely the “dogmatic” unity of two separate substances. But how are we to understand this?

* Marcuse is punning: one can say, how have you acted in the matter (*Wie hast du dich bei der Sache verhalten?*) — in this case, it is as if the given manifold of being acts in a certain manner and this acting in a certain manner is expressed in the judgment. [Cf. glossary under “*sich verhalten*” and related terms. — Tr.]

The synthesis accomplished in synthetic a priori judgments requires a prior unity of the synthesized elements themselves. Prior to all judging, the “manifold of intuition” must itself already stand under a necessary and universal unity, under which it will be grasped subsequently in judgments. By regressively analyzing the entire sequence of stages of synthesis through which human experience constitutes itself as knowledge, Kant identifies transcendental apperception as the final ground of this unity between the given and thought. The being of the pure I, or the pure self-consciousness of “I think,” is the only possible reason (*Wofür*) of all the givenness of beings. First and foremost through this transcendental unity and for it can beings appear and become appearance. In order to appear as being at all, the “manifold of intuition” already must have become “object,” that is to say, it must have been “unified” in one concept (B, 137). All unification, all connecting together, are never simply given; rather they are always “an act of spontaneity” of the I (B, 130). The unification of the manifold in general into an object in general, which alone makes possible all unification of objects, can only happen through a pure I, which, as “the continuous and persisting self,” provides that underlying unity for all manifoldness. The pure I does not perform the subsequent synthesis of a manifold, already lying before it, but such a synthesis already occurs with the being of this I as I think. Being is [constituted — Tr.] as the unity of this manifold first and only through the occurrence of this synthesis. This synthesis does not presuppose an already pre-given unity which it synthesizes, but unity and manifoldness, identity and difference, first come into being or occur through the occurrence of this synthesis. The unity of pure apperception is an “originally synthetic” or in itself synthetic unity. And because this original synthesis, as an “act of spontaneity” of the I, is necessarily an *I think* — not merely thinking but a thought which thinks *itself* — the unity and difference of thought and being-for-thought occur simultaneously with the being of this I — or expressed in Hegelian terms, the unity of “thought and being” of the “subjective and the objective.” Already Kant himself names the transcendental unity of apperception, although it is a unity of the I think or of subjectivity, an “objective” unity,

because the “concept of the object” is only first possible through it (B, 139).

Because it is the transcendental condition for the appearance of all being, the “I think” of pure apperception cannot itself be a determinate being (*ein Seiendes*); it can be neither a subject nor an object that has determinate being. Qua that “continuous and persisting” self [which makes possible, — Tr.] the appearance of all being, it is an “original” unity; a unity that enables the springing forth from itself, a unity in and through which the difference between an I that is and a world that likewise is, between subject and object, breaks forth.

In this original synthetic unity of transcendental apperception, Hegel sees a genuinely “speculative idea,” the most profound idea which glitters “amidst the dullness of the deduction of the categories” (ED, 238; 240 ff). Our question is, In what does the profundity of this principle and the dullness and superficiality of the deduction lie for Hegel? With the answer to this question, Hegel’s departure from Kantian ground will be made more visible.

First, Hegel sees the profundity of this idea in that it reaches beyond the dualism of understanding and sensibility to their original unifying unity. According to Hegel, the faculty of the original synthetic unity of apperception is a “genuinely speculative idea” at those points in Kant’s work where it is grasped not merely as a higher form of the understanding or even as understanding itself, nor as the simply external and subsequent bringing together of both faculties, but as “the principle of sensibility” as well as of the understanding (ED, 238), as that original first out of which both spring forth as out of their origin (ED, 240 ff. We explain later what the original character of this principle means). Hegel’s critique does not aim at driving sensibility, or intuition, out of the central place which it occupies in the problematic for Kant. Hegel expressly praises the “service” of Kantian philosophy to be the proof that “neither the concept for itself alone, nor the intuition by itself is . . . something” (ED, 236, 238). On the contrary, the original synthetic unity is necessarily and cooriginally the *principle* of both faculties; it is that through which both first become what they are; it is the essential ground of their possibility.

The transcendental apperception of the I, as “principle,” *must be sharply distinguished* “from the I which is the subject and capable of representations, and will be said by Kant to accompany all our representations” (ED, 240). The fundamentally ontological character of this principle, which had only been hinted at by Kant, is placed by Hegel at the zenith of the “deduction.” If the pure apperception and its synthesis first make possible the appearance of what is as being; first make possible that there be an object for a subject and that the difference between subject and object break out of their unity, then the human subject itself is a “product” of the bifurcation of this original synthetic unity (ED, 241). “The I as thinking subject and the manifold as body and world must *first part*” out of this original synthesis of apperception (ED, 239; emphasis added). For this original unity is such that “on the one hand it becomes the *subject in general* and on the other *the object* and it is originally both . . .” (ED, 241; emphasis added).

Hegel defends apperception to be a *principle*. He admits that the description of this unity as synthetic and as occurring in synthesis could give rise to the charge that “it presupposed an antithesis, and that therefore it required the manifold of this antithesis as one that has being for itself and was independent from it. In this case, it would naturally be subsequent to what was juxtaposed to it” (ED, 239). This is not the case, for the essence of the pure I think consists exactly in that, unity *and* manifold, I *and* world, can *be* first through the occurrence of this synthesis. This synthesis is, therefore, “the relationship of the manifold to empty identity, to the I” (ED, 239), as the “absolute,” “original” synthesis — it is the absolute origin itself out of which “I” and “the world” first “part.”

It is no coincidence that when explaining absolute synthesis,² Hegel attributes its actual achievement more to the faculty of the “productive imagination” than to that of pure apperception, and that indeed, at decisive points in the text he even substitutes “imagination” for “apperception” (ED, 240; 241; 258). What takes place in absolute synthesis and how it takes place is characterized much more adequately in Hegel’s eyes through the faculty of the imagination than through the faculty of mere apperception. Already the term “*Einbildungskraft*”

(imagination) expresses the achievement of pure synthesis: being that forms or shapes itself (*Insich-einbildendes Sein*) from the manifold into a unity. But this does not mean that unity is subsequently built out of an already given manifold, rather the being of the “I” itself is the “producing” of this unity and manifoldness as well as of their unification through the imagination. The “I” is first and foremost “productivity,” “productive power,” a “potence” (ED, 241). In his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* as well, when discussing “apperception” Hegel emphasizes its basic feature to be “activity” and “self-production” (GPh, XV, 585 ff).

Such a principle, however, can no longer be viewed as a faculty of human subjectivity. It cannot even be viewed as a faculty of transcendental subjectivity insofar as we can only gain access to the latter through a regress to the foundational structure of empirical subjectivity. Hegel thus summarizes his rejection of Kant as the critique of the Kantian deduction. Kant views this principle as a faculty of human subjectivity, because in the course of the deduction he places productive imagination or apperception alongside the understanding, interpreting both thereby as pure “potentialities of reflection” and their identity as “reflected identity” (ED, 241). “Since this productive imagination is only a characteristic of the subject, of humans and their understanding, this faculty itself abandons the medium whereby it itself can only be what it is, and becomes merely subjective” (ED, 258).

Therefore the absolute judgment of idealism can and in the case of the Kantian deduction must be so understood that the manifold of sensibility, empirical consciousness as intuition and sensation, is in-itself disunited, the world is in-itself disjointed, and that first through the good will of the self-consciousness of cognizing humans does it attain an objective connection, stability, substantiality, multiplicity, and even actuality and possibility, an objective determinateness which humans project unto it and perceive it as possessing. (ED, 242)

Already in his essay on the “Difference Between Fichte’s and Schelling’s Systems of Philosophy” Hegel claimed that, as a transcendental principle, the original synthetic unity had to be viewed not only “subjectively but also objectively” (ED, 37 ff),

“not only in the form of knowing, but also in the form of being” (ED, 79). This claim becomes more precise in light of his interpretation of transcendental apperception. In absolute synthesis, not only knowing and the known, but also the *meaning of Being* itself and determinate being constitute themselves, because absolute synthesis is the *principle* through which each being first becomes something. Or as Hegel once expressed in the *Phenomenology*, “The *pure essence* of beings or the *simple category*” (PhG, 177); all being, simply in virtue of being, stands under the category.³

Hegel discusses the absolute synthesis as an “ontological principle” as follows: when through reflection the structural unity of this synthesis is “separated and reflected into its juxtaposed elements,” on the one hand we have the concept as such — in the double sense of the act of conceiving and the concept. It is pure unity, universality, *and* pure unification and the construction of unity (the structural unity of both determinations constitutes the “empty I”). On the other hand there is “manifoldness” as such (ED, 239). Through this original “dual identity” all three moments are given which are required to characterize the meaning of being as motility! These are: unity as the remaining and persisting self, unity as the process of unifying, and the united manifold.

From here on the original synthetic unity is defined as “principle,” as the “simple category,” and as the original meaning of being; it is a synthesis of the unifying unity of manifoldness. This synthesis comes about through the apperception of the “I think,” more precisely, through the act of productive self-formation. It takes place through the illuminating power of representation, perception and *knowledge*. For, as we saw in the preceding chapter, only in the clarity and power of representation and perception is a truly unifying unity possible. Qua a synthesis that perceives, qua knowledge, this absolute principle once again has the meaning of a *subjective* being. It is a united being that comprehends. It is the concept and the I. As such, however, it is simultaneously and in-itself objectivity as well. None is more primary than the other. Indeed, subjectivity and objectivity first *become*, and only are, in and through this oc-

currence. Qua this “absolute identity of unlikes,” this principle is a “reasoning identity,” or “reason” (ED, 238; 241).

Precisely at the outset of the exposition of this problem, I would like to emphasize the extent to which Hegel’s claim that this principle of absolute synthesis is “reason” is influenced by his (ontological) orientation, according to which the basic meaning of being is that of a unifying unity (motility). Yet this orientation can in no way be explained as “idealism” or “rationalism.” Let me briefly recapitulate the fundamental themes which have led Hegel to this claim.

The synthesizing original principle is defined as “reason” first on the basis of its synthetic character. It is a mode of *self-relation*. This self-relation is an act of unifying, namely, the synthesizing of the manifold into the unity which sustains itself through this manifold. Such a unifying and united being can only have the character of an I, of *subjectivity* that can *perceive* the manifold “posited” as its own negativity. In this negativity alone is the I, a positivity that can *distinguish* (represent) itself from itself as a perceiving unity and that can relate back to itself as one that is perceived and distinguished.

Such an act of distinguishing is attained through *thought*. With reference to the fundamental character of this distinguishing synthesis, Hegel says, “All reality consists of this distinguishing” (GPh, XV, 554). Only a unified being that distinguishes, perceives, and itself forms into one what it perceives, can preserve itself as itself in the occurrence of the synthesis, in “endless activity.” It remains *identical with itself* only through becoming other, through the change that assimilating and reforming the perceived manifold brings with itself. Only a being in the mode of perceiving and knowing I is such an “equality-with-self that generates its own movement” (PhG, 17).

The terms “knowledge,” “conceiving,” “concept” and “reason” must be understood from the very beginning in that fundamental sense given to them: their meaning is that of a distinctive mode of being as distinguishing, unifying, and “equality-with-self” that generates its own movement. The extension of the meaning of these terms beyond their traditional significations is not a haphazard choice on Hegel’s part. In his

Logic he will illuminate the ground which unites these various significations.

Hegel's answer to the Kantian question concerning the possibility of synthetic a priori judgments then is that "reason" constitutes this fundamental condition: "The possibility of such a positing (of the identity of subject and predicate in judgment as the identity of the particular and the universal, of thought and being) is no other than reason, the identity of such unequals" (ED, 238). And the synthesis of judgment is only the expression of the "identity of the subjective and objective" (ED, 239), which constitutes the "principle" of being itself. Because "the pure essence of beings" is no other than the occurrence of the synthesis of the one and the many, of the subjective and the objective, the synthesis [performed — Tr.] by the judging human subject can a priori give expression to the *truth* of being. "Thought and being," in light of their ontological meaning, are not different but *one*. Through the "principle" of absolute synthesis, which first qua "thought" allows beings to be at all, both thought and being are united, and it is this original unity that allows difference to proceed from itself. "The world," the given manifold of beings is not an object (*Gegenstand*) of the human I; it is not something which stands over against it (*entgegen-stehendes*) in some ontologically appropriate form. The world "belongs" quite fundamentally to the being of the I. For it is the negativity through which the human I can first be positivity; for it is the manifold through whose synthesis the I can first come *to be*. Likewise *all* being first is through such a synthesis. The world "belongs" to the human subject in a special way, and accordingly, the synthesis is also a special synthesis, which as such can be ascribed to no other being. Subsequently in the *Logic*, Hegel defines this mode of being as "Life."

The "principle" of absolute synthesis which is not "merely a form of knowing but also a form of being" is "the one true reality" (ED, 236). Its occurrence is that of the *totality*. We have indicated above the ontological significance of the concept of the "totality." The absolute synthesis and the original synthetic unity which occurs through this synthesis "constitute" themselves as "universality" (ED, 238). It is the *universal* "form"

under which each being qua *determinate being* stands a priori. The universal form is also the most *genuine*, because determinate being does not first appear as unity but as bifurcation and juxtaposition, that is to say, it appears in its *untrue* form. (This dual meaning of the original principle persists throughout Hegel's ontology and is most apparent in his explanation of the "Idea.")

When one defines this principle as the "origin" out of which determinate being "separates itself," "springs forth," "becomes" and "appears" (ED, 240 ff), one does not imply thereby that it is a ground which transcends beings themselves. "Origin" here signifies no other than the very Being of beings, that *through which* the latter first *is*. Hegel states that "the subjective I as well as the objective world necessarily separate themselves" out of the original synthetic unity "into appearance and product" (ED, 241). This means that the original synthetic character of Being as such is the condition for the possibility of the emergence of the "subjective I" of humans out of the totality, which then comes to know, or believes itself to be, the subject of synthesis and is thus juxtaposed to the "objective world" as one that is synthesized by the I.

With this claim Hegel's actual task now for the first time lies ahead, namely, to demonstrate this synthesis of the original synthetic unity to be a "principle," and to render intelligible the manifold modes of being or the "dimensions" of determinate being and their unity as various modes of absolute synthesis. As an "activity without depth and dimension," in which the "juxtaposition to the finite is held unto," "reason" is "in itself empty" (ED, 249). But it can truly be a "principle" only when the concrete fullness of its dimensions is grasped along with it. Indeed, at first sight it is perfectly obscure how the being a thing, of a living organism, or of a concept can be understood as the occurrence of absolute synthesis, of a "rational identity." Furthermore, because as "rational identity" this absolute synthesis implies the ontological meaning of *subjectivity*, to undertake such a task means that the manifold modes of being must be shown to be so many modes of subjectivity or their substance must be shown to be subject. It is further implied that the multiple modes of being are to be explicated

as various modes of being-in-movement, for as a unifying unity, the occurrence of absolute synthesis itself is a definite mode of motility. It is “equality-with-self that moves itself,” the coming-back-to-itself from and the remaining-by-itself in otherness. In Hegel's *Logic* the categories of traditional ontology are treated in this specific sense as fundamental concepts of Being designating various modes of motility.

The Absolute Difference within Being: Equality-with- Self-in-Otherness. Being as Motility.

The ontological concept of the absolute, understood here as the in-itself synthetic unity of a rational subjectivity, was said to constitute the ground of the multiplicity of beings as their “origin and essence” in still unclarified fashion. Our next task is to show how beings develop out of this origin and essence in their manifold ways. We try to indicate that reason is not merely understood as “an activity without depth and dimension” (ED, 249), in the sense of “bad idealism,” but rather as a “totality” that is both developing and developed. Our task is the concrete presentation and identification of this novel concept of Being. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the *Logic* provide this ontological foundation, admittedly proceeding from different assumptions and intentions. It can be made clear only in the course of our investigations why it was necessary for Hegel to establish such a foundation twice. Insofar as the *Logic* presents the final elaboration of Hegelian ontology, in which the dualism of this original foundation is retained, its interpretation is presented here first. We can best gain access to the early formulations of this ontological foundation on the basis of the *Logic*. However, we begin this chapter with a central passage of the *Phenomenology* in which Hegel himself characterizes the consequences of this novel concept of Being in relation to Kantian philosophy.

“Reason is the certainty of being all *reality* (*Realität*). This reality, this in-itself (*Ansich*) is still completely general; it is the pure abstraction of reality . . . and the I, therefore, is merely

the pure *essentiality* (*Wesenheit*) of beings (*des Seienden*), or the *simple category*" (PhG, 177). Positively formulated this means that "reason" determines the pure essentiality of being. As the "*simple category*" (PhG, 177), it articulates being as being (*das Seiende*). The mere essentiality of being is no longer merely juxtaposed to consciousness; reason as the "simple category" is that whereby being, despite all multiplicity, is *one*, a "simple unity," something that is (*ein Seiendes*). Its *being* is a "thinking actuality." "The category is this, that self-consciousness and being are the *same*; they are the *same* not by being compared with one another, but "intrinsically" (PhG, 177). But negatively formulated this also means that this determination of essence (*Wesensbestimmung*) is still merely "universal" and without any concrete justification in the manifold of beings; it is a mere "abstraction." But it is as yet impossible to see how the manifold of beings can be articulated in terms of the simple category. For Kant the multiplicity of the categories was a mere "catch," a fact that Hegel denounces as an "outrage of science" (PhG, 178).

In this passage Hegel gives us a principle for the necessary deduction of the various categories from the simple or "pure" category which defines the direction of the subsequent elaboration of his ontology, and which, moreover, had already been at work in his earlier exposition in the *Jenenser Logik*.

This (simple) category ... contains however *distinction intrinsically*, because its essence is to be *immediately equal-to-self in absolute difference or in otherness*. The distinction therefore *exists*, but what is perfectly obvious, as a distinction which is at the same time none. It appears as a *manifold* of the categories. (PhG, 178 ff. Emphasis added.)

And this appearance is precisely such that the categories can be comprehended as "kinds" of the pure category.

Along with this stipulation concerning the deduction of the various kinds of pure categories, Hegel immediately sets another. The assertion that rational self-consciousness is in-and-for-itself all reality and the essentiality of being, remains a mere assertion, to which others can be justifiedly juxtaposed, as long as the genesis of the content posited therein has not been clearly analyzed into its elements. Reason is "intrinsically all

reality first in that (it) *becomes* this reality, more precisely in that it *proves* itself to be this reality" (PhG, 176). The thesis that the absolute is reason thereby becomes an axiomatic foundation. The "initial" certainty is not of the intrinsic reasonableness of being. Quite the contrary, it is the certainty that reasoning self-consciousness and the being given as object are *other*. Being is first encountered through the dualism of the I and the object. A concrete interpretation of being as objectness must lead to the thesis that we can prove this to be so out of the very phenomenon of objectness itself. Only in the return to self, in the "reflection" back into itself from objectness as the "certainty juxtaposed" to it, can the certainty of the rationality of beings be transformed from mere assertion into truth (PhG, 177). The *Phenomenology of Spirit* already shows this movement at work.

Let us summarize the situation described by Hegel at this point: the leading principle governing the deduction of the manifold of beings out of the original unity of the absolute must be contained in the "pure essentiality" of beings itself and must be made intelligible in this light. The pure essentiality of beings must therefore be understood as a process of letting-spring-forth (*Entspringen-lassen*) of the manifold. At first this pure essentiality of beings is nothing other than what determines all being as existing: that in virtue of which and through which all being in its manifold is a "simple unity"; in other words, the *Being* (*das Sein*) of beings (PhG, 178; Hegel explicitly says "essentiality" or the "simple unity" of beings). This simple unity will then be defined as *containing distinction in itself*, in fact as equality-with-self-in-otherness.

The definition of the pure category as equality-with-self-in-otherness also characterizes the ontological specificity of absolute synthesis and of its unifying unity. Over and against the synthesizing I (self-consciousness), the synthesized manifold is essentially "negativity." The manifold is what the I is *not*, its "other." This synthesis thus is more a self-unification (self-mediation) with the other, a relating of the self to and a maintenance of the self qua unity in face of otherness. Insofar as this unity is necessarily a synthetic one, which first takes place in the completion of this synthesis, being is what it is only in being

its other. The category “is distinguished within itself”; exactly what is being for-itself and for nothing else is also for another and otherness. “Being-for-self and being-for-another” are “posited as one with the simple category which is thereby all content” (PhG, 314).

The category of “equality-with-self-in-otherness” emerges out of a more fundamental basis of Hegel’s philosophy than the exposition of this concept in the *Logic* would allow us to assume. This category leads back to the ontological concept of *Life* as it is presented in the *Phenomenology*. Because these relationships are analyzed in the second half of this work, at this stage a brief reference suffices.

With the determination of being as equality-with-self-in-otherness — the meaning of which can only be made clear in the course of our investigations — Hegel returns to Aristotelian ontology. Although Aristotle’s ontology was implicit in Hegel’s basic framework since the *Jenenser Logik*, his reception of it was not extensively examined until today; indeed, it has not been treated as a real problem even once.¹ Such treatment does not belong in our investigation, but we nonetheless elaborate certain crucial Hegelian concepts in relation to their Aristotelian counterparts. When discussing being-in-itself and being-for-itself Hegel explicitly introduces the Aristotelian categories of *dynamis* and *energeia* (HE, 85; E, I, 282, par. 142 and Addition; GPh, I, 33 ff).

To clarify the terminology let us repeat once more that “being” for Hegel never means what we call Being in an emphatic ontological sense, that is to say, that which is (*das Seiende*) qua *being* (*Seiendes*) (ὄν εἰ ὄν). But “being” for Hegel also does not mean intrinsic or essential being. It is rather a specific form of being; immediate-being-there in its various forms. When used in this Hegelian sense, the concept of being is always placed in quotation marks.

Hegel has now defined the intrinsically synthetic character of the pure category as equality-with-self-in-otherness. The pure category, which characterizes being in its “simple unity,” carries this “absolute difference” in itself. With this determination one reaches the highest point of Hegelian philosophy which is irrevocable. Being has the fundamental character of being “split” into two: it is in being *other*, as equality-with-self in transformation. It carries its negativity within itself, and is negativity in its innermost essence. This fundamentally split and dual character of being is the ground of its *motility*, of its happening.

Again it is this duality within being which grounds the multiplicity of beings as various modes of Being, since these are no other than various modes of equality-with-self-in-otherness, modes, that is, through which absolute distinction is concretized, as returning back to self, but also as carrying out and fulfilling the essential duality. Precisely for this reason they are forms of motility. For the “mediation” of being with its otherness “is nothing other than the equality-with-self which *generates its own motion*,” and precisely its “for-itselfness,” its “pure negativity” vis-à-vis otherness is “its power to move itself” (*PhG*, 177. Emphasis added). Because all being can be itself in otherness, and through the negation of itself, it necessarily *preserves* and *asserts* itself as what it is in being-other. It is not simply and immediately that which it is. It must display, exhibit, and reveal its being in opposition to negativity. As Hegel subsequently writes in the *Logic*: “Precisely this is the content of the Absolute, to manifest itself” (L, II, 163 ff). This specific motion of bringing itself forth, of showing itself, constitutes the proper “actuality” of beings. Being essentially brings itself about, it actualizes itself. This insight into the deepest truth of Being (which as we shall show is also able to account with great precision for the concrete phenomena of beings), allows Hegel to revive the great discoveries of Aristotelian philosophy by removing the cover which tradition had spread over them. Aristotelian philosophy is set once more on its true path: proceeding from the negativity and dividedness of being (the *dichas* of the categories, *morphé* and *stenesis* — *on dynamei* and *on energeia*, cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, 201 a 3ff, 191b 27ff; *Metaphysics*, ch. 7) as the basis of its motility (cf. the explanation of *kinesis* in *Physics*, Γ), progressing until that most actual form of motility and the most actual being — *noêsis* and *noêsos* (*Metaphysics* Λ).²

Thus the absolute difference within Being is at the same time the ground and the basis of its concretization as the self-development and reintegration (*concretum*) of this distinction. The development and mediation of this dualism constitute then the motility of Being as a concrete process. This is a “permanent becoming toward Being” and “aliveness.” Repeatedly and explicitly Hegel has defined this original fact to be the fundamental determination of his whole philosophy. Especially

in "The Doctrine of Judgment" in the *Logic*, which must be viewed as the actual explanation of this determination, precedent and subsequent modes of being are described as concrete formations of absolute difference. "But it is the truth (of the thing itself) that it is *divided* within itself into its *ought* and its *being*; this is the *absolute judgment over all actuality* (L, II 306 ff). In two of Hegel's letters to Dubor, it is stated:

In the sense of the philosophical absolute, I define truth as what is in-itself *concrete*, as the unity of a determination *juxtaposed* within itself, such that this juxtaposition is still preserved in the unity — or (I define) truth not as something fixed and rigid . . . but as movement, as Life. (*Briefe*, II, 130; cf. also II, 79 ff)

It now remains to be shown how Hegel develops absolute difference as the fundamental determination of Being out of the concrete phenomena of beings encountered in the world, and this task already takes us into Hegel's *Logic*.³

Thinking comes upon the first expression of absolute difference in the attempt to determine what confronts it overall and immediately, and which it encounters as existing in its immediate "being." This house here, this street, these human beings walking over there, the thoughts which I have upon their sight — all this which is so varied *is*. We encounter it immediately as "being."

The term "immediately" circumscribes the horizon within which the first book of the *Logic* unfolds. Because the concept of "immediacy" can first be made clear after reaching the completed form of "mediation," here we confine ourselves to some provisory remarks. "Immediacy" is not primarily the mode through which beings are given *to* or encountered by a *consciousness* but the form of Being of beings themselves. (The determination of immediacy is thus already a thoroughly scientific, even more, an ontological determination. It does not belong in the domain of common understanding, of immediate perception and the like.) Beings are immediate before acquiring their "essence" and "ground"; the determinations of their thereness (*Dasein*) constantly impinge upon them, happen to them. Beings have not yet established themselves into "existence" out of their very "essence"; beings as they are there immediately without having produced or realized themselves are immediate. The peculiar temporality of this process, namely, that "essence" which first emerges out of the history of being was always at the same time already there,

that immediate being is simultaneously a presupposition and a positing of essence, is discussed subsequently (see chs. 6 and 7).

What then constitutes the immediate “being” of all these different entities (*die Seienden*)? Our question is not what makes this house into a house, these human beings into human beings, or thoughts into thoughts. We are asking what it is that we have before our eyes when we say of all that they *are*. The “being” that is searched for must lie in a totally different dimension than all the possible or actual determinations of beings, for one ascribes this kind of “being” to entities even when their specific, factual determinations are completely different. This “being” must simply be “indeterminate,” for were it to be defined even through a single determination, it would no longer be pure “being.” Thus in the attempt to maintain this “pure being” totally “abstract for itself,” thought comes upon “nothing” as the “only determination” of this being. That “being,” which everywhere and always is spoken of and understood as “is,” is never and nowhere at hand (*vorhanden*) and can never be identified as such.

“Pure being” thus goes over into “nothingness.” This does not mean that “being” *is* not but that whenever “being” is, it has already “gone over.” “Being” only *is* in this going over to nothingness. Accordingly, nothingness will be positively incorporated by “being”: “pure being” *exists* only as its own negativity, that is to say, as determinate being (*Seiendes*). “It is not mere being, but being-there (*Dasein*); etymologically this means, at a specific point in space, but the representation of space does not belong here” (L, I, 96).

With this statement, Hegel already declares absolute difference to be the original fact about being in the sphere of immediacy. “Being” is only as being here or there, as “determined,” as burdened with negation. For each determination already means a negation of “pure being” in certain respects.

When being is considered as it is immediately . . . it possesses an empirical *thereness* and its ground therefore is that of limitation and the negative. No matter through what expressions and turns of phrases the understanding articulates itself, whenever it resists this

unity of being and nothing, and refers to the immediately at hand, it nonetheless finds nothing in this experience besides *determinate* being, limited or negated being. (L, I, 87)

But we have still not attained the concrete phenomenon of beings, that is, “being” not only as determinate *being*, but as a determinate being of a specific kind. This latter is not merely *being-there*, but a specific kind of being that also is there (*Da-seiendes*). The concrete phenomenon of beings is more than a simple manifold of determinations (“qualities”) which are. It is “concrete”; it is some one thing that has grown into a *unity*, into a “something” (*Etwas*). What constitutes the concrete unity of each being then? In the course of determining this immediate unity of the “something,” Hegel also unfolds the first concrete form of being as *motility*. He identifies the *genesis* of the unity of the something as a form of self-movement: “Being is there . . . it *determines itself* essentially as a being that is there” (L, I, 102. *Emphasis added*).

The unity through which we encounter each being, and on the basis of which we address it as this being, is not a “simple” unity but an intrinsically “negative one.” The absolute difference of being is concretized in a specific manner through the unity of the something. It is a unity only in juxtaposition to the manifold of “determinations” circumscribing each being at any given time and by excluding them. (The house is only a house insofar as it is this or that house, in such and such a condition, in such and such a state.) The pure “in-itselfness” of this specific being can only be a “reality” by being negated; it is itself because it is other than mere being “in-itself,” precisely because it is in “otherness.” Each specific being in merely being-there is caught in the difference between “in-itselfness” and “being-there.”

This specific being is not merely there in its otherness. It is not peaceful in its thereness but carries this duality within itself and becomes a concrete something first through this process. It is not simply there in its determinateness, rather “in this capacity of being-there, it is also difference — reality and negation” (L, I, 101 ff). This difference is not simple either. It is not as if everything were split into “in-itselfness” and a given

determinate thereness, but “these differences that are at hand in determinate being-there are also just as ephemeral and overcome (*aufgehoben*)” (L, I, 102). The concrete something as it is immediately at hand comes to constitute itself through this process of the sublation of difference: “The factual that is at hand is being-there in general; it is also different from *it* and the sublation of this difference” (L, I, 102). Determinate being-there will first become a concrete being in that it seizes upon the given determinateness under which it exists (*qua* in-itselfness) as its negation, and through this negation, “refers back to itself” and “mediates itself with itself.” Being-there *becomes* a specific something through this process of displaying and producing out of itself its own negativity, and in becoming *external* to itself through this negativity. What is there excludes its otherness from itself and thereby comes back to itself: the fundamental determination of being-there is “having become” (*Gewordensein*) (E, I, 179 §89). Being-there can only be “one that has become”; it is a “result” (HE, §57).

The (negative) unity of beings is one that *happens* or occurs. This happening, through which unity is first established, is understood as the sublation and generation of difference, as a mediation with otherness. The unity of beings is constituted through this motility which is not external and which is not caused externally. Its “ground” lies in the “negativity” proper to the Being of beings. This movement is a *self-movement*: being moves itself and *overwhelms* its otherness; sublating and mediating this otherness, it seizes upon its determinations. These determinations are not, as it were, glued unto being, as if they could casually come loose of it and change. Being exists within its determinations by mastering them. This process is carried on and kept going by means of a certain *power*. Something *will* first become what it is, a being-there, by appropriating, dominating its otherness and making itself into it. Being has thus become the “middle,” carrying and sustaining within itself its own otherness and difference.

The absolute difference between in-itselfness and being-there is thus unified, for in-itselfness is viewed as a self-actualizing power (*dynamis* as *potentia*). This concept is at the center of Hegelian ontology, and the claim that “substance is subject”

is based on the concept of “*potentia*” or “*dynamis*.” Through this concept Hegel’s orientation will shift from the emphasis on the knowing I as the actual instance of equality-with-self-in-otherness to the *Being* of Life, for here the potency (*Mächtigkeit*) of the in-itself is actualized most vividly.

Hegel first discusses the concept of potency extensively and specifically along with the category of “actuality” after the analysis of “essence.” Essence sets free the ground on which the mediating and sublating process of the potential in-itselfness is based. It is only when we look this far ahead into Hegel’s *Logic* that we can see that the specific power of something precisely because it is immediate is at this stage a *powerlessness*.

Let us return to the interpretation of the unity of the something. In this sphere of beings as well, in-itselfness has a certain immediate power and potency but precisely because it is immediate this power it also a form of impotence.

The genesis of the something has already shown immediate, “simple being” to be a highly complex and concrete process through which a being-there first *becomes*. The modality of this process provides the key to the structure of the developing entity, whose being had been characterized as a mode of “in-itselfness” (L, I, 102). Something is *in-itself* in being-there: “in-itself” it moves itself around in its otherness. To use that highly plastic expression of the *Encyclopaedia*, it has an “extended field of being” in which it relates itself to others and thereby limits itself (HE, 59; E, I, 180 §91). Even the most immediate being possesses, therefore, a certain potency. Something is not merely there. It determines *itself* to be there. This was already implied in Hegel’s statement about being-there determining *itself* to be a specific being. We can understand being concretely when we view it as a process in and external to itself, as “mediating itself,” as a self-becoming. But such a process is most adequate to a *subject* in a dual sense: first, because in the course of this movement of determinate being-there something preserves itself as the same; and second, this same being relates itself toward another and is thus “in-itself.”

This is why “substance” must be grasped “as subject.” In the *Phenomenology* Hegel claims that “all else follows” from this necessity. This claim is not necessary because it follows deduc-

tively out of some or other basic idealist thesis or because transcendental philosophy has been presupposed. The thesis that “substance is subject” is based on the knowledge that Being is motility. To be a subject means to remain-by-oneself-in-otherness. This claim necessarily follows from Hegel’s conceptual directness that does not shy in the face of consequences which would make the common understanding “shudder.” It was this conceptual matter-of-factness which also led Hegel to discover in the immediate being of each something that internal dualism and movement which constitutes all being as a unity. This is stated most clearly in the preface to the *Phenomenology*: “The living substance is further that being which is actually *subject*, or what is the same, this living substance is actual only insofar as it is *the movement of positing itself*, the mediation between itself and becoming another” (PhG, 15. Emphasis added).

If movement plays such a central role in Hegel’s ontology, a remark on Hegel’s *Philosophy of Nature*, in which movement is expressly analyzed, is in order here. But more than a brief reference must not be expected, for the latter belongs to a completely different domain than the *Logic*. In the *Philosophy of Nature* certain real forms (*Gestalten*) of the Idea are the object, and no ontological determinations are explicated. It is therefore not to be wondered that movement is treated in the *Philosophy of Nature* under the section on “Mechanism.” But nonetheless the proper ontological significance of movement is hinted at here as well: “Thus movement is the concept of the true soul of the world; we are used to perceive it as a predicate or a state, but it is in fact the self — subject as substance — remaining as well as disappearing” (E, II, 65; §261, Addition).

This remark throws preliminary light on the connection between the two significations of ‘subject’ as well as their relation to the subject of a judgment. The fact that all being entails the difference between in-itselfness and thereness is expressed in that being appears as the subject of a judgment, as the *hypokeimenon* of a certain predicate. For Hegel, actuality shows itself (in and through itself) in judging (*Urteilung*) such that I can address being *as* a such and thus. Through every determination of being, its given existence is distinguished from its in-itselfness, and nonetheless rejoined in unity. The ontological foundation of Hegel’s doctrine of judgment is discussed in more detail in chapter 12.

Let us parenthetically remark that our interpretation also refutes Dilthey’s view that the concept of “otherness” is a source of embarrassment for Hegel (Dilthey, IV, 220 ff).

Motility as Change: The Finitude of Beings

Hegel has defined the mode of being-there of the immediate something as “in-itselfness” and has conceptualized this in-itselfness, in its proper potency, as a mode of subjecthood. In the course of the exposition of the ontological identity (*Seinsweise*) of the immediate being this early determination is decisively corrected. The something is “only the *beginning* of the subject; in-itselfness is at first wholly undetermined” (L, I, 102. Emphasis added). Of course, immediate being can only *be* insofar as it is “the mediation of itself through itself.” Yet this mediating process belongs to the something only implicitly. This process floats over the surface of this something and happens along with it (*begibt sich nur mit ihm*), but remains a one-dimensional occurrence which floats over and around it without being grounded in the “essence” of the something which is the subject of this process. The in-itselfness of this something is a specific form of *impotence* (powerlessness). This powerlessness is a positive aspect of its being, for it does not indicate the absence of all power but signifies only its “beginning” and its most minimal level. This impotence is only made possible by a certain kind of potency. One must emphasize this paradox: being is at first immediate mediation. It is a unity whose unification cannot be grounded in its essence. This specific form of powerlessness characterizes the motility of the something as “*change*.”

Precisely because of its powerlessness immediate being is *at the mercy* of the motility of its being: it can neither sustain itself

(*sich ver-halten*) in the course of this movement nor can it keep it within its bounds (*ansich halten*).* Its in-itselfness *changes* with every determinateness (*Bestimmtheit*) that impinges upon it. With each determinateness this in-itselfness is sublated and becomes *another* in-itselfness, another something. “Something as becoming is a going over unto (*Übergehen*), whose moments are likewise something, and this is therefore change” (L, I, 103). Something only *is* in its permanent going over unto another. Until now we have not fully considered this aspect of the movement of something, but this is necessary for the complete determination of the Being of immediate beings.

We know now that the being of something is characterized by the dualism of in-itselfness and being-other (*Anderssein*). This being-other will now be characterized more precisely as “being-for-another” (*Sein-für-Anderes*). This characterization has the purpose of including *change* as a constitutive aspect of the Being of immediate beings. Being-other reaches the very in-itselfness of beings. Beings refer to another out of their very self, and fulfill their in-itselfness in the relatedness (*Beziehung*) to another — being *is for-another*. At the same time, as we will see later, being will become an *other*. It will go over into the other.

We would like to draw attention to the double meaning of the term “in-itselfness” (*Ansichsein*). First, positively “in-itself” means what being remains intrinsically, over and against all accidental determinations of its existence. The term opposed to this is being-there (*Dasein*), being-other. Second, negatively “in-itselfness” means what being already implicitly is but which has not been exhibited, manifested, and actualized. This refers to its mere (abstract) “essence” in distinction from its “actuality” which has unfolded itself out of this essence. The term opposed to this second meaning is “being-for-self” (*Fürsichsein*).

The two meanings of the term and their opposites have an internal connection with one another. Insofar as for Hegel the actual meaning of Being is first attained with “for-itselfness,” all being-in-itself is dependent on the fact that what it is will be grasped by, and manifest

* Marcuse’s play on the various meanings of the verb “halten” (to hold unto; to keep) and its derivatives, such as “*sich verhalten*” (to behave, to conduct oneself, to relate), is lost in English. The reader is asked to consult the glossary under “*sich verhalten*” for a fuller picture of Marcuse’s intentions. — Tr.

to, the comprehending transparency of a consciousness. All that is *merely* in-itself is precisely because of this *for-another* (for consciousness), for whom this in-itselfness is an object. And it is this other which first grasps this in-itselfness in its truth. The necessity behind this dual meaning can only be explained at a later point.

If being-other belongs to the in-itselfness of beings, if the latter sustains itself and keeps to itself precisely in its being other, this means that ontologically each being is also “being-for-another.” Thus the absolute difference of being leads beyond the seemingly self-enclosed immediate unity of each into “connections” with other beings, which then belong to the in-itselfness of beings. This ontologically appropriate (*Seinmässig*) interconnectedness of all beings constitutes their concrete multiplicity in the sphere of immediate existence (*Dasein*). Something and another thing are not juxtaposed to one another: “Their truth is their *relatedness*; being-for-another and being-in-itself are therefore ... posited as moments of one and the same, as determinations (*Bestimmungen*), which are *relations*, and which remain in their unity, in the unity of immediate existence (*Dasein*)” (L, I, 106. *Emphasis added*). The first determination of this concept already clarifies that Hegel has come upon the Aristotelian category of *pros ti*, and he himself emphasizes the difference between this category and the Platonic *heteron* (L, I, 105).

In this process through which something becomes, and which, moreover, displays the ontologically appropriate occurrence of the relatedness to an other, the difference within being emerges more prominently.¹ This difference now appears as that between “determination” (*Bestimmung*) and “constitution” (*Beschaffenheit*). In becoming other the in-itselfness proves itself not to be neutral. It is not a medium which absorbs all otherness into itself; rather it is a unit allowing only specific possibilities to occur. In all its becoming-other, being conforms to this constitution which is its “determination.” This remaining-in-conformity-with is the mode in which being remains by itself. This is its unity. This remaining-in-conformity-with expresses itself in the being of something once more as the “beginnings” of a power over and against becoming-other, and thus reveals

this to be powerlessness. That something does not change itself, but that it becomes another (a being, a something) is grounded in this powerlessness. Immediate being acquires a determination only in that it goes over into another. It reaches the “fullness” of its being first in this going-over.

Determination is affirmative determinateness as the in-itselfness with which the something remains congruous in its being-there, and in face of its entanglement with others by which it might be determined. Something thereby maintains itself in its equality with itself, and makes this hold good in its being-for-another. Something *fulfills* its determination insofar as that further determinateness which first grows in various ways through its relation to another, is congruous with its in-itselfness, and hence becomes its fullness. (L, I, 110)

The category of “determination” characterizes being as change and as in the process of changing. It concretizes the meaning of “in-itselfness.” The latter is no longer defined as restfulness but as permanent movement in relation to other beings. The fullness of being is now understood as the ever new “filling of in-itselfness with determinateness” (L, I, 111). This filling is not only one that always becomes but also one that is never fulfilled. Determination is once again “an *ought*, that is, together with the completeness embodied in in-itselfness, it is the form of in-itselfness in general *confronting* the immediate existent that is not embodied in this form” (L, I, 111).

The “determination” of beings can never reach fulfillment. Determination is always confronted with a “being-there which it has not incorporated,” with an externality to which it has not yet adjusted itself.

Constituted in one way or another, something is always caught in the net of external relations and influence. This external relation upon which its constitution (*die Beschaffenheit*) depends, and the being-determined-by-an-other, both appear as contingencies. But it is the quality of something to be abandoned to such externality and to have a constitution. (L, I, 111)

The relation of something in the mode of being-for-another does not simply signify the “latitude of immediate existence” but has become a “quality” of being itself which extends into its “determination”: “That determinateness which thus in-

cludes the other within itself . . . brings otherness into the very core of in-itselfness or determination; the latter is reduced consequently to constituted being" (L, I, 112).

It now turns out that the determinateness of something through the other and the externality of being-for-other are not only the immediate limit of something, but are constitutive of the in-itselfness, of the determination of something. "Its limit, qua the termination of another at it, is at the same time the being of the something. The latter is what it is through its limit and has its quality in it [in the limit — Tr.]" (L, I, 114). The limit is the "principle" (L, I, 115, *arche*) of beings themselves (the Aristotelian category of *telos*).

If this is so, however, if individual beings in their limitations are not merely at rest by one another, if this limitedness also constitutes the motility of their Being, then it is also the case "that something, which can only be at its limit, equally separates itself from itself and points beyond itself to its own non-being, expresses this non-being to be its being and goes over into it" (L, I, 115). We saw that the "in-itselfness" of something was characterized by a specific *powerlessness*. Because its unity still lacks "essence" and "ground," it is prey to the happening of its other. In every one of its transformations, it is "conquered" by its other and thereby becomes an *other*, that is, an other *something*. Thus something does not change itself but passes over into another; it "*perishes, passes away*" (*vergeht*). Its unity is only provided by this *context of movement*: the leaf is only a leaf because it withers. The seed is only a seed because it "passes away" into a fruit. The Being of immediate beings constitutes itself first and foremost through a movement which is the complete *perishing* of the individual something, the going beyond its own limit that is its in-itselfness, thus the movement of going beyond its own self. The "end" of individual beings is incorporated within their very Being in such a manner that the latter is first fulfilled when they reach their end. The individual being is *finite* (*das Endliche*).

When we say of things that they are finite, we understand thereby that . . . they are not merely limited . . . but rather that their not-being constitutes their nature and their being. Finite things *are*, but their relation to themselves is . . . to pass beyond themselves and

their own being. They *are*, but the truth of this being is their *end*. Unlike the something, the finite being does not merely change itself, but it “passes away” [perishes]. This perishing is not merely a possibility, as if the finite could be without perishing. The being of finite things as such is to have the seed of perishing as their in-itself: the hour of their birth is the hour of their death. (L, I, 117).

One must place these unheard words in the context in which they were written. In the domain of ontology finitude emerges as the ontological determination (*Seinbestimmung*) of beings. The question here is not the “critical” finitude of human knowledge or of human existence in contrast to the infinity of an *intuitus originarius* — a God. The question is finitude as the ontological determination of beings in general! Even more, this determination of finitude has emerged out of a concrete interpretation of encountered beings. This means that for the first time the concept of finitude is removed from the theological tradition and placed on the ground of pure philosophical ontology. It is no longer the finitude of beings as *ens creatum* in contrast to a creator God that is meant here. The finite is *not* contrasted to anything else, *not* even to the infinity of beings themselves, which Hegel dismisses precisely as the “bad” infinity. From this point on, Hegel opens the wholly new dimension of the universal *historicity* of beings and clears the way for understanding the essence of the *historical*. The process of happening of finite beings is not a development toward some previously determined or undetermined goal. It is not at all a happening to and from. It is a pure happening in-itself, immanent to beings themselves. The finite being does not *have* a history; it *is* history. The history of humans is only a specific *mode* of this universal process and is to be understood only in unity with it.

However, these are provisional theses which still need proving. We have advanced far beyond the point actually reached in our exegesis. Above all, there is one question that suggests itself: How is the fact that in the *Logic* the chapter called “Infinity” immediately follows the one on “Finitude” to be reconciled with our assertions? Or what are we to make of the fact that exactly at this point Hegel blames the common understanding that its business is not advancing further than

finitude? Or that Hegel characterizes his *Logic* to be “the presentation of God . . . and of his essential being as it was before the creation of nature and of a finite spirit?” Or that in his *Lectures of the Philosophy of History* he treats history unequivocally as a development toward a definite goal?

Finitude as Infinity. Infinity as Characteristic of Motility

Although the problematic handled under the title of “Infinity” in the first book of the *Logic* is not immediately in line with the course of our investigation — in this chapter Hegel does not advance the ontological question further; not a single *new* content is revealed, only what has already been discovered is explained more precisely — we must nonetheless treat it briefly, for the misunderstandings surrounding this chapter have diverted from the essential point.

The formal-dialectical determination of infinity is simple: the finite proves itself to be one which, in accordance with its own being, necessarily must go beyond itself and become its other. The other of the finite is, however, infinity. Finitude is, in-itself and in its very finitude, infinity. But nothing concrete has been said so long as this determination, as a formal-dialectical one, seems to hang in the air. Our question is, What does this determination mean in the context of an ontological investigation?

We already saw that the being of finite beings is so constituted that *in each case* they go beyond what they are as something (as existent being), that their in-itselfness is self-determination and that this self-determination is an ought (*Sollen*). The determinateness of finite beings constitutes a principle of their being not only as “limit” (*Grenze*) but as “limitation” (*Schranke*) as well, as a principle of what they ought to be. The finite being stands under the imperative of sending-itself-beyond-itself; it ought to become another, but thereby it will first become *itself*.

The “ought” is an ontological character of finite beings. With this determination, Hegel removes the concept of the “ought” from the ahistorical sphere of Kantian ethics of duty and transcendental moral philosophy in general and places it on the ground of concrete happening. The original premise that humans and the world are united is preserved by Hegel throughout. The pure ethics of duty of transcendental idealism grew out of the rupture of this unity and out of the absolutization of the transcendently purified human subject. But this subject itself is only a certain mode of Being of determinate being in general. The “place” of ethics can only be discovered through a universal ontological process of coming to one’s senses (*Besinnung*)!

The finite being exists qua being-beyond itself, qua the other of itself. The being of the finite is to *pass away* (perish). But what does being pass away *into*?

Hegel has already answered this question too: finite being does not disappear; it does not become nothing, rather through this passing away it comes back to itself! This passing away is its own *Being*. Of course, the individual, fixed being, considered in isolation, perishes, but the individuality of the being here and now, determined to be such and such, *is* not finite being at all. The latter *becomes* what it is through the ontologically appropriate relation to its other, through the concrete emergence of being-for-another. “The plant goes beyond the limitation of being seed, of being flower, fruit and leaf as well. The seed will unfold into the plant, the blossom fades, etc...” (L, I, 123). This is by no means restricted to the domain of *living* beings alone. The absolute difference, the dualism and the dividedness of being, is a universal ontological determination, and as such the ground of *all* happening. “Even the stone, qua something, is different in its determination or in-itselfness from its existence; to this extent it also goes beyond its limitation ... if it is an acidic base, it is oxidizable, neutralizable, etc...” (L, I, 122). The Being of each individual being first fulfills itself in the universal context of this happening in which, qua an individual something, it perishes.

The “in-itselfness” of being (of something) had been determined as *power* or powerlessness in the face of its transformations. The whole range of its transformations — its “being-for-

another" — is included in its power as a determination which lies within the something ("self-determination"). Even when these changes occur *to* it and *along with it*, and its power is only "immediate," and therefore only *powerlessness*, this powerless being is still an "in-itselfness," a mediating middle, a being-by-oneself-in-otherness. Even this impotence is not the *lack* of all power (if this were the case no being would be something, but merely the sum and resultant of its various properties), but a limited, weak form of power. It is only the beginning of the "subject," of the true, mighty self. What immediately happens to the something in its being-for-another is not an alien, external occurrence. On the contrary, this constitutes the being-there of the something. Through it, its in-itselfness fulfills itself as determination. Its own being "sends it beyond" its respective determinateness as its limit. What "passes away" is at the same time only an isolated and fixed condition, removed from the context of the happening of beings. That specific "something" (the specific condition of an existing stone or plant) passes away, but not beings themselves. These are always *more* than what they are at any point: that other into which being has gone over, into which it has passed away also belongs to this potency, to this "more." Beings do not disappear; even when they are completely destroyed, this destruction is grounded in the potency or impotence of their being. Destruction is a positive occurrence: through it a possibility of being becomes actual; in it beings fulfill their "determination."

To insist on the perishing of the individual, finite being therefore is not adequate, for the finite "has not perished in its passing away; first of all it has become *an other* finite being, which in turn is perishing as passing away into another finite being, and so on to *infinity*." In this process of perishing each individual finite being "has attained its in-itselfness, it has *re-joined itself in the process*" (L, I, 124ff). For this reason Hegel can and must say that transitoriness and perishing themselves *cease to be* (L, I, 118). Precisely the finitude of beings has the character of infinity. This most acute insistence on the ontologically appropriate finitude of beings allows Hegel to express the "truth" of this finitude to be infinity! "It is not in the sublation (*Aufheben*) of finitude in general that infinity in gen-

eral comes to be; rather, the finite is only this, that through its own nature it becomes itself infinity. The infinite is its affirmative determination, that which the finite truly is in-itself" (L, I, 126).

Paradoxical as this may sound, exactly the formulation that finitude is infinity offers the clearest indication of how radically, and against all theological definitions, Hegel insists on finitude as the historicity of beings. Hegel himself points out that at this point both concepts "lose their qualitative nature" (L, I, 133). The infinite is no longer the beyond of the finite, from which point the being of the finite would be determined. The finite carries its own infinity in itself, as the infinity of its own happening. The infinite "is and it is there, present and before us now. Only the bad infinity is *beyond*" (L, I, 138). Infinity is only the most consistent expression for the absolute and universal immanence of motility; it is the "unrest of self-movement" within the Being of beings, that is the "eternal" being-by-self in being-for-another, "the returning-back-into-itself, its own relation to itself" (L, I, 138). In the *Jena Logic* infinity is defined exactly as "this absolute restlessness" of the finite "not to be, what it is." "Infinity... is thereby the only reality of the determinate; not a beyond but the simple relation, the *pure absolute movement*, the being-outside-oneself in being-in-itself" (JL, 31. Emphasis added). We read in the *Encyclopaedia*: the true infinite consists in this, "to be by itself in its otherness, or if we express the same as process, to come to itself in its otherness" (E, I, 184, § 94 Addition).

Infinity is thus thoroughly a characteristic of the Being of finite beings as motility. It "is essentially only as *becoming*" (L, I, 138). This is no longer an abstract, but a "determinate becoming." As was stated, it is everywhere and at each moment "there, present before us now." Beings are finite; the Being of finite beings is motility. In this movement of perishing, each being returns back to itself and is fulfilled only through it. Qua the Being of finite beings, motility therefore is always a return to self, a relation to self, and thus has the character of infinity.

Hegel defines the concept of Idealism on this basis. That the finite is "ideal" (*das "ideelle"*) means for him nothing more than that it is

“not a *self-subsistent being*, but (exists) only as moment” (L, I, 139); the finite has its Being only in the infinite movement with and toward the other. Hegel simply says, “The sentence that the finite is ideal constitutes idealism” (L, I, 145). He continues, “Every philosophy is essentially idealism.” That mode of inquiry, which insists on the fixed and isolated character of individual beings, which does not recognize that the individual being, the “thing,” is not a self-subsistent being, “grounded in itself,” but that it has its being always “from another” and is “posited,” cannot be named philosophy. At this point, it becomes clear that for Hegel idealism never means a simple epistemological principle but an ontological one. He will have nothing to do with “subjective,” “formal” idealism that only deserves the “form of representations,” and that seeks to grasp and resolve the opposition of subjectivity and objectivity only in the domain of human cognition. With such an idealism “nothing is lost, and nothing gained” (L, I, 146).

On the basis of the determination of motility as the infinite return of beings to self, Hegel arrives at the final category in the sphere of immediacy, that of “for-itselfness.” He provides thereby a preliminary answer to the question, there from the very beginning, of the essence of the *unity* of beings in the medium of absolute difference.

The category of for-itselfness is perhaps the most comprehensive one in Hegelian ontology. It means both the most abstract, general, and the most concrete and actual mode of being. It covers the whole range of distinction from the *hên* to pure *energeia*. This stage of the problematic can be characterized through the question: when being can only *be* through universal motility and universal relation to others, in the infinity of becoming other and of returning-to-self, what constitutes then the persistent unity of each being? How does it come about that each being nonetheless is something *for-itself*?

When a being is for-itself, then it asserts and maintains itself as *this one* through all otherness and negativity. The unity of the for-itself does not mean the dissolution of absolute difference but the “sublation” of this difference in a form which preserves and unites it as difference. For-itselfness “posits” as well as “canceling” “the difference between being and determinateness or negation” (L, I, 147). For-itselfness has its otherness “built into” it. It remains itself by otherness; it *is* first actual then. But how is this unity possible?

From this general determination of for-itselfness it follows that the unity of beings in the mode of for-itselfness is not a fixed one and at rest but one that is self-moved. It is "relation" (*Beziehung*) (L, I, 147). Indeed, it is the built-in and self-canceling relation of being-other, and of the other to the self-changing being. Such a relation is only possible when the other is given to each being as an other, so that it can sublimate the other, "push it away," and can remove and "abstract" itself from its other (L, I, 148). The unity characteristic of for-itselfness is essentially one of "self-relating" (*Sich-verhalten*), and indeed a relating in the most striking sense of "being-reflected-to self" (*Insich-reflektiertseins*) (L, I, 148). Each being remains *for-itself* in this movement of becoming an other, in that it relates (*verhält*) itself to others but remains self-same* (*ver-hält*). It bends itself back in to itself out of the given multiplicity facing it, in such a way that it does not lose itself in this movement, does not go beyond itself but remains precisely by itself.

This "relation to self" presented by for-itselfness must be understood in a such broad sense that it can be extended to all forms of reflected self-relation, from the most immediate one of the empty *atomon hên* to the most free movement of comprehension. The actual capacity of beings to be as subjects will develop itself through this relating, as already anticipated in the discussion of the unity constitutive of being qua something.

The "relation" of for-itselfness has a fundamental double meaning throughout Hegel's ontology. What is given to being as an other and which it has before it, it re-presents to itself. It contains what is represented to it "in-itself" as an other, without thereby becoming this other itself. According to its innermost being, for-itselfness is *consciousness*. And "consciousness already contains the determination of for-itselfness" (L, I, 148). What being in this mode has for itself belongs to it *alone*. In the relation to self, it is "singled out" (*vereinzelt*): it is "individuality."¹

* Marcuse is once more punning on the various meanings of the verb "*sich verhalten*" — to conduct, to behave, to relate, etc. In relating itself to others, being remains (*sich ver-hält*) itself; literally, it holds unto itself. — Tr.

The broad range of the category of “for-itselfness” is not arbitrary. It expresses the fact that what constitutes the unity of beings is in each case something different, according to the mode of being in which that particular something happens to be at any point. In the sphere of immediate “being” with which the *Logic* has dealt with till now, “this relation to self” and its unity are *immediate* (L, I, 148; HE, 60). This immediacy happens to beings, it occurs to them, but is not controlled by them and grounded in their essence. On account of its immediacy, the unity which constitutes itself in immediate for-itselfness is most abstract, external and indifferent: the pure *atomon* and *kenon* (L, I, 156 ff). Of course, through the relating back of all change to itself, being becomes “absolutely determined being.” Over and against others, it is absolutely determined as this one that is for-itself. But because the determination of this unity is constituted in the immediate occurrence of beings, and is not held together by a unity mediating itself out of its own “essence,” it necessarily remains an “indifferent” unity. This unity is “one” only in juxtaposition to others that are likewise ones. That other to which every being relates itself is, of course, a “moment” of its being, and its unity will be codetermined by this other, but this other remains one that is indifferent to this specific being. The relation constitutive of for-itselfness is thus the pure external relation of “repulsion and attraction” among many individual beings. Because the for-itselfness is

fixed as one that is *immediately* present at hand (*Vorhandenes*), its negative relation to itself is at the same time the relation to a *being that exists* (*Seiendes*) . . . that to which it relates remains determined as a *being-there* and as an *other* . . . Likewise, in virtue of the essential relation to itself, the other is a *unity* as well. The one is consequently the becoming of many ones. (L, I, 158)

This is a fundamental conclusion. The unity, which in the sphere of for-itselfness is constituted in the dimension of immediacy, is in general only an “abstract, formal self-subsistence” (L, I, 163), which always contains its own “destruction.” The unity of beings, which is sustained in the face of all change, signifies at the same time the “indifference” of beings in face of all determinateness. It still needs to be clarified how this

unity survives the dissolution of each something. Simultaneously, each being absorbs each determination equally. Yet this does not mean that it remains the *same* in every determinateness, only that throughout every determination it remains itself as a *being that is* (*Seiendes*). Determinateness in general, that is, quality, is thereby *sublated* (*aufgehoben*). A being which is immediately identical with its respective quality such as to remain the same throughout all its qualitative transformations, is no longer qualitatively but quantitatively determined. When the ground of this exteriorization (*Veräußerlichung*) is the immediacy of beings, then this means even more.

The immediate thereness (*Da-sein*) of beings at *no* time and nowhere provides the ontologically appropriate unity of beings. The Being of beings is never and nowhere constituted in the sphere of immediate thereness. This only means that *motility*, as the mode of Being of beings, has not been grasped in its depth. So long as it happens along with and to beings, motility and beings pass each other by (*verlaufen*), so to speak.* The dimension of immediate being-there suffices neither to determine beings nor to determine their Being.

* "*Wenn also die Bewegtheit sich an Seienden und das Seiende an der Bewegtheit sich gleichsam verläuft.*" The expression "*sich verlaufen an*" has many meanings on which Marcuse is drawing. It means simply "happening" and "taking place," as in an experiment but also to "get lost" (in a city for example), as well as to "run out," as when water runs out. In a sense all three meanings — taking place, getting lost, and running out (exhausting oneself) — characterize the ontological relation between beings and the kind of movement specific to them at this stage, namely, simple change. — Tr.

The Emergence of a New Dimension of Being and Motility: The “Recollection”* of Immediate Beings as “Essence”

The process characteristic of being in the mode of immediacy has proved a quantitative one. Likewise the unity of such beings is merely quantitative. These determinations are of a purely ontological nature: they do not mean that one progresses from an analysis of the quality of beings to their quantity, as one determination among many others, as an “external” in contrast to an “inner” one, etc. Rather, quantity signifies a certain mode of the *Being* of beings. Quantity constitutes the quality of beings in the sphere of immediacy. Qua immediate, being *is* as pure magnitude and thereby stands in a universal relation to other beings that are likewise magnitudes. It is not as if beings were first qualitative and became quantitative subsequently. Like every transition in the *Logic*, the transition from quality to quantity is a progression from one structure to another, and in fact, from an abstract and less adequate structure to a concrete and more adequate one. This transition is a movement within a whole which is always already there. The structure to which one advances is not a subsequent one, but one which is already there, simultaneously with the sublated previous structure; through this movement this structure is only grasped and disclosed.

Because it is not the purpose of this work to provide a

*The term “*Erinnerung*,” in addition to meaning remembrance or recollection, also means an intensified, heightened process of “interiorization.” Recollection is the process whereby beings move to their interior, “collect” once more their parts together (re-collection), or “re-member” themselves, reconstitute their members. — Tr.

comprehensive interpretation of the *Logic* but to bring to light certain ontological lines of thought aiming at the elaboration of the ideas of Being as motility and historicity, we can omit the individual characteristics of being as quantity and summarize instead the results of Hegel's analysis.

The category of quantity in no way makes possible nor does it ground the true unity of beings. Quite the contrary, quantity means the ultimate dissolution of all unity. The individual being now absorbs quantitative determinations into itself. Each being is to others as a "measure"; these others size up to and are in turn sized up by this being. The simple relation of quantitative determinateness "makes up the qualitative nature of the material something" (L, I, 360). "That which is self-subsistent exposes its essential determinate being (*Ansichbestimmtheitsein*) only in the comparison with the other" (L, I, 363). The determination of this self-subsistent unity "consists simply in the quantitative art and manner of its conduct" (*Verhältnis*) (L, I, 365). The individual being becomes a "nodal line of measure relations" (L, I, 379).

Each individual being is in *movement* throughout such measure relations, and because the "measure-determining unity," which constitutes each individual being as unity, consists of "quantitative differences" alone, the individual "self-subsistent units are reduced to *states*," in fact, to the continuously changing states of a perennial "substance" which remains the "same" (L, I, 386). For this is the decisive point: in this "infinite progress" of a self-constituting nodal line one *unity* remains nonetheless, one "self-sameness" constitutes itself. In all continuation, individual being persists, and all which continues is still an individual being. But this is the *only* determination we can still ascribe to unity and self-sameness: the enduring substance merely is as "being." "This transition of the qualitative and the quantitative into each other proceeds on the basis of their unity, and the meaning of this process is only the showing or positing of the *being-there*, namely, that such a substance underlies this process which is their unity" (L, I, 386).

Thus the "Doctrine of Being," the explanation of which had taken up the entire first book of the *Logic*, returns after a long itinerary to its starting point, namely, to "pure being"! The

“Doctrine of Being” arrives at the emptiest and most abstract determination, to “being” in general which at the same time is nothing! Have we really gained anything then? Do we merely stand at the beginning once more? It all depends on whether one can hold on to the proven result of this itinerary, which will then lead beyond itself and beyond its own conclusion into an as yet completely obscure but also completely new dimension.

Negativity and motility are the central determinations which the “Doctrine of Being” as immediacy has arrived at. Both constitute a structural unity: negativity is the ground of the motility of beings, and this negativity *exists* only as motility. The structural unity of being can now be grasped more concretely.

“Being is the abstract indifference (*Gleichgültigkeit*)” as the sublation of each determinateness (L, I, 387). Throughout every determinateness immediate being equally *is*. But qua this indifferent equivalence, it is not simply there and at rest; it is one that is moved. It only exists through the sublation and negation of every factual determinateness, in the return to self via the transcendence of every determinateness. When considered in this sense, being is not mere indifference, but “absolute indifference,” one which “*through the negation* of every determinateness of being . . . mediates itself with itself as simple unity” (L, I, 388). Qua this absolute indifference, “being” constitutes a moved, “negative totality”: “simple and infinite negative relation to itself, the irreconciliability (or indifference) with itself, the repulsion of itself from itself” (L, I, 397).

We must now interpret these determinations in all their concreteness. The Being of beings as simple thereness (*Da-Sein*) and as immediacy amounts exactly to this: they nonetheless *are* through the fact that they negate every determinateness *in* which they find themselves; beings are irreconciled with themselves, they are self-repulsive; they move forward but throughout they remain themselves. Beings are nothing other than the presence, carrying out, and occurrence of this conflict (discord). At the end of the first edition of the first book of the *Logic*, these formulations are more pointed, cutting, and shorter: “Being” is “an indifference which is for-itself,” “the latter precisely means that immediate *being* is to be determined

as *not-being*, and being-in-itself as determinateness." Being is "the simple negativity of itself"; it is "not being what it is, and being what it is not." In the *Heidelberg Encyclopaedia* Hegel writes that immediate being "is the negativity which sublates itself in its being other and which sublates this otherness as well" (HE, 67).

When we consider this fact in all its distinctness, then we can see that the sphere of the immediacy of being has already burst apart from within. This "nothing," this negativity that being is, is itself never really at hand in the sphere of immediacy; it is not and can never be *present*, for this "nothing" is always the other of immediacy and presence. It is what being as *present* precisely never is, but this nothing nonetheless constitutes its *being*. At each moment, this "not-being," this negativity is what the immediately present being *has* already *been*. The Being of beings in the present always lies back in their *past*. To a certain extent, this is an "atemporal" past (L, II, 3), a past which is always present and *out* of which alone being comes to be. Being can only be what it is immediately in the present through recollection (*Erinnerung*): "The reflection that immediately forces itself is that this *pure being* . . . presupposes a *recollection* and a movement which has purified immediate being-there to pure being" (L, II, 3). By disclosing the phenomenon of recollection, Hegel opens up a new dimension of being which constitutes it as having-been — the dimension of *essence*.

"Recollection," of course, has nothing to do with the psychic phenomenon which we today mean with this term. It is a universal *ontological* category, a "movement of being itself" which "re-collects itself in accordance with its own nature" (L, II, 3). It is the "going into self" of beings and their return back to self. But the decisive point is that unlike the mediations and negations of the something, which ran afoul (*verlaufen*) precisely because they occurred in the dimension of immediacy, this new movement is no longer confined to this dimension but can regress backward, thereby entering a new dimension — that of "timeless" having been, or essence.

The negative totality, which the Being of immediate beings has proven itself to be, is in fact a positive one, for this negativity is not nothing. It is precisely the one that persists through-

out all the determinations of being-there. "It is not abolished with the transition from one quality to another or from the qualitative to the quantitative and vice versa. It is what remains in things and this is essence" (E, I, 225 §112 Addition).

We must try to clarify the dimension of being which Hegel characterizes as "essence" without recourse to what is usually meant by this term in philosophy. We must not resort to Platonic ideas, to the concept, or to "essence" in the sense of Husserl's *Ideas on a Pure Phenomenology*, and the like. Hegel's concept of essence is attained through a concrete interpretation of being as motility. It signals a genuine recovery and at the same time a new formulation of the Aristotelian category of the *ti ên einai*.

This plant here is now as seed, now as blossom, and now as fruit. But it *is* neither seed, nor blossom, nor fruit. It *is* not these things even when it exists immediately as seed, blossom, and fruit; it *is* not even all these things taken together. Thus we have been unable to reach the *Being* of these beings throughout our investigation of the sphere of immediate presence (*Dasein*) except in the form of the "negative totality" of each immediate determinacy. The plant *is* exactly what *it is not* as the seed, blossom, or fruit. Nonetheless, it *is* what it is not and "relates" this "not" to itself. The seed *will* become the blossom, the blossom *will* become the fruit, and the plant *is* what "persists" in all this, and which thereby becomes what it is. But in order to be present throughout these determinations, in order to be a seed, blossom, fruit, and plant, the plant must already always *have been* prior to these individual determinations. The seed is *already* a plant. But the plant does not emerge from the seed, only the blossom and the fruit do. The "being" of the plant, therefore, is an "essence": it is to be determined in no other fashion as "that which being (always already) was" — *to ti ên einai*.

When we question the place of essence in the development of beings, at first we can only define it as "the past," as the "having been." "Language has preserved essence (*Wesen*) in the past participle (*gewesen*) of the verb to be, for essence is past, but a timelessly past being" (L, II, 3). "Timelessly" past means that what has been does not disappear, is not nothing, but is

present in all determinations. This linguistic usage “is based upon a correct intuition of the relation of being to essence, since essence can be considered that past being. We should remark that what is past is not, thereby, abstractly negated, but is sublated and thereby conserved” (E, I, 225 §112 Addition). Hegel explains this as follows: when I say “Caesar has been in South France,” then I do not deny his stay there, but I sublata it and preserve it. This “having been in South France” is still present in the Caesar of the Pompeii war, even in the murdered Caesar or in today's Caesar!

The present (being) does not undo what has been; what has been remains in the present. But these — the present and the past — do not lie in the same *dimension*: “having been” constitutes its own dimension of being, and indeed when juxtaposed to the present, the *actual* dimension.

The Doctrine of Essence, as the still actual past (*Gewesenheit*), is that systematic point in the *Logic* when the discovery of the historicity of beings is still preserved. Significantly, this Doctrine of Essence is not to be found in the *Jenenser Logic*, but emerges only after the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which first expressly adds historicity to the ontological framework. “Recollection” attains decisive meaning as a fundamental category of historicity first in the *Phenomenology*. Explicating these connections is the task of the second half of this work.

The Motility of Essence in Its Two Dimensions. The “Ground” and the “Unity” of Beings

In the sphere of immediacy the ontological ground of all motility was the “absolute difference” of being, namely, the dualism of “in-itselfness” and “being-there,” of in-itselfness and being-other. This difference now becomes more pronounced, and in the case of the motility of “essence” it is concretized as the difference and dualism between two dimensions: having-been and presence, “essence” and being-there, “the world in-itself and the world as appearing.” Whereas the characterization of the immediate movement of “being” — being-for-another, change, perishing, passing into another — was confined to *one* dimension, to the immediately present being, already through the very terms which describe essential motility — reflection, seeming-in-itself (*Scheinen-in-sich*), appearance, and manifesting itself — its two dimensionality becomes visible. Through this two dimensionality this movement comes to constitute the essential *ground* and *unity* of beings.

Let us once more clarify the relationship of essence to “immediate being,” to being-there. Vis-à-vis the latter, essence always has been; at the same time it is always present in being. Concretely this means that being-there is at one and the same time a presupposition (*Voraussetzung*) and a consequence of essence. Essence can only be in and through determinate being. At the same time, this being is what it is only as “posited” by essence. Only through essence does it acquire continuity, ground, and unity. In order to understand these determinations, we must first explain the general character of the motility of essence.

“Reflection” refers to that same motility which, as a process generative of unity in the sphere of immediacy, was described as being-for-self. In other words reflection refers to the “simple relation-to-self” attained through the sublation of being-other (see p. 63 above). While in the sphere of “being” this movement was an open-ended one, flowing in and around being, an indifferent transition to the other, the newly emerged dimension of essence makes this movement into a closed cycle which “remains-in-itself” and returns to itself (L, II, 15). Being-other, as we will show, is simply a “presupposition” and “positing” of essence, which stands in a necessary and internal relationship to it.

Being has incorporated this possibility of remaining-in-itself through the fact that it has re-membered (re-collected) itself from “being-there” to “essence,” and has thereby made its own having-been into its present as the actual ground of its “being.” “But essence, as it has here come to be, is what it is through a negativity that is not alien to it but its very own, namely, the infinite movement of being” (L, II, 4). This movement no longer flows toward others but keeps to itself, for in that having been which is continuously present, a dimension is now made available through which the “permanence,” which makes the “unity” of being possible, can constitute itself. The determination of essence “remains consequently within this unity and is neither a becoming nor a transition; nor are the determinations themselves *another*, nor relations to others” (L, II, 5). For this reason Hegel writes of the “equality-with-self” of reflection (L, II, 21). The mediation of given determinacies always proceeds from and returns to the same “essence.” “As a going forth the movement immediately returns to itself” (L, II, 16). It is always the same essence, more correctly, it is this same movement qua essence which relates itself to them and which makes them “relative” to itself. “Transition no longer occurs in (the sphere of) essence, only relation. . . . Here we no longer have true otherness but distinction (*Verschiedenheit*), the relation of the one to *its own* otherness” (E, I, 221ff, §111 Addition).

How does the unity of essence concretely constitute itself at any given point? Till now we have defined only the general

ground on which such a unity can possibly constitute itself, namely, the ground of an always present having-been. Each essence, however, is a *determinate* one (an essentiality — *Wesentlichkeit*), and its unity is a determinate unity. How does reflection, as the movement of essence, constitute its determinate unity? In answering this question, Hegel at the same time clarifies the relationship of essence to being-there. Essence is always the essence of a being that is there. In fact, it is the re-membered being-there which has withdrawn into itself. At first, this being is for essence a “sublated” and inessential one. It is not “merely an inessential being-there but the immediate being that is in-and-for-itself a nullity. It is only non-essence, a show, a semblance”* (L, II, 9). Vis-à-vis essence, being-there is “in-and-for-itself” a nullity, for this being has its “basis” (*Boden*), that which makes it what is, not in itself but in essence.

This thesis, however, must not be interpreted as some form of phenomenalism which questions the immediate being-there of “beings.” Seeming-being, qua non-essential, is not nothing: it is *there* and does not vanish. Quite to the contrary. As we shall see, this being-there remains the “presupposition” of essence, and yet is maintained in its being-there by essence. Essence only *can be* in and through its own non-essential being. “Seeming being is itself essence in the determinacy of being”; it is “semblance in itself, the seeming of essence itself” (L, II, 11). Precisely at this point where the temptation of phenomenalism unavoidably sets in, the immense concreteness of Hegel’s philosophy shows itself: immediate being-there is never ordered away or dismissed. It is taken up into essence in all its immediacy but is not completely dissolved into essence. Rather, it remains *there* in all its concreteness. The motility of essence develops precisely out of this antagonistic unity between essence and being-there.

In each case the motility of essence encounters in the immediate being something “already-there,” from which it must

* I am departing from the usual rendition of the term *Schein* as “illusory being.” “Illusion” has the strong connotation of a deception, a misperception colored by the state of mind of the one perceiving a thing, a situation, etc. But *Es scheint so* does not mean “it is illusorily so,” but “it seems so.” Not the element of deception, but that of uncertainty, is expressed. — Tr.

proceed and which it must absorb into itself. Immediate being is its “presupposition,” “that out of which essence *originates*” (L, II, 16). Reflection *goes beyond* this profound, pregiven immediacy. In order to be able to relate this immediate being to itself qua the essence of the former, in order to stand in relation to it, and to preserve it within itself, reflection must always already have *gone beyond* immediately existent being. Only then can it sublimate it and return to itself while preserving what it has sublated by itself. “Reflection thus *finds* an immediate *before* it, beyond which it goes and from which it is the return” (L, II, 16). In order for a blossom to *be* a plant, in order to preserve the blossom in the being of the plant, the plant, *as* blossom, must have gone *beyond* the blossom and must be more than the latter. It must always already be the *future* fruit, just as it *had* always already *been* the blossom.

The movement of reflection and its consequences have still been only partly described and their work only partially explained. Nonetheless, a crucial point has become clear: immediate being becomes first and foremost what it is in this movement through which essence goes beyond it. Immediate being finds its essential “place” through being sublated and being led back to itself in the sphere of essence; it is *sustained* through this process. “What was found thus *comes to be* through being *left behind*”; “going beyond the immediate, is also arriving at it” (L, II, 16). Without this movement of going beyond and sublation, the immediate determinateness of being would represent only the momentary state of indifference of a matter persisting indifferently in the midst of permanent change. If immediate being *is* to be actual, then it can attain this being only through the movement of reflection which sublimes it and goes beyond it. Being-there is an “essential determinateness that does not go beyond,” it is an actual “persisting” only qua *posited being*, posited through the movement of essence.

We can now determine the Being of immediate being-there: “*Being-there is only posited being*: this proposition expresses the essence of immediate being-there” (L, II, 20). Essence is the “basis” of being-there (L, II, 20); the “equality-to-self of reflection,” “which allows being-there to *continue to exist*” (L, II, 21. Emphasis added).

It is not only the continued existence of immediate being-there which is first constituted through this movement of going beyond and returning but that of essence as well. For essence *comes to be* and *is* only through this movement. "Going beyond the immediate . . . is much more through this" and through the return from the immediate "the arrival of essence back to itself; the simple being, equal to itself" (L, II, 16). Essence is "remaining-in-itself" only in virtue of "this relation to itself" (L, II, 15). Essence "does not have this movement in it, rather it is . . . this movement itself" (L, II, 14).¹

The movement of essence is thereby characterized as a "self-generated movement" which is self-enclosed and which thus creates actual unity. It is a "movement which proceeds from itself" (L, II, 16), because the immediate being that it finds given to it is only one that has been posited by it; this immediate being only "seems to be the beginning" (L, II, 15). What essence arrives at is always itself. Essence is nothing separated from this movement, and this movement itself stands in an ontologically adequate relation to immediate being. "Immediacy is only this movement itself" (L, II, 13). This does not mean that the two dimensions collapse once again. We will see how their duality is developed even further. But they are not isolated and self-subsistent worlds that need to be brought subsequently in relation; they are dimensions of being which are from the beginning ontologically dependent on one another, and which only continue to exist through each other and which only move themselves within their conflictual unity.

With the conceptualization of essence as self-generated movement and the unification of the dimensions of essence and "being-there" within a *single* framework of movement (primarily through the categories of "recollection," "presupposition" and "positing") the process of development of beings presented in the *Logic* first becomes intelligible. It is now clear how being can pass from "being-there" into "essence," from "essence" into "existence," etc., because these transitions do not present *successive* stages of an identically persisting being, but, to the contrary, are contained in the integrative simultaneity of a movement encompassing them all. *While* being is immediately there, it re-members itself as essence; *while* it is reflected-

into-itself, it remains immediately as being-there; *while* it steps out of essence into "existence," it does not cease to have within itself the two dimensions of essence and immediate existence. The peculiar atemporality of the process unfolding in the *Logic* is based on this fact. We return to it later.

The determinations of essence such as "identity" and "ground" are actually already contained in this aspect of reflection as the motility of essence and need to be explained solely in relation to it. Let us note that "identity" and "ground" are treated under the heading of "pure determinations of reflection." The category of "ground" (*Grund*) occupies an intermediate position in the *Logic* between essence and the appearing of essence, whereas in the two *Encyclopaedias* it is ordered rather externally along with other determinations of reflection. With the determinations of "identity" and "ground," we still remain in the sphere of permanent essentiality. The essential *identity* and ground of immediate beings lie in their having been. Beings always "go forth" from this having been in which they are rooted and through which they are grounded.

"Essential identity" is nothing more than the simple self-equality of reflection described earlier. The "pure self-generation in and out of itself"; "it is so far still the same as essence" (L. II, 26). This identity is only through and against difference. It relates itself within itself to what it is *not*. In each case it is an identity which *generates* (*Herstellen*) itself and a unity which becomes only through and in the positing and sublating of its negative. "Absolute distinction" reaches to the core of essential identity (L. II, 32). Essence is *dependent* on the immediate determinacy of being-there given to it. Because it goes beyond this determinateness, sublating and making it into a posited being, it becomes not only a "determinate essence" itself but a posited being, a having-become (*Gewordensein*). More precisely, essential identity is "positivity," but all positivity is juxtaposed to a negativity and exists only in being posited *over and against* another which thereby codefines its positive being. Essence carries within itself the absolute contradiction, in that it only *is* as juxtaposed to a profound determinateness that it negates and sublates into itself. Thereby it sublates its own possibility

of being and negates itself. Yet it is not negated qua essence as such but only as “pure,” self-sufficient essence that is distinct from beings as posited beings. This means that essence has first become *real* through this negation. By driving itself to the ground, it has regained itself as *ground!* The plant only *is* by sublating now the seed, now the blossom, and now the fruit, by *not being*. This means that the plant is, because it is now seed, now blossom and fruit! It has no being besides or behind the seed, blossom, and fruit, but is only *as* seed, blossom, or fruit. It does not “dissolve” (*gehen auf*) into these determinations; rather it is *in* them (it “essences” in them — “west in ihnen”),* but not as a merely “inward” metaphysical substance. The plant is the self-same relation of these determinations to their own process of happening: it is their mediation and preservation, a mode of self-activity which remains constant in relating to them. *Being*, in the mode of essence, unfolds as a *self-generated activity* (*Sich-verhalten*) which remains self-identical through every one of its determinacies. This thesis unites all the determinations of essence hitherto given by Hegel: motility (becoming and having-become; proceeding from . . . going over into . . . and return to self); equality-with-self throughout this movement (identity); the interiorizing and externalizing of contradiction (positivity and negativity).

The destruction (*Zu-Grunde-gehen*)** of pure essence signifies only that the ground of real beings has been thereby reached and that “existence” has been grounded. Essence makes the transition to reality by itself and out of its own proper motility and *becomes* only in this transition. “Essence determines itself as ground” (L, II, 63). And the ground is nothing *other* than essence; it is only “essence posited as totality” (HE, 75). “As ground” essence is “a posited being, a being that has become” (L, II, 53). It arrives at this point by proceeding from the

* The expression “west in ihnen,” which Marcuse uses in this context, creates a verb out of the substantive “Wesen” (essence). This is a common Heideggerian construction, intending to show that the process described by the predicate belongs to the Being of the subject which the predicate characterizes. — Tr.

** Marcuse is punning on the two meanings of the expression “zu Grunde gehen,” which signifies “going to the ground” as in reaching the ground, but also destruction and dissolution. Through its own destruction pure essence reaches its true ground, that is, existence. — Tr.

determinateness which it finds given and by taking this “negativity” into itself, but only to let go of it and to let it happen. Its movement “consists in this: to *posit* itself . . . as what it is *in-itself* and to determine itself” (L, II, 63). When the self-determination of essence is nothing other than the sublation, interiorization, and letting proceed from itself of a profound determinateness, essence is no longer “a proceeding from another, but is, in its negativity, self-identical essence” (L, II, 63). This mediation of essence with itself, as explained earlier, is no longer “pure mediation in general,” but “real mediation” (L, II, 64), which grounds and permits the development of the “thing itself” (*die Sache*), of the really “existing thing.”

Let us briefly summarize here the principal determinations of “ground” which Hegel deduces from this: the fundamental characteristic common to them all is that ground is immanent in beings themselves, when the latter exist no longer as immediate being-there, but rather as essentially self-moved and self-contained beings, as “the thing-itself.” The second mutual characteristic is that the being of the ground forms the process through which the thing itself (*die Sache selbst*) unfolds. Essence is the ground of beings: it is the permanent self-equating of reflection, the relation of these manifold determinations to an “essential being” (*das Wesende*) which remains constant *through* them. Essence is the allowing to happen (*Geschehen-lassen*) which proceeds from this “essential being” and the self-positing of that which is always posited. (Because Hegel defines essence throughout as movement, as “absolute activity,” as “self-movement,” it is not only possible but also necessary to understand “essence” as an active, “essential being”; cf. L, II, 33; 59 ff; 73; 67). Only through superficial abstraction, therefore, can the ground as an “identical foundation” be separated from the existing thing itself (*die seiende Sache*) as “form,” and be defined as an identical “substratum,” as the “material” which is juxtaposed to the changing factual “form” of beings. Actually, this is the one and the same process, namely, “a reflection . . . which defines essence as the simple substrate and which is the subsisting of form” (L, II, 68). “The question cannot be asked, therefore, how form is added to essence,” for “form has . . . in its own identity essence, just as essence has absolute form in

its negative nature” (L, II, 69). There “is” no ground for what is, for ground itself is only the process of happening of beings. Ground exists only as “grounding.” All immediate being-there exists as “condition” (*Bedingung*), as the condition of its own essence.

The being-there is in-itself only this, to sublimate itself in its own immediacy and to fall to the ground. *Being* is simply the *becoming* of essence. Its essential nature is to make itself into a positedness and an identity. . . . The formal-determinations (*Formbestimmungen*) of positedness and of self-identical in-itselfness (the form through which the immediate being-there becomes condition) are, therefore, not external to it. On the contrary, immediate being-there is this reflection itself. (L, II, 94)

Ground is an ontological determination (*Seinsbestimmung*) of beings themselves; ground is an “act of the thing itself” (*Tun der Sache*) (L, II, 97). Ground constitutes the Being of beings, which signifies that in-themselves and intrinsically they fall to the ground, that on the basis of having been in the past, they ground what they are in each case.

We attain thereby a new and deeper determination of *Being* itself, which emerges out of the full disclosure of the dimension of “having-been” (*Gewesenheit*), namely, “existence” as an essential being, proceeding from essence. It is interpreted in the next chapter. Here we want to add only that Hegel characterizes the motility of essence throughout as “deed” (*Tun*), as “activity” (*Tätigkeit*).² This provides two extremely important hints: first, “deed” and “activity” signify an increased intensity of the motility of beings; in fact, this intensity leads toward the character of beings qua subject. Activity is a form of self-contained, self-incited, and self-relating movement. It is not an unmediated and flowing process, as in the sphere of being-there, but a mediated movement, reflected-into-self and remaining-by-itself. Second, it is no accident that with the expressions “deed” and “activity” one hears the Greek *poiesis*, as an ontological category which defines Being as a product, as fabricated, and as “prepared.” This certainly does not imply something produced by an other, being as prepared by humans; it means rather that Being is produced by and through itself.

Being as Existence

Through the determination of ground as self-grounding and as a process immanent in beings themselves, we have once more reached the dimension of immediate “being.” In the process of grounding, essence “gives” itself the determinacy that was previously pre-given to it. This new “immediate *being* which has been reproduced by essence” is “consequently a *being which is the identity of essence with itself as ground*” (L, II, 64). This second is not at all equivalent to the first immediate being; rather it is a being which has “emerged” (*hervorgegangenes*) and “stepped out of” its essence. With the reattainment of the dimension of “being,” and with the “emergence of the fact (*die Sache*) into existence,” it is no accident that those fundamental characteristics which had earlier revealed the dimension of “having-been” to be an “atemporal past” once more return. These are the facts of “having emerged from” and “remembrance.” “Having” is now added as a new “characteristic of the past” (HE, 78; E, I, 254, §125). All the determinations of being as existence are deduced now from the “having been” of beings as their essential dimension.

The grounding of being was no other than the positing of the once already posited, and, as such, it was a pure happening of beings themselves. “The process by which the fact (*die Sache*) is posited is, accordingly, the simple *self-entry* (*Hervortreten*) into existence, the pure movement of the fact itself” (L, II, 99). “The fact emerges from the ground. It is not grounded or posited by it as if the ground remains underneath. On the

contrary, the positing is the movement of the ground outward toward itself, and its simple vanishing" (L, II, 100). Nothing remains "under." Essence has no independent being "along-side" existent things; it always only exists as what "has proceeded from negativity and inwardness," and a "being thrown into (*hinausgeworfen*) the externality of being" (L, II, 97). Essence is a showing, revealing, and manifesting of itself. "Essence must appear" (L, II, 101). Thus we reach once more the dimension of the many existing things, but not as if these were mere somethings whose qualities uninterruptedly flowed into one another. These are now concrete, self-contained, grounded, and integrated unities. The *Being* of these things that are is now fully determined as *existence*, while their mode is that of *appearance*.

The "truth of being" is first uncovered with the determination of beings as existence. Being (*das Seiende*) is no longer immediately there, it *exists*. "All that is, exists" (L, II, 102). "The truth of being is not to be a first immediate, but an essence which has emerged into immediacy" (L, II, 102). The actual nodal point, the sustaining and grounding medium of beings, lies in the past, in their having-been: "The expression existence (deduced from *existere*) refers to a having emerged from (*Hervorgegangensein*)" (E, I, 250, §123, Addition). In order to exist at all, that is, in order to be a being which is grounded and which is sustained throughout this grounded substantial unity, being must *have* already *been*: it must have an *essence*; at each moment the truth of its being lies behind it. It is always ahead of its own truth, it has always gone beyond it. "The fact (*die Sache*) is, before it exists" (L, II, 99).

This circumstance, which brings to light the ontological determination of historicity in the sphere of existing things, is concretely expressed in the phenomenon of *thinghood* as experienced everyday. The extensive multitude of factual determinacies (qualities) appears in wholly unmediated fashion to be carried and sustained by a persistent thinghood which remains identical as a "substrate" (*Grundlage*) throughout the transformation of these determinacies. We do not experience what is as something that perishes along with its qualities, but as a thing which *has* properties. Now, if one were to compre-

hend this thing apart from the changing properties with which it appears, as a “thing in itself” — in some or another sense of the word — as something subsisting on its own and remaining hidden behind beings, one would then abstract a “ground” and a “substrate.” This is ontologically unjustifiable, for it has been established that the ground does not remain an identical substrate, “behind” and “underneath” beings, but is always one which “throws itself into the externality of being,” which exists throughout the given determinations, which exists *in* appearance. The “proper self” (*Ansich*) of the thing *is* its appearance, its appearing, its showing itself, its having emerged out of. Nonetheless talk about “having” properties is quite meaningful. “Having” means primarily “holding,” holding unto, holding together, as in the Greek *echein* (Aristoteles, *Metaphysics*, Δ 23). It expresses one of the fundamental determinations of existence. The factual determinacies, which beings in each case possess, are *held unto* and posited in the process through which essence develops. The Being of beings does not appear in them in order also to disappear with them; it *enters* them, it *maintains* itself in them qua identity, it remains “distinct” from them. This does not mean that it can ever be without them (HE, 77 ff). Furthermore, “to have” refers to the past participle: “In many languages ‘have’ will be used to designate the past” (HE, 77). Hegel adds, “and rightfully so.” For the past is the sublated and preserved being which is the only condition for the possibility of that “holding unto” as a process emerging from the ground.

The experience of things and their properties is only the beginning of our knowledge of being as existence. Essence is only as thrown into externality, “existence consists of this externality” (L, II, 100); “the external immediacy and the determinateness” belong to the “proper self” of the thing (L, II, 112). Thereby “thinghood has passed over into property” (L, II, 113). Because of the immediacy with which essence throws itself into externality and into which it disappears, the thing exists equally throughout its changing properties and *exists* only in them. Thereby we once more lose the possibility of fixating this determinate single thing as an essentially self-grounded unity amid the storm of happenings. “What is considered *one*

thing, can equally be made into or considered several things. . . . A book is a thing, each of its pages is also a thing, and so too are each bit of its paper, and so on *ad infinitum*" (L, II, 113). The "dissolution of the thing" proceeds further. Each thing and every part of a thing which I can consider to be a thing, is, qua this existent, one that has emerged out of . . . ; the ground and essence of its existence, the "basis" of its being are always already "behind" it, in its having been. The ground of the thing, in turn, has gone into externality; it is itself an existent, a thing — this was the main result of the Doctrine of Essence. Each individual existing thing has the ground and basis of its existence in an other existing thing; not a single one of them is self-subsistent — precisely because all exist equally essentially, they exist equally unessentially. Existence

is one that is immediately sublated and that has its ground in a non-existent identity with itself; this interiority is also immediately . . . existence, but one that is other than the first. Through the fact that something, qua existing thing, exists much more in another than in itself, and is one that is mediated, essence is within appearance. (HE, 79ff.)

Hence "the truth of existence is to have its proper self (*An-sichsein*) in inessentiality, and its subsistence in another, and in fact in the absolute other, or it has its own *nullity* as its substrate. It is, therefore, appearance" (L, II, 119).

The concept of appearance, which designates the mode of Being of existing things, carries the original dual meaning within itself. That which exists is appearance, first because it is a self-showing, self-revealing, and self-manifesting only; second, because it never has its ground in itself, but as an existent has always already extricated itself from its ground. It has left it behind, in another. Qua this existent it is nothing then. This determination of existence as appearance can be understood only by taking the following into consideration: the fact that the ground has been does not mean that it has ceased to be, as if the existent which has extricated itself from the ground were an independent entity. Quite the contrary, the ground as having been is permanently present, it is "timeless" past, such that existence remains continuously determined by its having

been and remains grounded. In both senses appearance is a solely ontological character of existence. Appearance does *not* signify an existent in relation to a knowing subject but the existent solely on its own basis and in its very *Being*: "We have established that this essentiality of existence to be appearance is the actual truth of existence. The reflection, by virtue of which it is this, belongs to it (existence)" (L, II, 123).

The nullity of existence resulting from this conclusion is totally different from the negativity of immediate being *prior* to its re-rememberance in essence. For essence itself exists in this nullity; it has not disappeared. On the contrary, it has shown itself in this nullity. As first sight, we seem to be facing the paradoxical result that precisely nullity constitutes the *subsistence* of the existent; that it has "essential self-subsistence" in its negativity (L, II, 124). But this is a concrete fact about beings themselves: not a single individual among existing things has its ground only in and of itself; rather, it stands in a universal "mediation" with other existing things through which it is grounded and sustained, and each of which, moreover, points in turn to another. There thus results a "totality" of existing things, among which, each individual is a "nullity," and which nonetheless, qua totality, has a subsistence that is grounded in itself and that is proper to its essence. Looked at from the standpoint of the totality, each individual thing is once more an "essential self-subsistence." In truth, it is not so in itself, but as sustained and supported by universal mediation and relation. The self-subsistence of existing things is constituted exactly through their nullity as individuals, through their *juxtaposition to one another*, in their "relatedness" to and in their "relations" with one another.

This is no longer the unmediated mediation of something with yet another thing which we had seen at the beginning. Here the one existent is dependent on the other not only for its immediate thereness, but in its *positedness*. One existent *posits* another. It does not support the other in its immediate subsistence qua this particular thereness, but in its existence *proper to essence*. "For this reason the connection of the reciprocally grounding existents consists in their mutual negation, namely,

that the subsistence of one is not the subsistence of the other, but its positedness, which relation of positedness alone constitutes their subsistence" (L, II, 124 ff). The "essential content" of appearance lies no longer within the apparent unity of individual, existent things — this has dissolved itself into nullity — but in the developing (*geschehenden*) relatedness (*Beziehung*) among individual things. The "essential aspect of appearance" is "the complete determinateness: the *one* and its *other*." And the essential unity of existing things is "the identity of their double-sided subsistence: the positedness of the one is also the positedness of the other. . . . This unity is the law of appearance" (L, II, 126).

The interpretation of Being thereby acquires a new direction, which is distinguished through two fundamental determinations in particular: the concepts of totality and relation (*Beziehung*; *Verhältnis*). Until this point, the analysis of essence seemed not to lead beyond the self-enclosed unity of individual beings. Indeed, through the immanence of the ground relation and through the immediate externalization (*Veräußerlichung*) of essence, every transition beyond the individual being seemed to be cut off. It is now established that in that being which has emerged out of essence — in existence — the unity of beings does not constitute itself via the individually existing thing, but only via the essential relation among them. "The existent or appearance in its determinateness is, therefore, the *relation*, such that the one and the same is also the juxtaposition of self-subsistent existents; their identical relatedness alone defines the distinguishables [*die Unterschiedenen*] as what they are" (HE, 80). This relation (*Beziehung*) is a universal one. It does not stop at and exclude any individual existent. This means that the universality of the relation is one that is self-enclosed; it is totality: "This infinite mediation is at the same time the unity of the relation with itself; and existence develops into a *totality* and into a *world* of appearance of the reflected finitude" (E, I, 263, §132). Being determines itself as, and requires from itself, the totality, the world. Only in and through such a totality can being be; only in and through it is it supported and sustained. "The being-external-to-one-another (*der Aussereinander*) of the

world of appearance is totality and this is wholly contained in its relation to self" (E, I, §133; cf. the introduction to the concepts of totality and world in the *Logic*, II, 127 ff).¹

Being always occurs in a totality; it is an occurrence in a world, not, however, in the sense that being moves therein as in space, as if it had its "place" there. This totality holds and grounds being such that being can constitute its unity only in the being of the totality. Within this totality, being is more precisely defined as a relating to (*Verhalten zu*) . . . as relation (*Verhältnis*). The process of essence has already been defined as a relation taking place within each individual being. Now, as an ontological characteristic, relation leads beyond individual beings and is ascribed to the totality as a maintaining and grounding process, for totality is only a "relatedness-to-self."

The essential relation is the determinate and wholly general mode of appearance. All that exists stands in relation to . . . and this relation is the truth of each existence. Hence, for-itself the existent is not abstract, but only through another. But in this other it is the relation to self and relation [*das Verhältnis*] is the unity of the relatedness [*die Beziehung*] to self and the relatedness to another. (E, I, 267, §135 Addition)

Essence, which appeared to have totally dissolved into the externality of the existing thing and into the nullity of appearance, now shows itself once again in its true being as the occurrence of this relation. It is not *within* individual existent things, rather it occurs as the "essential relation" of things to one another, as the *Law* which regulates these relations and which thereby first *posits* the existence of individual things (L, II, 126 ff). The duality of all being, determined here as the duality of essence and existence, now emerges as the duality between a "kingdom of laws" and a "world of appearance." The proper being of the world of appearances is the totality of the laws regulating its relatedness. This in no way implies a metaphysical dualism: "the law is . . . not beyond appearance, but is immediately *present* in it: the kingdom of laws is the *stable* image of the existing, appearing world. But the fact is that they both form a single totality, and the existing world is itself the kingdom of laws" (L, II, 127). The kingdom of laws is no

other than the totality of “essential relations” within which existent things coexist together. Here as well, the duality of being signifies a concrete happening “within” the single totality. Existence occurs only in the essential relation of existents to one another. The members of this relation, the parties to this connection, are “independent subsistents” only through this relation. They are thus “broken in themselves, such that the subsistence of the one gains its significance just as much in the relation to the other, or in its negative unity” (L, II, 137).

With the characterization of the totality of beings as a process of essential relations, being as existence is fully determined. Only now do we stand before that dimension of being that can be named “actuality” (*Wirklichkeit*) in the proper and “emphatic” sense of the word.

Being as existence represents a process of essential relation in a double sense. First, it signifies the essential behavior of each *individual* existent throughout the factual determinacies of its thereness: how it absorbs each determinateness into the ground of its existence and how it immediately lets go of this ground. (Here only the immediate nature of this grounding process [*Grundgeschehen*] is decisive. On this account the entire mode of behaving [*Sich-Verhalten*]* of the existent is immediate as well; it is only a process “in-itself,” not “in-and for-itself.”) Second, this self-relating occurs only through the essential relation to *other* existents. Hegel defines the mode of this relation more closely as one of the whole and its parts; force and its expression; inner and outer. Each individual existent is at one and the same time itself and a part of a whole, the expression of force and this force itself, the outer of an inner. These relational modes are not haphazardly assembled but signify progressive stages of a formalization, of the identification of the members of the relation, which is then completed in the relation of inner and outer. “What is inner, is also at hand as outer and vice versa,” “the inner and the outer are in and for

* Marcuse is once more utilizing both meanings of the term “*sich verhalten*”. On the one hand this means relating oneself to and designates the reflexive verb of relating; on the other hand, it signifies conduct, comportment, behavior. I will be using both renditions. — Tr.

themselves identical" (HE, 83 ff). The "unity of essence and existence," which completes itself in this progressive identification, is "actuality." We need not go into this transition in more detail. It can first be understood retrospectively in light of the explanation of actuality itself.

Actuality as the Fulfillment of Being

With the exposition of the concept of “actuality” (*Wirklichkeit*), Hegelian ontology reaches the dimension of the actual Being of beings. This form of being can now be determined in its “actuality” in accordance with the newly gained ontological concept. In a certain sense the *Logic* thereby comes to an end and the “Objective Logic” is completed. The transition to the “Subjective Logic,” effected in the passage from “actuality” to the “concept,” is completely different from those within the Objective Logic which had displayed a retrogression into new and ever deeper structures of beings. There is no transition from “actuality” to a more actual structure: the Subjective Logic means first, a “repetition” of the exposition of “actuality” in light of the *proper meaning* of actual being, and second, the exposition of that form of being which corresponds to this meaning of actuality. The Subjective Logic is thoroughly concerned with the meaning of “actuality” and with the most “actual” (*eigentliche*) mode of being, for it will be shown that *all* modes of being are possible only on the ground of “actuality” and as various modes of actual being; the Subjective Logic is concerned with the “universal” mode of being in general.

Only on this basis can we understand why Hegel includes the Doctrines of Being *and* of Essence in the “Objective Logic” and juxtaposes to both the “Subjective Logic” of the concept (*der Begriff*). The internal structure of the *Logic* is divided *not* into three, but into two parts. Hegel himself indicates this, for he introduces the exposition of “actuality” with the chapter on

the "Absolute." There is no going beyond the absolute, only an "exposition" of it, "exhibiting what it is" (L, II, 175). Significantly, this chapter is missing in the corresponding sections of the *Heidelberg* and the larger *Encyclopaedia*. But since these texts do not expose the ontology on which the system is based, but provide an outline of the system itself, in this context the presence of a chapter on the absolute would only be confusing and unintelligible.

In our opinion to do justice to the central place of this section, an exposition must first present it immanently and in its own terms. It will then be clarified in the course of the exposition, the extent to which actuality is the "unity of essence and existence," and the result and sublation of the preceding investigation.

Existence, as designating the Being of things which are (*seienden Dinge*), has proved to be a structure of relationality in a double sense: first, as the behavior of individual existents toward every factual determinacy of their thereness (*sich-verhalten*; self-related activity); second, as the ontologically appropriate universal interrelationship among individual existents, through which alone they are what they are. The *essence* of existents is contained within the process of development of this relationality. Because this process is an *immediate* one, existents have to be defined as "appearance," for what exists can only develop through this relation although it itself *is not* this relation. The process executes itself *through* it but is not *for* it. In order for appearance to become actuality, and for existents to become actual, this relation must be incorporated into their very existence. They must then let it develop out of their *very own* self: they must effectuate (*wirken*) the process. So long as this mode of being, on which all that is depends, is not arrived at, in the final analysis, being remains without essence. Its essence is intrinsic to it and is contained in it but it itself *is not* essential. Such being exists only as part of a whole, as the exteriority of an interior, as the expression of force, etc., and in each case the essential being is precisely what as an existing being it immediately is *not*: the whole, force itself, or interiority. There remains something that is not absorbed into and fully displayed by immediate existence, something that is merely

inward, despite the fact that or precisely because of the fact that it is one that exteriorizes itself. So long as something is still exteriorized, there remains something else which *has* not yet exteriorized itself and which is only at the interior. And so long as something is merely at the interior, actual being has not been attained. "It is essential to recognize that what comes first, since at the beginning it is . . . merely at the interior, for this reason is only immediate, passive being-there" (L, II, 153).

We meet here once more the deepest ground of Hegelian ontology on which the entire Doctrine of Being is based. In its highest and most proper sense, being is actual *being-there*, being as manifest. To be is to show, to manifest and to reveal oneself. All that is inner, that has not yet emerged and become external, is of an inferior value. All being that possesses an inner is not yet "absolute" being. The absolute is "the transparent externality, which is a *showing* of itself, a movement *out of* itself, but in such a way that this being-to-the-exterior (*Sein-nach-aussen*) is just as much inwardness itself" (L, II, 163). "The absolute, as this movement of the exposition which carries itself forward, is . . . exteriorization (*Äusserung*), not of an inner, and not against another; as absolute it is a manifesting of itself to itself, thus it is *actuality*" (L, II, 164). We return to this passage which already "translates" and reinterprets the essential Aristotelian definition of Being as *energeia*, as well as defining the character of the movement of actual being.

This highest meaning of Being is neither merely asserted nor simply adopted from ancient ontology. The entire Doctrine of Being and Essence should have shown that being (*das Seiende*) is of itself dependent on this truth and finds its own way to it. This demonstration is based on the fundamental phenomenon of Being as *motility*, and as capable of motility in virtue of the absolute negativity and dualism which it contains. Accordingly, all being is the process through which this movement between in-itselfness and being-there, essence and existence, inner and outer, possibility and actuality unfolds (we discuss later the dualism between possibility/actuality as the central phenomenon in the sphere of actuality). For this reason alone does absolute externality, actual being-there, pure self-manifestation, display the highest mode of being, for being is

never simply and immediately what it can and ought to be, but finds itself and moves itself within the difference of in-itselfness (potence) and existence. Only because being contains *dynamis* and *energeia* within itself, can it fulfill itself as pure *energeia*.

In order to correspond to this highest and most proper meaning of Being and to become *actual*, existing being, which is intrinsically an essential one, must absorb into its own very existence the essential relationality within which it already exists. This relation must proceed from its own self; its existence must effectuate this relation. When being posits its entire inwardness outside itself, it becomes actual. Force which achieves this process is a category of being itself. In the condensed exposition of the *Encyclopaedia*, this role of force as an aspect of being that actualizes actuality is clearer than in the *Logic*. "Through the exteriorization of force, the inner will be *posited* into existence; this *positing* . . . disappears in itself into immediacy, in which the inner and the outer are in and for themselves identical" (HE, 85; E, I, 281, §141). This force is neither an obscure force of nature, nor force in the sense of physics (this latter is analyzed by Hegel in the *Philosophy of Nature*, under the heading of "Absolute Mechanism"). Force concretizes the "potency" of being over and against being-there — a phenomenon visible from the beginning — and realizes the self-externalizing, self-manifesting motility in the dimension of existing beings which have emerged from essence. "The activity of force consists in expressing itself, that is . . . in the sublation of externality and in determining this latter to be that in which it is identical with itself" (L, II, 150). Accordingly, as the mode of being of an existent, actuality signifies the complete posit-edness of the inner to the exterior, of essence into existence. When an existent is *actual* this process has been completed. But the motility of being by no means comes to a standstill thereby. As actuality, it only assumes another character and another dimension.

We first want to consider what Hegel characterizes as "actuality" as it is at hand, in order then to develop the nature of its being and the mode of its motility. For this task we need in no way include in the phenomenon the results of our ontolog-

ical investigation till now; rather, they must unfold out of the phenomenon itself.

The starting point for understanding “actuality” in Hegel’s sense is once more the ontologically appropriate dualism and two dimensionality of this mode of being. Actuality is simply being-there, being-at-hand, being-present; yet *at the same time* it is *nothing* simple. All that *is* actual is always something *more*, something *other* than what is exactly there, at hand and present. Actuality possesses nothing merely inward. All inwardness has become manifest and is outside. The merely interior is nothing actual. Still the actual never completely pours itself out into the external. What makes the actual actual is that it has something “in-itself” (*an sich*), and is “in-itself.” This in-itself is neither simply dissolvable nor transferable to the given factual condition, to the present existence of the actual. The actual can transform itself and yet remain the same. It can be destroyed, but then *it* is the one destroyed, and this destruction also “belongs” to it in a sense. Even when it is completely dependent on it, the actual is in active control of its mode of being-there. It does not allow no matter what to happen to it, but resists certain kinds of occurrences, while offering itself to others. What actuality “intrinsically” (*an sich*) is, and what is still different from each individual circumstance of its existence as well as from the totality of these circumstances, has the most prominent feature of “*possibility*”. Actuality controls a certain horizon (*Umkreis*) of possible determinations, and in every case its mode of being-there realizes a certain possibility within this horizon. Hegel analyzes this dual dimension of actuality and possibility as the fundamental feature of actual being. “What is actual is possible.” This is the first premise of “actuality” (L, II, 171). Actuality “immediately contains in-itselfness (*Ansichsein*) or possibility.” At any point in time, the actual individual always exists there as *one* among its *many possible* determinations. It always exists “in the form of *one* of its determinations, distinguishing itself thereby as existent from in-itselfness (*Ansichsein*) or possibility” (L, II, 176). But it does not evaporate into its immediate determinations; it still is *more* than these and has other possibilities through which it can become actual. As this immediate being-there, it is “determined only as one pos-

sibility" (L, II, 173). Compared to its intrinsic being, to what it can still be in-itself, the fact that it exists precisely as this actual determinacy, is at first only "contingency": its "value" is merely being one possibility among many others (L, II, 176). In comparison to what it can be in-itself and according to its possibilities, every actual being exists as contingency. The actual exists in the dualism of contingency and possibility. "Possibility and contingency are moments of actuality" (E, I, 287, §145).

It is decisive that all the possibilities of an actual being are themselves in turn "real." "This possibility as the in-itselfness of real actuality is itself *real* possibility," "immediate existence" (L, II, 176), for in the sphere of actuality there is nothing that is merely inner; everything is "posited into existence." What is inner, namely essence, has here "essentially the determination . . . of being related to *being*, and of existing as immediate being" (L, II, 158). The possibilities constituting the intrinsic self of an actual are a multiplicity already existent somewhere. "The real possibility of a thing (*Sache*) is therefore the existing multiplicity of circumstances which relate themselves to it" (L, II, 176).

It is important to concretize this determination in light of a specific phenomenon: the upright tree in the forest can be hit by lightning, can collapse, can dry up, can be sawn as wood and utilized as construction material. All these possibilities belong to the in-itselfness of the tree; its actuality can pass through all of them. All these possibilities are themselves always already actually there: the electrically charged atmosphere, the woodcutters, the sawing mill, the building to which the planks will be transported, all exist somewhere. When they actually become possibilities of the tree, these plurality of possibilities also become an "existing multiplicity of circumstances" which "relate" themselves to the tree. The tree undergoes all its possibilities as actuality. It moves itself through them as "the same" tree.

In the higher sphere of human life as well, the "existent" character of possibility is identifiable. The *possibilities* which I have as an individual certainly are all in me but never all actualized and displayed. Seen from the standpoint of my current immediate existence, they are "not yet" and in the future. But even as these possibilities which have *not* yet been actualized by *me*, they still are always already actual. All of what I can become as this determinate individual is already there, *not* in the sense of a mystical predetermination, but in the sense that my concrete person depends on the "existing multiplicity of

circumstances” out of which and within which alone it *becomes* what is possible for it.

Every actuality is at the same time possibility in a double sense: on the one hand, the respective factual determinateness of the actual is a contingent and possible one over and against other determinations (the actual is itself only one possibility); on the other hand, possibility is “to actuality the essential” (E, I, 284, § 143), because the intrinsic being of actuality is always contained in other real possibilities besides the ones currently prevailing (the possible is the in-itselfness of the actual). The movement through which actuality first presents itself is the permanent alteration of the respective determinacies in which it is found: an “unmediated transformation” (*Umschlagen*) of each prevailing contingency into another possibility (*metaballein*), the “simple transformation” of actuality into possibility and vice versa (L, II, 174; 181). Immediate actuality is at first only “the absolute restlessness of the becoming of these two determinations” (L, II, 174).

But this manner of considering the motility of the actual does not do justice to the phenomenon. It is not at all the case that one contingency is “transformed” into another or that actuality blindly wanders through an endless series of contingencies. It is always the actual self that is actualized and “at work” throughout these possibilities. Indeed, actuality is always “transformed” into *its* possibilities; possibility constitutes the *intrinsic being* of actuality. When each contingency “immediately turns into its opposite, basically actuality itself *goes along* with it” (L, II, 174). Through this motility of the actual, an “identity of the same” throughout all contingencies is established: this identity is actuality’s necessity. In its very transition from possibility to possibility, actuality constitutes itself as *necessity*.

Let me try to review briefly the movement of actuality in light of the concrete unity of contingency, possibility, and necessity. The individual stages of Hegel’s exposition are necessarily condensed.

First, the respective contingency of the actual at any point in time must be taken into account. As the starting point of movement, this is a factual determinacy in which actuality hap-

pens to find itself. We have already seen that this contingent actuality had the “value” of an empty possibility and existed indeed as possibility for an *other* actuality, for another factual determinacy into which this actuality could be “transformed.” This contingent actuality “is therefore not its own possibility, but the in-itselfness of *an other* actual; it itself is the actuality which ought to be sublated, possibility as possibility *only*” (L, II, 177). It is the essence of the actual to be always *more* and *other* than what it is at any point. The immediate actuality which we find before us has in itself “the determination to be sublated,” to be the mere “*condition*” for another. Hegel expounds this aspect of actuality most precisely in the Addition of §146 of the *Encyclopaedia*: “Immediate actuality is in general never what it ought to be; rather, it is a finite actuality, divided in itself and its determination is to be consumed” (E, I, 291). Immediate being-there always constitutes a presupposition (*Voraussetzung*). This fact, which was definitive for the movement of “essence,” shows itself once more (see p. 73 above). Each immediate being-there is only a “presupposition” for the movement of the actual, for it is a contingency that must be absorbed by this movement, sublated by it and made into a condition for a new actuality. Thus “the other aspect of actuality” always constitutes its “essentiality” (E, I, 291 ff). “This new actuality, proceeding such” is “the proper interiority of immediate actuality, which it consumes.” In this movement, an actuality essentially *other* than the sublated one does not emerge, only the proper essentiality of the sublated actuality realizes itself in a new actuality. It will “not be another, for the first actuality will be posited according to its essence alone. The conditions which are sacrificed, which go to the ground and are consumed, only reunite with themselves in this other actuality” (Ibid.). Hegel writes: “Such in general is the process of actuality. The actual is not simply an immediate being, but as the essential being, it is the sublation of its own immediacy and with this the mediation of itself through itself” (Ibid.). It is thereby stated that *necessity* makes up the character of this movement. For actuality only unites itself with itself through its movement, and that into which it is “transformed” is no other than its own possibility, its own proper being (*Ansichsein*).

Hegel writes: "Real possibility and necessity are, therefore, only *seemingly* different. This is an identity that does not have to become, but is already presupposed and lies at the base" (L, II, 179).

When, however, "necessity" in the full sense of the term signifies a movement that proceeds from itself and returns to itself, then at this stage such a necessity has not been attained. For the movement examined here does have "a presupposition from which it begins; it has its starting point in the contingent" (L, II, 179). Certainly it returns to itself, but "it does not return from itself to itself" (L, II, 180). The factual immediacy in which the actual at first exists, and which presents only a contingency over and against its possibilities, is the ground for the fact that the necessity in the movement of the actual remains "relative." Actuality can never free itself from the contingency of its starting point and presupposition, but carries this within itself throughout. Necessity therefore is at bottom contingency! "Real necessity is *determinate* necessity . . . the determinateness of necessity consists in its containing its negation, contingency, within itself. This is what it has shown itself to be" (L, II, 180).

The point is not to juxtapose the essential contingency of all actuality *to* necessity, as is commonly done in everyday speech and partly in the philosophical tradition, but to grasp contingency to be the *ground* of necessity which makes actuality its own. This contingency is the final and deepest character of all being: it expresses once more the innermost dualism according to which all being (*alles Sein*) occurs as being (*als Seiendes*). From the very beginning, implicit being (*Ansichsein*) and being-there, essence and existence, actuality and possibility exist as the unity of a *dualism*. According to Hegel, the final significance of contingency is that it characterizes the *Being* of all finite things. The meaning of a "*perishing* being, which is contradictory in-itself," is given "immediately in contingency" (L, II, 62. Emphasis added). If we want to characterize, therefore, the fully realized concrete being, the "absolute actuality," we must include this contingency in its determination. Actuality can only be "absolute," and as actuality also necessity, when it has realized contingency as necessity, when necessity "by itself determines itself as contingency" (L, II, 179).

Actuality can absorb and display contingency only through its own *conduct* toward itself. Only a certain conduct of existing actuality toward its given, immediate factual determinacy can grasp this contingency as necessity and proceed from it as out of a genuine [and not merely contingent — Tr.] necessity. This condition, lying at the essence of actuality, is first fulfilled when the actual exists as *substance*.

The true “unity” of beings amid their motility which had been in sight from the very beginning of the *Logic*, is finally reached when actuality is determined as substance. In conformity with the fundamental phenomenon of “absolute difference,” we sought this unity of negativity, as an equality-with-self-in-otherness. We have now reached the final and most concrete definition of this negativity as contingency. As contingency, negativity is no longer an “other,” nothing merely external, or for that matter simply inner either. It is the immediate actuality of beings themselves. The “identity of beings” is now “unity as in their negation or as in *contingency*.” As such, it is substance as relation to itself” (L, II, 184). This analysis of the relation characteristic of substantiality as an “absolute relation” and as the most proper being of actuality, concludes the exposition of actuality and with it of the entire “Objective Logic.” This mode of being and motility will subsequently form the basis of the whole “Subjective Logic” of the “concept.” Substantiality, in turn, results from the motility of actuality as necessity. Hegel writes: “The concept of necessity is a very difficult one, precisely because it is the concept [*der Begriff*] itself,” and the concept “is the truth of necessity and contains the latter as sublated in it, just as necessity is *in itself* the concept” (E, I, 293 ff; §147 Addition). One must keep this in mind in order to understand the “transition” from actuality to the concept, which in fact is no transition! Being as substance is already *implicitly* being as the concept.

As the being of the actual, substantiality is defined from the outset as motility, and the latter is described as “actuality” (*Aktuosität*). The contingency in which the actual exists presents itself first as the accidentality (*Akzidentalität*) of a substance, which, in one way or another, seems to persist “in” this accidentality. This aspect though is only a semblance, for basically

substance and accidentality are identical, because we can never comprehend substance except through the totality of its accidents. But this does not imply the mere sum or abstract unity of these accidents; rather, this totality possesses the specific character of a wholeness determined by *potency* (*Mächtigkeit*). Along with the totality of its accidents, the actual which constitutes this totality also possesses a “power” (*Macht*) over all its accidents. In terms of concrete phenomena, the substantiality of a tree, for example, at first only appears to be a certain effective “power” that holds together its changing “conditions” as belonging to the “same” tree, and which, as a self-moving power, allows them to happen. It is the tree *itself* (what we want to designate as its substantiality) which moves itself across the range of its conditions and not the conditions which move themselves *around* the tree. The movement of accidentality is the movement of substance itself. “This movement of accidentality is *actuosity* of substance as a tranquil emergence out of itself. This is not active *against* something other, but only against itself as a simple unresisting element” (L, II, 186).

Actuosity concretizes the determination given earlier of “the absolute movement of actuality” as “movement proceeding from itself . . . such that this being-toward-outer is just as much inwardness itself.” As the mode of motility of substance, actuosity is also the power which absorbs the contingency of immediate actuality into the necessity of substance and “posits” it out of itself, for contingency will first become what it is when the actual existing within it has the power to proceed from this into another possible condition, that is to say, when it has the power to “sublate” it and to “lead it back into” another simple possibility (L, II, 187). Contingency is contingency only because the actual can go beyond it into another possibility; the given immediacy is the *beginning* of the movement of the actual, because the actual has *made* it into a beginning and has moved itself beyond it: “Only in the doing (*Tun*) which *sublates* the immediate, does this immediate itself become . . . beginning from self signifies the positing of this self from which it begins” (L, II, 186). As this powerful actuosity, the *motility* of actuality first provides the condition for the possibility of the difference among contingency, possibility, and necessity. Thus, these

modes of existent being no longer fall asunder and receive their "value" from somewhere outside but are united together into a movement out of which they emerge and in which they are sustained: "possibility and actuality are absolutely united in substantial necessity" (L, II, 187).

Defined more closely, this aspect of the positing power of actuality is "causality" (*Ursächlichkeit*). We have already seen that first through the movement of actuality itself does the contingent become contingency, and the immediate immediacy. As such, this movement is not simply there and transient but, through its existence, is related back to the actual which manifests itself in it. The factual condition in which the actual at any given point exists turns out to be in its very thereness a "posited-being" (*Gesetzsein*), "reflected-into-self," into the actual which in turn "exposes" itself in it. This factual condition is an "effect," posited and determined by another. "Over and against this positedness, which is reflected-into-self, against the determinate as determinate, stands substance as the non-posed original — as cause" (L, II, 190). On the other hand, the actual as substance does not merely posit the factual conditions as immediately originating and transpiring contingencies, indifferent to the being of substance; substance is "itself what it posits as negative or what it makes into positedness (*Gesetzsein*)" (L, II, 189). Not only does this immediacy first *become* through the movement of the actual sublating the given immediacy, but the actual *is* first actual through this sublating act of positing and through the causing of immediacy. The actual is only actual as this "power which posits determinations and which distinguishes them from itself" (L, II, 189), as this permanent being-beyond immediacy. Through this being-beyond, however, actuality first pre-poses (*voraus-setzt*)* this immediacy, and causes it as effect (L, II, 200). Thus this "presupposition" will be sublating into itself and will become truly a *pre-positing* and will be transformed from something pre-found into something *posited* and caused.

* For an explication of the relations between "presupposing" (*voraussetzen*), "positing" (*setzen*), and the motility of essence, the reader should consult the glossary under *voraussetzen* and *Wesen* — Tr.

“Substance, therefore, first gains actuality as cause.” “It is *actual* substance, because substance as power determines itself, but substance is at the same time cause, because it exhibits this determinateness or posits it as positedness. Thus it posits its actuality as positedness or as effect” (L, II, 190).

We must omit here the further characterization of the motility of substance as causality and reciprocity because they are already contained in the exposition given. We summarize them briefly.

Through its aspects of causality, the actual has a causal relationship not only to itself as the totality of its accidents but to other self-subsistent actual beings as well, for what it causes is itself something actual in turn. In this sphere of beings there exists nothing merely possible, merely accidental. At first a relationship emerges between an active and causally effective substance and a passive, posited and caused substance (L, II, 199 ff). But this way of looking at the matter arbitrarily freezes the self-enclosed movement of actuality into two segments. A more adequate depiction of this phenomenon would be the following.

An actual *A* is acted upon by another *B*. The immediate, factual determinacy, within which *A* exists, will be impinged upon by *B* and transformed. *B* appears as the alien cause, coming from the outside and exercising “violence,” such that *A* in its actuality as *A'* is there merely as posited by *B* and as caused externally. But *A* *will* first become itself through this effect which *B*, as alien cause, exercises upon it. *A* has first realized its actuality by passing into *A'* as a consequence of this effect. The immediate actuality, *A*, was not at all its intrinsic being, it was merely a possibility, a contingency. The *A'* into which it has changed is its intrinsic being, and so forth. “Through violence, passive substance is only posited as what it is *in truth*, namely, as something only posited, precisely because it is the simple positive or immediate substance. What it is beforehand as condition is only the semblance of immediacy, stripped off it through active causality” (L, II, 200). It is the proper, true actuality of the actual which fulfills itself through the causality of another actuality. Hegel summarizes the truth of the relation of causality in the following sentence: “Being

posited by another and its own becoming are one and the same” (L, II, 201).

Through the relation of causality, as it is in truth, actuality absorbs into itself its relationship to other beings, just as through the relation of substantiality, it had realized its own relation to self in the mode of a specific, given accidentality. The actual no longer exists “essentially,” but through “absolute relation,” more exactly, *as* absolute relation. Nothing comes to it merely from the outside, and it no longer possesses something merely inward; it no longer goes over into another (for all otherness is its own possibility which will be actualized in becoming other). Its contingency is its own necessity. The absolutely necessary and self-enclosed movement presents itself in its existence as follows: pure “exteriorization, not of an inner, not against another, but . . . only as absolute to manifest itself for itself” (L, II, 164). “Pure self-manifestation,” in other words, *energeia*.

A Summary Characterization of Actuality as Motility

The basic thrust of the preceding interpretation was to demonstrate that Hegel conceptualized the *Being* of actuality as *motility*; in fact, as the highest and most real form of motility. This should not imply that actuality always finds itself in movement as if it were first there and then set itself in motion. Rather, actuality constitutes itself through a distinctive mode of motility; actuality *can be* only as motility. Looking ahead, we have defined this movement in light of the Aristotelian category of *energeia*. This is neither arbitrary nor is it intended to express a mere historical affinity. In the course of the exposition of actuality, Hegel himself refers to this category several times. These references indicate what is essential to his determination of actuality. Thus in the *Heidelberg Encyclopaedia* he writes: “There are no transitions in actuality and its externality is its *energy*” (HE, 85. Emphasis added). The same is stated in the greater *Encyclopaedia* (I, 282, §142). In the addition to this paragraph, Hegel explicitly refers to the already given translation of *energeia* as the essential concept (*Wesensbegriff*) of actuality:

More precisely, Aristotle’s polemic against Plato is that the Platonic Idea is understood as mere *dynamis*. In contrast to this, it is claimed that the Idea, which both Plato and Aristotle understand as the only truth, must be considered essentially as *energeia*, that is to say, as an interiority which is wholly external. The Idea therefore, must be considered as the unity of the inner and the outer or as “actuality” in the emphatic sense assigned to the word here. (E, I, 284)

Certain passages from Hegel’s *Lectures on the History of Philoso-*

phy (cf. GPh, I, 34 ff) and Hegel's Aristotle interpretation in the second volume of this work also belong in this context. Whether Hegel's interpretation is consistent with what Aristotle himself meant by *energeia* will not be decided here. Through a general discussion of the motility of actuality, I try to make clear only by what right Hegel could refer to this category. I hope that this might serve as a preliminary contribution to an analysis of the internal relationship between Aristotelian and Hegelian ontologies.

The comprehensive determination of the motility of actuality is given by Hegel *before* the exposition of "actuality" in the chapter on the "Absolute."

According to the Doctrine of Essence, the Being of beings was defined as existence, and the latter's mode as appearance in a double sense: first as self-manifestation and, second, as the appearance of an other, of an inner, of an in-itselfness. Both meanings belong together: what merely appears is still not fully and properly there, manifest, outside itself. What appears, in that it appears, points to something *that* appears, and which is still *in the grips* (*begriffen*) of coming outside itself, and which is *grasped* (*begriffen*)* as what *is* still not outside. Appearance therefore is not the highest mode of being. What is there is not pure and complete; it is always something which is not there. The rupture and dualism within all being has not been completely eliminated; beings have not fully come out into thereness, into actuality. The movement of the being-there does not carry itself; its "basis" lies in another. Thus in appearance neither the complete thereness of being nor the proper movement belonging to it has been arrived at.

Beings, however, are dependent on such completeness and authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*). Precisely their inner dualism and rupture determines their being as an *ought* (which is not yet actualized — Tr.). This determination which we had first confronted in relation to the genesis of the something (see p. 58 above) is now concretized. Being not only ought to go beyond its given factual thereness, but it ought to "go beyond" in

*Marcuse's play on the various meanings of *greifen* and its derivatives like *begreifen* and *ergreifen* is analyzed in the glossary. — Tr.

general, more accurately, going beyond the given factual determination in each instance *is* in the final analysis no other than an exteriorization of oneself, a self-expression, a self-manifestation. Precisely because “in-itself” (*in sich*) being is never already there, it must at every moment bring this in-itselfness into thereness, it must bring it about. This takes place when being *is* simply there in all its thereness, when in every factual determinateness, its thereness is not simply something assigned to it (an attribute), such that one could still distinguish its in-itselfness from this. This happens when in its being-there being is only there as itself, when all its attributes are nothing other than “ways and modes of being” (L, II, 162). This being-there can no longer be named *appearance*; it is a “*shining-forth*,” a “semblance” (*Scheinen, phainestai*). “Just as the light of nature is neither something, nor a thing, but its being is its shining, likewise manifestation is the absolute actuality equal to itself” (L, II, 185).

Just as the light which shines does not merely pour itself out, but manifests itself exactly through this shining and through it alone, similarly, in the “visible exteriority” through which all that is inner becomes outer, actuality is self-appearing, self-expressing, self-showing, and manifesting. This “self” signifies that the mode of thereness of the actual is “energy,” a self-generation, being *actual*. The essential unity of all that is actual is constituted through this “energy”: the actual is not only “that which *is* equal to self, but that which posits itself as equal” (L, II, 163). The full and pure thereness of the actual is in each movement simultaneously a generated, posited being. Likewise, this posited being is always fully and purely thereness, “absolute being” (L, II, 163). All actuality is a relation to self; substance is a “relating to oneself” (L, II, 184). This self-relation is such that in every moment what relates itself to itself is there in this relation. It *is* as a self-relating. Insofar as being-for-others and being-other first constitute the actual as the unity of a self, this is just as much a relating to *others*. “Its relation to the other is its own manifestation” (L, II, 176).

The actual is fully there throughout all changing determinacies, and at the same time it is an identity sustaining itself throughout particular determinacies.

On the one hand, . . . the totality which . . . is originative as the reflection-into-self from determinateness, and as a simple whole which contains its positedness within itself, and is posited therein as self-identical — the *universal*; on the other hand, the totality . . . as . . . equally the reflection-into-self out of determinateness in order to reach negative determinateness, which as such is also posited as the self-identical determinateness, as the whole, but as the self-identical negativity: the individual. (L, II, 204)

These determinations which conclude the Objective Logic express in compressed form the crucial elements and at the same time are so formulated as to point the way to the subjective logic, to the Doctrine of the Concept. For this reason the definition cited is the most obscure and the most difficult. We attempt to distinguish from one another the decisive features of the nature of actuality implied therein with an eye to their future significance.

The fundamental factor holding together and giving unity to the dualism of actuality (expressed by Hegel as “on the one hand” and “on the other”) is “reflection-into-self.” Hegel has already introduced this in the course of explaining substantiality. Substance, as the “being in all beings,” is actuality as “absolute reflectedness-into-self” (L, II, 185). “Reflectedness-into-self” signifies no other than that mode of the being of the actual described many times as *self-relating*; indeed, as the unity of relating-to-self and the relating-of-self to others. It is a bending backward out of, and within, factual immediate determinateness toward the self; a holding onto the self (*ein An-sich-halten*), and the relating to one’s own process, whereby the process of genesis of the thereness of the actual becomes “a movement sustaining itself” (L, II, 164). We have already seen that the unity of the actual constitutes itself through this self-relating alone and constitutes its identity with itself as what is *common* through *all* determinacies and as the unity which is fully *there* in each individual determinacy qua pure self-manifestation. (How this self-relating identity attains the “logical” character of “universality” can be first explained in the context of the Doctrine of the Concept.) Self-relation or reflectedness-into-self will be characterized rightfully as the fundamental category of the Being of the actual. Furthermore, this category

is the central determination underlying Hegel's entire *Logic*. The Doctrines of Being and Essence, as well as the Doctrine of the Concept, will be developed on the basis of the knowledge that Being is motility and that motility is a self-relation. Hegel's entire ontology presents nothing more than the concrete unfolding of the fundamental mode of Being as self-relation throughout the various spheres of being.

Qua the being of the actual, self-relation has the additional characteristic of *negativity*. The self-subsistence of the actual can only be as "negative relation-to-self" (HE, 93; 96). For in every instance actuality is embedded in a determinateness which it itself is *not*; a determinateness which first will be made into the actuality of the actual, for the latter is *not* simply at peace in this determinateness but sublates it, goes beyond it, transforming it into necessity and thus prepositing it. All that is actual as unity finds itself there in the form of an individual factual determinateness. But it *is* actual in this determinateness insofar as it makes it into its negativity, insofar as its pure thereness always means a transcendence of and being-more than this determinateness. Actuality relates itself to the latter as its own limit and confinement. It *rests* in its respective facticity, in its given thereness, only in such a way that this rest is the condition of its movement, and rest first comes to be through this motility. The self-grounding quietitude of actuality is also a restfulness only because at any point it is the result of a movement: "The absolute cannot be a first, an immediate, but the absolute is essentially its own *result*" (L, II, 165).

This result-character of actuality is expressed in the statement that "being-in-and-for-itself first is through the fact that it is posited" (L, II, 216; cf. 214, 221). Taken in isolation as a given factual determinateness, what is (*das Seiende*) has the "value" of an empty possibility; it is what it can be only implicitly. It is a "passive substance," the powerless "originalness of the simple being-in-itself" (L, II, 214). In this condition, it suffers upon it the influence of another being; it is subject to the causality of an "active substance" alien to it. But as we have seen, being will first acquire the possibility of becoming what it actually is through this causality and through the sublation

of its respective determinateness (or presupposition). Through this causal influence

the presupposed (being), or that originality which is in-itself alone, will become *for-itself*. But this being-in-and-for-itself is possible only through this, that this positing is just as much a sublation of the presupposed or absolute substance has come to itself out of and within this positedness and is thereby absolute. (L, II, 216)

A determination which had been directing the analysis since the introduction of the category of for-itselfness (see above p. 62) is once more taken up here: the mere in-itselfness of beings never and nowhere constitutes their authentic (proper) being and their ontologically adequate truth and unity. Rather, what is in-itself must itself become *for-itself*, that is, beings must be able to “relate” to their thereness, must be capable of referring to themselves, and must contain and sustain their determinacies. Only through this can being really be “absolute.” We return to this fundamental determination.

The being of the actual constitutes itself as the “result” of a movement: it is posited-being in that double sense of the word. First, what is actual is always already posited (*Gesetztsein*) (presupposed, posited through an other actuality) and, second, it must reposit its positedness through the sublation of its own presupposition.

Self-relation, being-reflected-into-self, first make possible the “potency” of the actual over its own actuality and make possible substance as “absolute power” (L, II, 214). Because this self-relation is only always actual as self-manifestation, the power of the actual *is* thus no other than its self-relation and being reflected-to-self. This potency of the actual is basically negative; it is a power only as that self-absorbing contingency, existing on the basis of what is presupposed, as the sublation of immediacy. In the category of posited-being, “having been” qua the “Essence” of actuality once more finds expression. The actual generates its actuality always only out of what it has been; it is actual through and out of what it *has been*, through the sublation of its presupposition. The enigmatic sentence from the *Philosophy of Nature* is based on this: “It is the truth of time that not the future, but the *past* is its goal” (E, II, 66; §261, Addition. Emphasis added).

Let us once more summarize the meaning of actuality as the fulfillment of being.

First, we have gained that self-grounded unity of beings in their motility. The actual has in fact the power of its own actuality. It contains its own being-there in its self-relation and lets this happen out of itself. "Through its externality" it is "not drawn into the sphere of transformation . . . in its externality, it is *itself*, and is itself only in it, as the movement which distinguishes itself from itself and which is determining" (L, II, 170). We have further gained that mode of motility appropriate to this unity: relating-to-self and being effective within this relation is the true being-by-oneself-in-otherness, a movement which proceeds from itself and which is self-sustaining. Because the actual absorbs into itself its respective accidentality, sublates it and is effective out of it, it is "its own cause." The movement proceeds from it. It sustains itself, because it is nothing other than this sublating and the new positing of reflectedness-into-self. The movement of the actual has therefore the character of necessity. We thereby also arrive at the final concretization of the innermost rupture and dualism of being which is the ground of all motility: the potency of the actual is deeply negative; in general it is only as negativity.

When we take these determinations together in their structural unity, we see that they lack something and that this points to what they are not yet, which is not contained in them but which they themselves require. The potency of the actual is its self-relation as grasping, absorbing into self (sublating), and sustaining its own thereness. This potency as self-relation nonetheless still takes place through "blind necessity." The actual is not powerful enough to master its own potency. The latter occurs "in the obscurity of substances standing in a causal relation" (L, II, 219). This obscurity constitutes its deficiency. The actual still has not made the potency of its own being into posited-being and generated it itself. Its self-relation is not complete therefore. True and complete self-relation can occur only in the light and transparency of for-itselfness, when the gripping (*Ergreifen*) and groping (*Umgreifen*) of being-there becomes a *conceptual grasping* (*Begreifen*); only then does the blind necessity of power liberate itself. Like all being, the being of

the actual is first fulfilled when it has posited itself, when it reflects-itself-into-itself and emerges from itself: "This infinite reflection-into-self, through which in- and for-itselfness first becomes posited being, is the fulfillment of being. But this completion is no longer substance itself, but a higher one, the *concept*, the *subject*" (L, II, 216). The obscurity of actuality becomes "a clarity transparent to itself" when the actual is such that it grasps its there-ness, when substance exists as subject (L, II, 219).

The Comprehending Being (the Concept) as True Being. Substance as Subject

The conclusion to be drawn from the preceding interpretation of Being as self-relation, as reflectedness-into-self, is that conceptual activity (*der Begreifen*) is the most authentic being as well as the realization of actuality. The claim that the concept designates the most authentic actuality can be internally consistent only when being is viewed essentially as self-relation and when in-itselfness culminates in for-itselfness. In this case the structure of self-relation which has reached inner completeness has become one with the intrinsically fulfilled mode of being. Only on the basis of this presupposition can it be maintained that the total transparency and clarity of comprehension, which at first represents the truth of self-relationality alone, constitutes the truth of being and of essence as well. However (and we have already pointed to this in the first two sections of this work), the claim that being is self-relationality and the conception of “absolute difference” on which it is based result from an orientation to the idea of the *knowing I*, more precisely, from a specific interpretation of the transcendental “original synthetic unity.” From the very beginning, *comprehending being* (*das begreifende Sein*) was before our eyes as authentic being. We analyze the relationship between these two leading themes of Hegelian ontology in the second half of this work.

The interpretation of Being as self-relationality actually runs throughout the Hegelian ontology from the determination of the simple immediate something to the determination of the “Absolute Idea.” We have already pointed out that Hegel de-

fines “being” as (simple) “relatedness to self” (*Beziehung auf sich*). A glance at the chapter titles of the *Jena Logic* shows that here the divisions into sections correspond to various modes of “relatedness” or “relation” (*Verhältnis*): Part I is “Simple Relatedness”; part II, “The Relation” — (a) the Relation of Being and (b) the Relation of Thought; part III, “Proportion.” In the *Logic* the different modes of being are treated as different modes of this “relatedness to self”: beginning from the immediate, simple relatedness of the something to itself, we move to the measure relation of quantitative being, to the reflection of essence and finally to the “absolute relation” extending from actuality to the concept. These modes of self-relating correspond to different modes of motility: change, transition to another, seeming, appearance, self-manifestation, self-unfolding. The claim that being is self-relationality is structurally related to the interpretation of Being as motility and thereby to the fundamental phenomenon of the “absolute difference” between in-itselfness (*Ansichsein*) and being-there (*Dasein*). Only because all being is fundamentally ruptured and split can it and must it develop as the ever new re-enacting and sublating of this dualism. As the “relatedness” of being-there to in-itselfness, as a mode of self-relating to what it is at any point, being must necessarily and recurrently “sublate” its being-thereness in order to be at all. On account of this innermost dualism, all being can remain by itself when it has posited itself into every one of its determinations and when it has attained its in- and for-itselfness first and foremost as “posited being.”

This interpretation of being as self-relationality is compelling when considered in the light of the original phenomenon of “absolute difference”: what forces this interpretation on us is what is inherent in the phenomenon itself. We return to this point when discussing judgment (*Urteil*) as an original dividing (*Ur-teilung*). Now we want to show that the interpretation of being as self-relationality is adequate to the matter at hand also when we follow another theme. This theme is not explicitly analyzed by Hegel himself; nonetheless, it stands clearly in sight and with the Doctrine of “Objectivity” becomes incorporated into the overall direction of the *Logic*.

In the course of this discussion, Hegel first ascribes “objec-

tivity” to being in the mode of in-and-for-itselfness: “This being is . . . a fact (*Sache*) that is in-and-for-itself — objectivity.” Only an actual being which is *for-itself* in its in-itselfness, which relates itself to its own implicit conduct (*ansichseienden Verhalten*), which comprehends its own being, is “objective.” Hegel says: “Rational principles, perfect artworks, etc. . . . are called *objective* insofar as they are free and above all contingency. Although rational theoretical and ethical principles only belong to *subjectivity*, to consciousness, nevertheless their in-and-for-itselfness will be named *objective*” (L, II, 358. Emphasis added). The ontological mode of “objectivity” thus contains the traditional concepts of objectivity and subjectivity. Objectivity is not constituted in opposition to the mode of being of subjectivity but is purely a mode of being as self-relating, namely, as in-and-for-itselfness. A *res extensa* as well as a *res cogitans* can be “objectivity,” insofar as both are in the mode of in-and-for-itselfness.

Objectivity is what being is in-and-for-itself and not for *another* (the cognizing subjectivity). Hegel here makes use of everyday language in its proper significance. I can properly speak of “the fact of the matter” (*Sache*), when this has a being in the sense of for-itselfness, when what constitutes the objectivity of the matter is in a certain sense *there* “for” it as well. When I say “this is really the fact of the matter” (it is objectively so), this can only mean: it *contains* this determination within itself and *conducts* itself (*verhält sich*) so in it. Only when the Being of beings is itself a self-relating (self-comportment), whatever its specific form, can one speak of “objectivity” in contrast to a merely subjective determination. In everyday language this same thought is expressed with “*Es verhält sich wirklich so*,” saying literally “it really behaves so” to mean “such indeed is the case.” The only possibility of “demonstrating” the objectivity of a matter is to expose its *genesis*, to show its being to consist in the multifaceted development of its own conduct, to exhibit that this being is a having-become, in which it “posits” every one of its determinacies through its relation to itself and to other beings. Exactly the proper sense of objectivity requires from us that we consider it as “subject,” as a being whose Being is a self-relating that is in-and-for-itself.

This perspective forces Hegel to interpret being as self-relationality and to view actual self-relating as an in-and-for-itselfness. We saw that the in-and-for-itselfness exhibited by "actuality" was incomplete and did not yet exist in the full range of the possibilities embodied in it; it developed in blind necessity and darkness but did not yet unfold itself via the self-transparent clarity and freedom of comprehension and had not yet become a posited being "for itself." First, when self-relating has emancipated itself to the point of such clarity, being exists in the most adequate form of Being, as *subject* in the proper sense, as the *I*.

Thus when Hegel now claims that Being in the mode of the *I* is the most authentic Being, this is perfectly consistent with his predominant ontological orientation. The *Being* of the *I* is considered to consist in comprehending activity, and the latter is viewed as the most complete form of Being qua self-relating. The "I" is placed here at the center of ontology as *Being's* most distinguished mode and indeed as that mode of Being which, through its very existence, fulfills all the exigencies implicit in beings themselves.

In the first place, the "I" is the fullest and most actual being-by-oneself-in-otherness, an essential, self-grounded unity, free of all transition (to otherness). It is not so immediately or necessarily but as the continuous, transparent, and free relation to self, as the constant recovery of itself from negativity. The *I* is

first this pure unity that refers to itself, and it is so not immediately but through abstracting from all determinateness and content and withdrawing into the freedom of limitless equality with self. As such it is universality; a unity, which is unity with self, only through that negative conduct which appears as abstracting and which thereby contains all determinate being (*Bestimmtheit*) as dissolved in it. (L, II, 220)

Second, it is just as essential to the *I*, however, that it exists as itself not only as a single factual determinacy, which it implicitly possesses but that it relates to this as to its own negativity. The *I* posits this determinateness by taking it up and sublating it. The *I* exists only as positedness and can exist only as such: "In the second place, the *I* as the self-referring ne-

gativity is no less immediately *Individuality*, absolute determinedness, juxtaposing itself to all that is other and excluding it: individual personality” (L, II, 220).

The I is therefore “absolute *universality* which is just as much absolute *individuation*, an in-and-for-itselfness which is purely positedness and which is in-and-for-itselfness only through the unity with positedness” (L, II, 220 ff). All the determinations which realized themselves in the mode of Being of actuality (as substantiality) still obscurely and as through a necessary development, attain transparent clarity and free development with the Being of the I. The I is thus the “proper and necessary continued determination of substance,” the pure manifestation of what substance is already “in-itself,” or the true self-manifestation of actuality (L, II, 214).

Hegel now claims that these determinations constitute “the nature of the *I* as well as of the *concept*.” “We can understand nothing about the one or the other, unless the indicated moments are grasped simultaneously both in their abstraction and in their perfect unity” (L, II, 221).

How can the living unity of the I have the “same nature” as the logical unity of the concept? What kind of an essential commonality exists between the equality-with-self of the I which posits itself as self-equal through the individuation of its existence in virtue of its freedom, and the logical universality of the concept? How can the highest unity of beings and the most genuine Being be determined as the logical unity and the logical Being of the concept?

According to Hegel, the I (the comprehending being) is a mode of the “existence” of the concept: “The concept, insofar as it has developed into such an existence which is free is none other than I” (L, II, 220). When in the being of the I the concept attains free existence, then the concept as such must signify a certain mode of being. The common essential determination in which the “identity” of the I and of the concept is grounded is “freedom.” “The realm of freedom has opened itself up with the concept.” It is the “free one” (L, II, 218), “and the concept, insofar as it has developed into a being which is itself free is none other than the I” (L, II, 220). Freedom is the determination of being as self-relation: a for-itselfness that

sublates and absorbs into its own essence every necessarily emerging negativity, every otherness and being-for-another in such a way that it “posits” itself into this negativity. It does not immediately “fall” into the determination of its existence, but becomes free *for it*. Such a self-relation presupposes that all preceding determinacies are “transparently” and “clearly” in front of one. Such a self-relation is thus possible only as a comprehending and grasping being, when a “self” that is equal-to-self unites the other of itself with itself. Freedom has essentially the character of subjectivity (of being-subject); free-being is present as the “existence” of the comprehending I. This freedom of the I is to be formed through the distinctive relationship between “universality” and “individuality” qua modes of existence of the concept.

If freedom is essentially a determination of the being of the subject, then the “concept” as the free being must be fundamentally a mode of subjectivity. It can become an object of comprehension, what is conceived (*das Begriffene*), first on the basis of this subjectivity. Indeed, Hegel defines the “concept” primarily as the subject of the comprehending being.¹

To document this primary significance of the concept as the subject of conceiving, as he whos conceives (in the active sense!), a few characteristic passages are cited: The concept is “the subject as such,” “that which is effective plain and simple” (HE, 98 ff); “the principle of all life,” “activity” (E, I, 319, 323). It is the “soul of the concrete,” “the forming and creating” (L, II, 246); “relatedness to itself” (L, II, 241, relation) and thereby “in-itself” and “for-itself” (Ibid. and L, II, 260). Exactly through this being as *subject*, through this active function, the concept will become a principle, the ground and truth of all being. The entire third book of the *Logic* is devoted to showing how the concept “forms” reality “in and out of itself” (L, II, 229).

The concept is a mode of being, and the universality of the concept is a mode of self-relating, and not an existent being, for being is always an individuation of universality, namely, individuality. But when existing being is an actual individuality which is “in-and-for-itself,” it possesses this actuality only in virtue of something which behaves throughout every here and now as self-same: this derives from its “universal nature” as it

is entailed by the concept of this being. The genuine concept is not accidental universality abstracted from individuality. The concept is by no means a product of the mere understanding alone but encompasses the actual and intrinsic Being of beings. On the other hand, being *is* actual and authentic only “through its concept.” Qua the “universal nature of beings” the concept designates their true being whereby they are what they are. The concept lies at the ground (*subjectum*) of each individuality as what is always the same; this being-at-the-ground is a self-relating (the subject as I).

Only when it has found its “concept” does being wholly exist as what it truly is, that is, when all singularities are posited through its concept and are contained in the universality of its concept. Only then does “the realm of freedom open itself for it”; it is then free to be what it truly is. But such an existence is possible only for a comprehending being. Only what comprehends itself can exist in the truth and freedom of its concept, and this is life as self-consciousness.

But what does the being so characterized have to do with what has been called the “concept” in the *Logic* all along? Hegel himself poses this question numerous times (L, II, 219 ff; E, I, 316 ff). His answer is given via an extensive reference to Kant’s deduction of the categories, and in this context he also clarifies the true relationship between the I and the concept, and the “identity” of their “nature.”

“The object . . . is that in whose concept the manifold of a given intuition is *united*.” Hegel places this sentence from Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* at the head of his interpretation. Kant proceeds to determine “objectivity” and “objective validity” on the basis of the *concept* of an object, more precisely, in relation to the *synthesis* of the conceiving I taking place via the concept. There is no “objectivity” without the synthesis of the I. This synthesis constitutes the essence (the “nature”) of the concept and thereby of “objectivity.” Hegel does not mean thereby the mere conceptual synthesis of the “understanding,” or even of mere “representation,” but the “transcendental unity of apperception” which first makes this synthesis possible (L, II, 221 ff; Hegel here reduces the various stages of Kant’s deduction to extreme brevity). Kant has thereby shown that the concept is

“that whereby something is not a mere mode of feeling, an intuition or even a mere representation, but an object” (L, II, 222). But the concept is not “a faculty or property” of the I, something that I have (“just as I have a dress, color and other external properties,”) but the being of the I itself. The original synthetic unity of apperception in which the concept is grounded and through which it develops is nothing other than “the unity of the I with itself.” Hegel thus places at the end of his interpretation the sentence which expresses the identity of object and concept, of the concept and the I. The object has its objectivity in the concept and the concept is “no other than the nature of self-consciousness, has no other moments or determinations than the I itself.”

It is clear that this interpretation of Kant already presupposes the transformation of transcendental apperception into an ontological principle² as was analyzed in the second chapter. We return to this passage and its presuppositions later (cf. Ch. 15). Hegel expressly discusses his opposition to Kant on this point. It is decisive for Hegel that the transcendental apperception is not “something merely subjective,” not at all a human subjectivity (knowledge) “juxtaposed” to objectivity (L, II, 223), but, as we also saw at the beginning of this work, this subjectivity belongs to objectivity and is the “principle” of the object itself. Formulated paradoxically, human consciousness does not grasp objectivity, not even in its transcendental form; rather, conceiving is the doing and essence of objectivity itself. Conceptual activity and human concepts can be true and reach the essence of objectivity only because conceptual activity constitutes the essence of objectivity. Only because the object is “first through its concept in truth” (L, II, 229) can it be transformed into an “in-and-for-itselfness” through the conceiving activity of human consciousness (L, II, 222). Only because conceiving activity is the true and genuine Being of beings, realizing itself in the concept, can the conceptual activity of humans reach the true Being of beings, and the concept come to signify true Being from this point of view as well.

Thus “the concept is to be regarded not as an act of the self-conscious understanding, not as the subjective understanding, but as a concept in- and for-itself which constitutes a stage of

nature as well as of Spirit" (L, II, 224). Accordingly, Hegel maintains against Kant that the "stages presupposed" by the foundational science of *Logic* are not epistemological-psychological ones of feeling, intuition, and representation but ontological stages of *being* and *essence* (L, II, 223). The concept is at one and the same time the "ground" and the "truth" of being and essence; it has a concrete genesis and a concrete becoming, as exposed in the first two books of the *Logic*.

In addition to the above interpretation of the Kantian doctrine of the concept, Hegel also introduces everyday linguistic usage as evidence to support this objectively concrete modality of the concept. "One speaks of the deduction of a content, as for example, in the case of juridical determinations concerning property out of the concept of property and vice versa by leading such a content back to its concept. It is acknowledged thereby that the concept is not merely a contentless form, for if it were so, on the one hand, nothing could be deduced from it, and on the other hand, by leading a given content back to the empty form of the concept, one would rob this content of its determinacy, but would not be led to recognize it" (E, I, 317, §160, Addition: cf. 324, §164 Conclusion). When one speaks of the concept in such concrete fashion, one cannot mean thereby the empty determination of thought, the result of an empty abstraction. The concept of property signifies that on account of which and in respect to which all particular historical forms of property come to be what they are. It is what allows these different forms to emerge out of itself (the concept as "the ground of being") in the form of a development (HE, 96). The concept implicitly contains these determinations in itself and grasps them comprehensively (the concept as universality and totality). This is illuminating: should the concept fulfill these concrete functions, it must be more concrete than every concrete individual. It must be the unity of all individual forms which have developed out of it and which are encompassed and comprehended by it; furthermore, this unity must not be forced together but must be one that has grown together. Thus Hegel names the concept "the concrete as such." "All else which is concrete is not so concrete, and least of all what in the usual sense of this word refers to a manifold that is externally held together" (HE, 99 ff; E, I, §164). As opposed to the sensual element which is at hand here and now, the concept is "abstract"; one cannot grasp it with the hand, and "when it comes to the concept, hearing and sight as such have abandoned us" (HE, §164, Addition). In this sense thinking is an "element" of the concept (Ibid., 164). In the example of property given above, for Hegel the "concept" means a concrete-historical content (*Sachver-*

halt). At the same time this signifies the “metaphysical” situation of humans in history out of which forms of property develop as the essentially appropriate reaction of humans to this situation. All these forms of property are to be “deduced” from this situation and “led back” to it. Or, as we would formulate in current terminology, the concept of “property” signifies the essential aspect of “property” in its concrete-historical content. Two things are decisive about this: first, this essential aspect is viewed thoroughly in its historical “actuality,” as something that has caused and developed concrete forms of property as a historical force and power. The character of the concept as “subject” of this process, as activity, must be totally maintained. Hegel at one point names the concept qua individuality “simply what is effective” (HE, 98; E, I, §163). Second, the concretization of the concept should not be so understood as if it were a unique, originary situation in the sense that all forms which emerged and developed out of it were left behind and the concept were to convert them into a mere past. The concept of property remains present through all specific property forms. It is there in each individual form, particularizing and individuating itself through it. This unity of universality and particularity or the individuation of the totality of the concept constitute the central determination of its being. It is the highest stage of absolute difference, finding its expression in “judgment.” We want to analyze this aspect of the concept briefly in the following with relation to the theory of judgment.

The Mode of Being of the Concept: The Individuation of Universality. Judgment and Conclusion

The thesis that substance is subject and the true subject, the “concept,” can be explained preliminarily with reference to the meaning of Being as “self-relating.” “Subject” does not primarily designate the being of the human I (the human mode of consciousness) but refers in general to the distinctive form of self-relating, namely to being in the mode of an in-and-for-itselfness that comprehends. *Human* subjectivity is only a specific, albeit exemplary, mode of such being. When the “concept,” the true substance, is considered subject, then “concept” refers primarily to the subject and not to the object of an in-and-for-itselfness that comprehends, and this is an actual and actualizing “creative power” (see p. 116 above).

In the course of the exposition of the meaning of Being, the “concept” was introduced as a distinctive form of the unifying unity of absolute difference on account of the relation between “universality” and “singularity” (*Einzelheit*) realized by it (p. 115 above). Precisely this relation between universality and singularity constituted the character of the concept as subject, just as conversely the character of the “I” as subject was defined with respect the “logical” relation of universality and singularity. First, then, we must clarify the extent to which the concept attains this truly subject-character on the basis of the unity realized by it and to what extent the concept is an in-and-for-itselfness that comprehends. We begin with that essential determination of the “universality” of the concept given by Hegel.

The concept is . . . the absolute self-identity only as the negation of negation or as the infinite unity of negativity with itself. This *pure relation* of the concept to itself is as one positing itself through negativity, and is the *universality* of the concept. (L, II, 240)

The universality of the concept is thus a relation of the concept to itself; indeed, this relation is one that negates and *sublates* the former negation of the concept (here this means its former singularity). The universality of the concept attains equality-with-self through the sublating unification with negativity; it is essentially a *negative* unity. This equality-with-self first *is* in that it “posits” itself; it takes place through that process of sublating negativity. Such a unity, however, is possible only as a specific form of self-relating, namely, as being in the mode of “for-itselfness” reflected-into-self. This “for-itselfness” is self-actualizing; it is being in the mode of subjectivity and of the I. Insofar as the concept was said to constitute the Being and evolution of *beings themselves* (see above p. 117) the self-actualizing for-itselfness of the concept must present an “objective” process of beings. How can Hegel explicate such a process?

One can best gain access to this by beginning with the character of the concept as “principle.”¹ “The concept is that which resides in the things themselves; whereby they are what they are” (E, I, 328 ff, §166 Addition). “*Whereby* they are what they are” means the universality of the concept is the ground and originating point (*arché*) of the singularities comprehended through it. It is through which and from which the determinateness of each existing singularity issues, and the existing singularity *is* actual only insofar as it is determined through the concept. The concept is “the *principle* of its differences”; “the principle contains the beginning and essence of its development and realization” (L, II, 250). This sentence definitely indicates the originary (*ursprüngliche*) dimension of the “concept.” In relation to the singularities, the universality of the concept presents a *process* in which a “principle” decomposes itself into its elements and “develops” and “realizes” itself in such a way that it remains “the beginning and the essence” of what becomes real through this development and comes into existence as a determinate singularity. Qua “origin,” the uni-

versality of the concept allows these singularities to emerge from itself, and qua “essence” it contains these singularities in its equality-with-self. It does not allow these to trail off into contingency but as their true actuality remains effective and present within them. Universality is “what particularizes itself (*sich selbst Besondernde*) and what remains by itself in its other in unclouded clarity” (E, I, 321, §163, Addition 1). Universality is a process which individuates (*vereinzelt*) itself; it is “activity.” “creative power.”

When Hegel ascribes self-particularization and self-individuation to the universality of the concept and describes its universality “as actuality pure and simple,” as “creative power,” the concept, as was already suggested, becomes visible as *telos*, as the universality of the *species* (*Gattung*). In the strict sense of the term, for Hegel every concept is of a “species” (kind) and for him there are only species-concepts (*Gattungsbegriffe*). “Kind” or “species” are not restricted to beings in the “natural” realm. The “I” as well, as an in-and-for-itselfness that comprehends, is a kind. Indeed, as we will show, the “I” is the kind or species *par excellence!* Through the term “species,” the true originary dimension of the concept has been indicated, namely the Being and process of becoming of “Life.” The second part of this work is concerned with analyzing these relations.

In order to clarify the terms “kind” or “species,” we can say preliminarily that “species” primarily means for Hegel a specific mode of *motility* and *process* (genesis), a mode through which being moves itself. More precisely, in such a movement a universal unfolds itself out of itself and realizes itself, in that it particularizes itself into the individual distinctions of its existence by decomposing its essence into its elements.² For example, the being grasped by the concept “human” is a concrete mode of being amid the totality of beings. The universal, which so unfolds and individuates itself, the concept as “principle” of the species, is not separable from its distinctions but only actual in them and as individualities. These in turn never exhaust the essence of universality; they are much more a particularization, limitation, and “negation” of the same. It is the “fate” of universality to “lose” itself in its individuations, to “fall” into them. Universality is what it is only through absolute difference. In-

sofar as it can first become actuality through the process of individuation, this "loss" of itself is at the same time "the absolute return ... into self" (L, II, 253).

In light of the process characteristic of the species, it becomes tentatively clear why the unity of the concept constituting itself in the relation of universality to individuality can be the highest form of unifying unity. The universality of the concept is "actual" in its individualities in the emphatic sense of "actuality": through its self-individuation this universality causes itself as well as its individualities to become and is active only insofar as it is individuated.

Now, because the individuation of the universal concept, understood in light of the species' process, signifies an in-and-for-itselfness that comprehends, the term "comprehending" (*Begreifen*) must also be interpreted in the broader sense suggested by the term "species." In accordance with its "universal form," every being existing as an actual species member is also a comprehending being, for absolute difference is unified in it in such a way that every emerging negativity is sublated in the self-identical "principle." This principle grips and grasps its corresponding differences. It holds unto them through its potency and relates itself to them. It is thereby expressed, however, that the concept itself has different stages and forms, that there are different modes of conceptualizing corresponding to the various modes of species, process, extending from mere organic life to the life of consciousness, and Spirit. The individuation of the concept can be more or less affected by the "darkness" of necessity; the concept "free" in-and-for-itself can nonetheless be immersed in its own unfreedom and opacity, as is the case with the organic being of "nature" (E, I, §161 and 164). (This problem is further analyzed in the last two sections of the "Subjective Logic.") After these preliminary clarifications, let us try to interpret the individuation of the concept as the originary dividing (*Ur-teilung*)* of beings.

We have already seen that the universal concept is nowhere

* Etymologically, the German term "*Urteil*" (judgment) is composed of the prefix "*Ur*" and the root "*teilen*." Rendered into English this would signify "originary dividing, parting." Both Hegel and Marcuse play on the etymology of the term: a judgment divides and unites subject and predicate, substance and attribute — Tr.

and never as such actual, but can only be so through its individuation. "Just as immediately, universality is in- and for-itself particularity, so too immediately, in- and for-itself particularity is individuality" (L, II, 253). Individuality is the final, indivisible, and immediate determination through which the concept exists: it alone is "a qualitative one or a thing" (L, II, 263), the single and true "actuality" of the concept. Therefore Hegel can say in the *Encyclopaedia*: "The individual is the same as the actual," and indeed "simply as what is effective ... it no longer is like cause and appearance, a mode of effecting another, but the effecting of itself" (HE, 98; E, I, §163). (Once again it is hinted that the sphere of the "concept" does not go beyond that of "actuality"; the individuality of the concept is "the same as actuality," actuality as it really *is* and not as it *appears*, as cause, effect, or substance in the reciprocal relation to other beings but such as it is seen to be the individuality of the concept. The actual *is* simply itself qua the "effectuating of its own self.") Absolute difference is thereby posited into the realm of the concept, for the individual is, according to its being, a "loss," the becoming finite of the universal. Individuation is necessarily negativity; the concept has "lost" itself in it (L, II, 264) in such a way that through this loss it is first by itself and has returned to itself from it. At this stage, absolute difference is likewise absolute unity; the concept remains by itself in its individuation. "Its return into self is therefore the absolute, original *dividing* (*Teilung*) of itself or as individuality it is posited as judgment" (L, II, 264).

It is hardly necessary to reemphasize that the Hegelian theory of judgment does not treat this as a form of thought or knowledge or as a logical image but as the foundational phenomenon of *Being* itself which can be uncovered and completed only through human judgment. Hegel's theory concerns the original division of Being into the absolute difference of in-itselfness and being-there, "concept," and "being." This fundamental phenomenon has been a leading theme of our interpretation from the very beginning; in considering the actual theory of judgment, we can therefore restrict ourselves to what is essential for our interests.

Through the fact that the universal self-equality of the con-

cept individuates itself, the concept posits itself as judgment. It exists as different from its universality, as lost and fallen into its “absolute negativity.” But it can exist *only* through individuation. It gains its “actuality” by losing itself; “judgment can therefore be called the proximate realization of the concept, insofar as reality in general designates the stepping into *existence* (*Dasein*) as a *determinate* being” (L, II, 264 ff). Judgment then signifies an ontological mode (*Seinsweise*) of beings, a “determination of the object itself” or, as the paradoxical formulation in the *Encyclopaedia* puts it, “all things are a judgment” (HE, 103; E, I, 329, §167). Every being as an existing being is in turn a factually determinate one, existing as different from its “in-itselfness.” It is “immediately in-itself the being of another,” an “essentially contingent one,” having the value of mere possibility, as the particular (and thereby negative) individuation of its inner “totality.” All the features of absolute difference with which we have become familiar since the beginning of the *Logic* are now traced back to judgment as the most “authentic” expression of this difference: the in-itselfness of beings is in truth their “universal concept,” and their existence, the individuation of this concept.

The standpoint of the concept is *finitude*, and the finitude of things consists of the same that they are judgment, that their existence and universal nature (their body and soul) are indeed united. Things would be nothing were it not for the fact that these totally different moments of theirs are thoroughly separable. (E, I, 330; §168; cf. *Heidelberg Encyclopaedia*, 104)

Judgment is not only the real “form” of beings but also the real “form” of their motility. “That the universal which is in-itself descends into existence through the individual or becomes a for-itselfness” thereby — “this significance of judgment is to be taken as its objective meaning and at the same time as the *truth* of the earlier forms of *transition*” (L, II, 269. Emphasis added). The “changes” undergone by the being-there, the “perishing” of finite beings, the “falling to the ground” of appearance, the “self-manifestation” of substance — “this going over into and semblance has now passed over into the original division of the concept” (L, II, 269). All these forms of motility

are likewise only “forms” with which the concept “dresses up” its differences. In the final analysis and in truth, they are to be seen as forms of judgment unfolding out of the immanent movement of the concept. They are concrete figures, realizations of absolute difference, modes of the relation of universality and individuality.

We cannot pursue here this unfolding of various forms of judgment out of absolute difference. As the first ontological theory of judgment, it belongs among the central aspects of Hegel’s *Logic* and has not been adequately interpreted until today. Such a task transcends the framework of our investigation. We abstract from it only those elements that are decisive for our purpose.

Although Hegel convincingly demonstrates that what is meant and treated as judgment by ordinary linguistic usage aims at the same ontological content as discovered by him, the treatment of judgment in the formal logic is not fitted into this framework. Insofar as Hegel attempts to do so and insists on the traditional “table of judgments,” he confuses and obscures the great aspect of his own doctrine.

Hegel sharply polemicizes against the “prejudice” of traditional logic in orienting itself to “judgments” like “The rose is red,” “This wall is green.” Ordinary linguistic usage would never allow these to be genuine judgments for they are essentially “untrue” forms of judging (L, II, 274; HE, 105 ff; E, I, 333 ff, §171, Addition, and 343, §178). Every authentic judgment attempts to express the absolute difference of being: it considers the individual existent in the light of its Being and actuality in the light of its concept. It proceeds from that ordinary fact of the “inappropriateness,” “accidentality” of an individual being in relation to its “intrinsic being” and to its “universal nature.” Beings can be adequate or inadequate only because Being itself is essentially a “potence” which presents and maintains itself in the negative as power. Every true judgment is a form of “measuring”: it measures the existent in relation to its intrinsic being; it judges the fact of “correspondence or non-correspondence” (L, II, 307), or “appropriateness or inappropriateness” (L, II, 303); it considers being as an “ought” that provides the measuring yard in light of which

to consider beings (L, II, 302). Therefore the true predicates of judgment are “good, bad, true, beautiful, right, etc.” They express that the “matter (*die Sache*) is measured in relation to its universal concept, presupposed as an ought and with which it is or is not in agreement” (L, II, 302). Such judgments compare individual “objects with what ought to be” (E, I, 334; §171 Addition). These predicates are thoroughly “predicates of the objects themselves,” and do not exist in “subjective consciousness” alone (L, II, 304). When I judge this house to be bad and this action to be good, I have in view the concept or the “universal nature” of the house or of the action, in relation to which and in accordance with the absolute difference (they contain — Tr.) this house or this action are “inadequate,” “accidental” or “possible.” This universal nature relates to individual forms as the ought does to “being”:

“The subject of a judgment is a concrete individual in general; the predicate expresses this individuality as the relation of its actuality, determinateness or constitution to its concept. (This house is bad; this action is good.) More precisely therefore it involves (a) that the subject *ought* to be something; its universal nature has posited itself as the independent concept, and that (b) particularity, which ... on account of its express differentiation from its independent universal nature is as *external* existence with such and such a constitution, this latter is . . . indifferent to the universal and can be adequate to it or not. (L, II, 303)

Or as the sharp formulation of the *Jena Logic* states, “The judgment is the moment of otherness of the determinate concept or its deficient reality,” in which “the deficient and the true reality” are disjointed (JL, 81, 93).

The concrete existent “may or may not conform to” its intrinsic being. This fact of being or not being in conformity with, indicates that the movement of the concept has not yet been completed in judgment. Just as being has “fallen” out of original unity into absolute difference, likewise this dividing in judgment (*Ur-teilen*) is not the last and final one, but presupposes the lost unity as an ought. We have confronted the “ought” to be a determination of being several times: it constitutes the motility of beings seeking to regain their lost adequacy with intrinsic being and to exist in conformity with it.

This unity and adequacy, this correspondence and agreement between concept and object, is always in view in judgment. Judgment aims at it but can never attain it. Taken by itself, judgment is final; no being can escape it: "That it is divided in-itself into its ought to be and its being, this is the absolute judgment on *all* actuality" (L, II, 306 ff). In its most authentic sense, being is comprehending and comprehended being — the concept. The concept, however, can *exist* only through judgment, in that "it negates its own universality and delivers itself to externality and individuality" (L, II, 305). The concept comes to constitute the "universal nature" of every matter only through this difference. In the final analysis the originary act of dividing, as the difference between "ought and is," more precisely as the self-relational structure of this difference, is the ground and essence of all actuality. First, "this original division, which is the omnipotence of the concept," this "absolute relation of the is and the ought to one another" constitute "the actual into a fact of the matter (*Sache*); this inner relation, this concrete identity constitutes the soul of the matter" (L, II, 307). Every being as actual, in its character as "the fact of the matter" (*res realitas*) exists as the judgment of its concept, as the "essentially accidental," "external constitution" of its "universal essence," as adequacy or inadequacy to its "ought." The fact of the matter *is* never merely there; it always stands in a specific relation to its concept as its ought, *constituted* in this or that way, in the sense of being good or bad. As authentic predicates of true judgment, "good" or "bad" are thus — exactly like the Greek, *kalon* and *kakos* — *ontological* determinations of beings themselves and not simply "evaluative" predicates. The briefest and most precise formulation of this is given in the larger *Encyclopaedia*: "This — the immediate individuality — house, the species constituted so and so — particularity — is good or bad — the apodictic judgment." Such an apodictic judgment presents no whim of the act of judging, but is an expression of the essential content (*Sachverhalt*) of being itself: "All things are a kind (their determination and purpose), an *individual* actuality and of a *particular* constitution. Their finitude consists in this that their particularity may or may not be adequate to the universal" (E, I, 344).

Judgment is true when its “ground” lies in the “constitution of the subject” and in it alone (L, II, 307), that is, when in judgment the adequacy or inadequacy of concrete individual beings (of the subject of judgment) is developed out of the “constitution” of these beings as out of their ground. When, in other words, this adequacy or inadequacy is not merely latched onto as something external and given, but when judgment shows them to be the actual judging of the matter itself, as a correspondence or noncorrespondence, which lies “in the particular determinacy of the matter at hand” (L, II, 307). It is possible to define and to demonstrate this adequacy or inadequacy to be an essential content of beings themselves when the Being of beings is itself defined as a mode of self-relationality, and as we can now add, a mode of self-relationality containing absolute difference. The “Objective Logic” has given this demonstration. Beings do not fall apart in absolute difference through the “relation of the is and the ought,” but exactly this relation concretizes them. Beings grow with and are held together by this relation. Difference is at the same time a unity and constitutes unity, the unity of the “fact” as reality. With specific reference to judgment this unity-constituting function means that being as the *ought* is not a norm beyond beings but a “determination” lying in the Being of beings. The inadequacy is internally related to an adequacy, to a unity of the ought and the is, which, it is true, is never simply there (otherwise the movement of actuality would come to a halt) but which is continuously present as “the mediating ground” in the difference “between the individuality of the actual and its universality” (E, I, 344, §180). The concept in itself is not only judgment, difference, but *unity* which is always already implied by judgment (the significance of the predicate when taken in its *live fullness*). The concept is the mediating middle which mediates, holds, and joins together the divided extremes of difference — the individual and the universal, existence and intrinsic being, “what is” and what “ought to be.” Beings condemned to difference are and remain one and a unity only through this feature of the concept as the middle. The actual constitutes itself as unity only through the mediating movement of the middle. The judgment on actuality is first completed in the

sylogism, which is “the cycle of the mediation of its moments through which it posits itself as one” (E, I, 345; § 181).

The “relation” of “being” to the ought, which constitutes the essence of the actual in judgment, is now determined more precisely as “mediation,” and the real-active character of the concept as “creating,” “activity” and “movement” is thus further concretized. The actual, according to its Being, exists essentially as mediating: “The particular appears here as the mediating middle between the individual and the universal” (E, I, 346). The *middle*, just like the concept, must be considered concretely as a determination of *being*. As the “unity of extremes,” the middle is the “holding ground” of the actual; it is the mediation “of the objective nature of the fact of the matter itself” (L, II, 310). The concept is first “posited” completely, in its “totality and unity,” and as what is held together in and through the middle, via the “sylogism” (*Schluss*; L, II, 308). That moment of the unity of difference now realized through its determination as the middle was still lacking in judgment. With reference to this character of being as the “middle,” as mediation that unites together, Hegel now states: “The definition of the absolute is that it is the syllogism, or to express this determination with a sentence, ‘Everything is a syllogism’” (HE, 109).³

We can analyze Hegel’s doctrine of the syllogism even less extensively than his doctrine of judgment. Here we single out only a crucial aspect of this development as it is concretized at this stage in the *Logic*: the actual constitutes itself as a “completed” unity through the mediation of the syllogism in that it absorbs into this unity, mediates with itself and joins together, that relation to *other* beings with which it stands in an ontologically appropriate interdependence.

The fundamental fact that every being only is through its manifold interdependence with other beings has been demonstrated numerous times in the *Logic* (see pp. 52, 102, 105). Already in the sphere of the concept, the category of “universality” pointed toward such a universal interdependence. The universality of the concept signifies equality-with-self amid the multitude of individuations. As such, it is the concrete *totality*: it encompasses a multiplicity, indeed the wholeness of respec-

tive individuations. Through this, every actual being stands immediately in relation to other actual beings, and in such a way that this relation constitutes at the time its Being as well as its actuality. At first this takes place through the relation of the actual to others of the same species. In virtue of his/her special relationship to humanity (the species) for example, the human individual stands in relation to all other humans. More precisely, the nature of this relationship is such that humanity presents itself as an “ought,” as a “determination” and “purpose” needing concrete fulfillment. Every individual being finds him/herself to be adequate or inadequate to this in a special way, toward which s/he permanently moves in his/her individual existence. The species, as the “ought,” is the “element” within which individuals move themselves and through which they relate to one another.

But this relation is by no means the only one. Another form of the relation among beings is also valid: this has been defined already at the beginning of the *Logic* through the category of “being-for-another,” and relations of causality and reciprocity have been explained as modes of the self-relationality of substance. According to this, each being is essentially a being for, and from, an other being (being-other determines others in their being and is in turn determined by others). Such relations go beyond those between beings of the same species: they form in each case the concrete “constitution” of a being, are limited in relation to it, and thus belong in the sphere of the essential “contingency” of existences (*Dasein*). They must be mediated, “sublated,” and “posited” by the substantiality of the being involved in each case.

In the sphere of the concept this fact is expressed through the hypothetical judgment: “If *A* is, *B* is as well; or the being of *A* is not its own being but that of another, of *B*” (L, II, 295). Hegel adds that in this judgment the “necessary interdependence” of two existents is posited, that in it the “relation” of immediate beings is the essential one, “that the finite is its own being, but it is just as much not its *very own*, but the being of another” (L, II, 296). The hypothetical judgment expresses “the relation of causality in conceptual form,” not as the interdependence of two independent substances reacting on one

another but as the interdependence with the concrete identity and totality of the concept, encompassing the necessary relation of beings (L, II, 296 ff).

But just as judgment, taken in itself, could not exhibit the full realization of the concept, because absolute difference as the middle and the sustaining ground was lacking, so too this ontological interdependence of beings is still not realized in judgment itself. "The hypothetical judgment only contains the necessary *relation* without the immediacy of the related terms. *If A, then B ...* with this it has not been said that either *A is* or that *B is*" (L, II, 346). Indeed, the *relation* of *A* and *B* is a necessary one, but *A* and *B* themselves are accepted in their immediate existence and inserted into this relation in their immediacy. Their existence itself as within this relation has not yet developed. This occurs first in the *sylogism*. The mediating middle mediates not only every individuality with its universality and vice versa, but also the relation among beings. The immediate thereness of beings themselves is constituted as necessary in this relation. The hypothetical syllogism "adds this immediacy of being" to the necessity of the simple *relation* developed in the hypothetical judgment: "If *A*, then *B* — now *A* — therefore *B*" (L, II, 346). The "is" of the minor premise is no longer merely "the abstract copula" but, in accordance with the general function of the syllogism, "the mediating unity that has been *completed*. The being of *A* is to be taken not as mere immediacy but essentially as the *middle term* of the syllogism" (L, II, 347). This signifies such a mediation of the relation among beings that in this mediation the immediate existence of beings, as constituted through this relation alone will also be mediated, comprehended and posited as comprehended.

In a syllogism, this mediation takes place in various "stages," themselves expressed through different forms of syllogism. This begins with the still external and immediate mediation of the immediate and external relations in which each being stands as an existent there; this is the "syllogism of existence." "The general significance of this syllogism is that the individual, which as such is infinite relation to itself and therefore would be merely *inward*, emerges through particularity into *existence*

as into universality, in which it no longer belongs to itself, but stands in an *external context*" (L, II, 312).

This mediation is still essentially "contingent," because the sustaining middle is not "substance" but the immediate existence of beings. This mediation terminates itself in the "syllogism of necessity": the mediation now has its "ground" in "the concept of the matter (*die Sache*)" itself (L, II, 319), such that "the connection of the terms is the *essential nature* as content" (L, II, 343 ff) and the "free unity of the concept" determining itself as "activity" (L, II, 348).

When we now consider the structure of beings "joined together" in this fashion, then it is established that the movement of the syllogism as a mediation joining together [various elements — Tr.] consisted in reassembling all determinations of being in the unity of the concept (as the "essential nature" of beings) as their mediating middle. So long as this had not been attained, the concept remained an "abstract determination," still "different," and removed from the determinations of being in need of mediation, and whose concrete unity it still constituted (L, II, 351). In this case, the concept remained an "ought," a "demand that the mediating element be its totality" (L, II, 351). "The different kinds of syllogism, however, present the stages through which the middle term is *filled in* or concretized." The concept truly realizes itself as a "principle" first in the syllogism (see p. 122 above). The concept is the effective "ground" and actual "essence" of all determinations developing themselves out of it. In the "syllogism of necessity" all determinations of beings are mediated with their "essential nature" as the "ground sustaining" them. There is nothing immediate in them that would be still unmediated. Thus, "the distinction between the mediating and the mediated has vanished. What is mediated is itself an essential moment of what mediates it, and each moment is as the totality of what is mediated" (L, II, 351).

"The concept as such has been realized thereby: more exactly, it has obtained a reality that is *objectivity*" (L, II, 351).

The Unfree Reality of the Concept: Objectivity

The significance of objectivity in the context of the Subjective Logic has already been mentioned in chapter 11. Although in interpreting this section of Hegel's *Logic* we cannot begin with the cognizing human subject juxtaposed to objectivity, insofar as "objectivity" signifies the *real existence* of beings distinguished from the "universal form" of subjectivity (concept, judgment, syllogism) as developed in the first section of the Subjective Logic, it is in some sense juxtaposed to "subjectivity" as well. Considered from this point of view, the "concept" and its unfolding in judgment and syllogism are "still abstract reality" (L, II, 354). We have already suggested that comprehending being admits various modes and forms of existence and that it even requires these (cf. p. 123). Although the concept in- and for-itself is simply the concrete being, it remains abstract so long as it does not exist in a specific form of concreteness and has not become actual. As the existence of the concept, objectivity belongs among "forms of immediacy," as was the case in the sphere of being for example, with simple "thereness" (*Dasein*), in the sphere of essence with "existence, and then actuality and substantiality" (L, II, 356). "Immediacy" here has a positive as well as negative meaning: positively it signifies the emergence (*Herausstellung*) and the having emerged of the concept; thus it signifies an actual and actualized existence (*Dasein*); its significance is negative insofar as this fact of having emerged, is at first immediate and thus subject to unfreedom and in need of completion by still higher forms of comprehending self-actualization.

Thus “objectivity” signifies the existence of the concept, of beings as they are there immediately “in their very concept,” and not merely as “something” among others, as a “thing” with many properties, as actual cause with its accidents, but rather being as the individuation of the concept. The natural sciences consider beings in this sense as a world of mechanical and chemical objects, which is not subject to contingency and to external changes but rather governed by a universality developing according to its laws and in which every individual determinacy is in “principle” self-positing and self-mediated. In this way, being as *in-itselfness* is also *for-itselfness*, because all determinacies are grounded in its own behavior; all which limits and is juxtaposed to it is sublated in its own lawfulness and accepted or repulsed according to this proper law. “Objectivity is the in-and-for-itselfness that is without limitation and opposition” (L, II, 358).¹ However, the transition from pure concept to objectivity becomes problematic first because Hegel confounds it with the transition from concept to being as handled in traditional logic, especially with the transition from the concept of God to its existence, the ontological proof of God (L, II, 353 ff; HE, 115 ff) and, second, because he presents this transition as a self-made “decision” and as the “self-determination” of the concept to exist. But what can such a self-determination of the concept to exist mean in the first place?

The concept goes over “into objectivity by itself”; existence is a “moment of the concept” (HE, 116). The concept, in-and-for-itselfness as comprehending being, thus must already contain the existing, determinate, contentful “being” in itself. When one remembers that the concept here signifies a mode of being and that existence has been interpreted as a form of self-relating, then the “interdependence of being and the concept” loses its paradoxical quality. We have been told already at the beginning of the *Logic* that “Existence, life, thought, etc. essentially determine themselves into the existent, the living and the thinking [I]” (L, I, 102). The simple “universalities,” like existence, life, and thought, are still not “real,” but according to the principle of absolute difference can *only be* as “real.” “Being” only *can be* along with its negation and limitation, and

all determination, all content *is* the limitation, negation of a “pure” being. The same “falling” of pure “being” into existence was expressed in the sphere of the concept through the particularization of universality into individuality. The self-equal universality of the concept *is actual* only through the individuation by which the concept divides itself. Existence, more exactly the existent, is posited through the absolute difference of being from the very beginning. In the realm of the concept “individuality” means existence: “The concept, even as formal, already immediately contains being . . . in that as negatively relating to itself, it is individuality” (L, II, 355). The self-determination of the concept as objectivity is no other than the process of absolute difference, the “falling” of being into existence which has always already occurred whenever being *is*. “Existence” here no longer means the respective accidental facticity but the already mediated and sublated “actuality” of being, existence as complete positedness (L, II, 364 ff). The determinations constituting existence are no longer pregiven, but determinate being acquires every one of its determinations of existence from the concept, because “the concept as absolutely self-identical negativity is self-determining” (L, II, 354).

Hegel claims that this interpretation, according to which the universality of the concept contains “being” as a “moment” of its individuation, also fulfills the traditional demand that “being” be “*external* to the concept.” The judgment of the concept posits existence in such a way that through it the concept “posits itself against itself” (L, II, 355) and “externalizes” itself in existence. But this “externality,” this dualism of concept and “being,” occurs within an original unity that allows the original division (*Ur-teilung*) to take place and which mediates it with itself. This division occurs “within” being (within the concept) and is not a product of the metaphysical or epistemological situation of conceptualizing human thought.

Yet it is crucial that objectivity, although it is the complete realization of the concept, does not present the mode of being most adequate to the concept. Hegel insists on absolute difference as a foundational phenomenon so strongly that this prevents him from reducing the internal “rupture” within being to a flat unity.

The concept is so fully realized in objectivity that all difference between the mediating and the mediated drops away and each contingency becomes a self-positing necessity, and every determinateness a self-determination. As “the matter that is in-and-for-itself” the object is indeed the concept in its “totality.” The object of mathematical natural science, the purely physical “matter,” is not deficient as existent, is no longer incomplete in the sense that something was still contained in its concept which was not immediately realized in it (as is *necessarily* the case with the concrete “thing”). The abstract “purity” of the physical object excludes all inadequacies of contingency. But exactly this immediate, pure, total unity of objectivity constitutes the latter’s *inadequacy*. It lacks negativity, but *negativity* belongs to the essence of true being. The true adequacy of reality to its concept, the true actualization of the concept, can be *free* only when comprehending being frees itself from negativity and becomes free *for* it, repositing itself out of the freedom of its own essence. “Adequacy,” “correspondence” of existence and implicit being, is possible only on the basis of an ontological inadequacy and lack of correspondence. Inadequacy does not disappear in adequacy; it is only “sublated” in it.

But in objectivity negativity has disappeared. Every determinateness of the object is already *immediately* a self-determination; every facticity already is *immediately* posited being. What was considered to be the essence of the concept from the very beginning, namely, *freedom*, also disappears, for this *immediate* unity of in-itselfness and existence excludes freedom. Freedom is possible only when one stands freely opposed, when “the is and the ought” are juxtaposed. In order for freedom to be there, something must also be there which itself escapes free determinability and which must be first pulled into it. The “*free* for-itselfness” of the concept is possible only when the “immediacy becomes a negative *juxtaposed* to it and one which is determinable through its activity” (L, II, 359 Emphasis added). And exactly because this freedom constitutes the *essence* of the concept qua subjectivity, Hegel asserts that in objectivity the “subjectivity” of the concept has completely disappeared, although “implicitly” objectivity is the existence of the *concept* and

thus, “in-itself,” a comprehending existent. This lawful, self-positing behavior of the object is so immediate, simple, and “indifferent” that it is almost no longer a result of the behavior of the concept that its existence can once again be designated as “relationless multiplicity” (L, II, 361). To describe this movement of objects Hegel coins the striking expression “free necessity” (L, II, 375)! “Free” because all processes proper to objects correspond to the law of their being and occur only through it (the object is “the in-itself intransitory source of self-enticing movement”); “necessity” because this process is not juxtaposed to a comprehension mediating it, because the object itself is “simply indifferent” to its own process.

In-itself objectivity points toward *another subjectivity* in which it fulfills itself. This fact is grounded on the essential unfreedom of objectivity. *In-and-for-itself* objectivity is as it is in “its concept,” but it *itself* does not comprehend its own comprehensibility. Only with *cognizing* subjectivity does the unfreedom of *objectivity* disappear; the being of objectivity fulfills itself in cognizing subjectivity. These connections can first be clarified with reference to the Idea of Life.

When absolute difference is the foundational phenomenon of all being, then its disappearance into the simple immediacy of objectivity can be only a transitional point in this process: difference must once more break through amid the movement of objectivity. Out of objectivity itself, the concept must reestablish “the free for-itselfness of subjectivity”; it must once again divide itself in order to regain “the freedom of individuality” (L, II, 359 ff). This is the guiding theme of the subsequent exposition of objectivity [in Hegel’s *Logic* — Tr.], extending from the mechanical to the chemical and to the teleological object. At this latter stage, the free subjectivity of the concept once more reemerges as “purpose.” We omit here a closer interpretation of mechanism and chemism and proceed directly to teleological movement in which the transition to the “free existence of the concept” completes itself. Of course, teleology as well is not a “reflexive judgment” but an ontological characteristic of being itself. It is not the work of a subjective understanding but “the truth which is in- and for-itself,” an “objective judgment” (L, II, 390), that is, a division

of the concept itself whereby the concept comes into its free existence. This new division within objectivity, through which the unmediated simple unity of the object is transcended, takes place in the relation of purpose (*Zweckbeziehung*). In this process the ground is once more cleared for the ontological negativity of "opposition" (*das Gegenüber*), for a "negative behavior" in which the freedom of subjectivity is possible (L, II, 393).

When the being of an existing object has become its "purpose," then qua object it is once more immersed in the difference between implicit and existent being. It has broken out of the unmediated simplicity of objective "externality" and exists as "negative relation" to itself, for with the relation of purpose the inadequacy of existing being vis-à-vis this purpose is posited right away. This existing being is not simply what it is but "has" a purpose at which it aims, in which it first fulfills itself as object; "simplicity is inadequate to . . . what it is and the concept therefore repulses itself" (L, II, 393). In this "repulsion from itself," the new division and thereby the freeing of the concept to become a free "for-itselfness" takes place. The object has "reflected itself" into itself and in this "total reflection of objectivity into itself," the dimension of "opposition," the negativity within objectivity emerges. The indifferent, "relationless" movement of mechanical objects becomes, in the case of objects existing within the relation of purpose, "activity," "self-determination," "effort and drive" (L, II, 391). This movement has an objective world "before" it to which it relates itself "as to something that is already there," "against" which it is aimed, and which "stands against" it, "as a whole . . . not yet determined and penetrated" (L, II, 392ff). This something already there and at hand, however, constitutes the objectivity of the activity directed against it; for at this stage what is already there and at hand is itself a posited and mediated existence. The counterthrust of this activity which wants to determine and penetrate the pre-given insofar as it is an inadequate and not completely pervaded whole, is directed in fact against its own self, against its own immediate existence. This activity is a self-repulsion. And because negative self-relationality once more becomes possible through this repulsion from self and because being can constitute itself as "negative unity" in its proper for-

itselfness only at this point, this repulsion presents at the same time the “resolution” of objectivity which has fallen into immediate simplicity to regain its proper “self.”

This repulsion in general is the *resolution* of the relation of negative unity to itself whereby it becomes exclusive individuality; but through this exclusion [*Ausschliessen*] it *resolves* itself [*sich entschliesst*], *opens itself up* [*aufschliessen*], because this exclusion is a *self-determination*, positing of itself. (L, II, 393)

The object arrives at its self-determination by dividing up its existence and by setting its mere at-handness (*Vorhandsein*) as inadequate to itself, as its own “means.” Purpose must direct itself toward the means and must sublimate it as being merely a presupposition of its own realization. “The movement of purpose can now be so expressed as having for its aim the sublation of its presupposition, the immediacy of the object, and to posit the object as one determined by the concept” (L, II, 393). “Determined by the concept” no longer means as empty, simple, unmediated thereness, as it is implicitly in its concept (like the mechanical object), but determined in its thereness as something, which is never *immediate*, which must always first *become* what it was already from the beginning according to its concept and to its purpose. This is Hegel’s characterization of the object determined by a purpose, “that it is a becoming of having been, that in it only the already existent comes into existence” (L, II, 399).

To make this state of affairs concretely present to ourselves, we must remember that the real relation of purpose is a determination of beings themselves. Indeed, the existence of objectivity is fulfilled in this relation; this relation is therefore the “most objective” aspect of objectivity, of the fact of the matter as it is in- and-for-itself. Seen in this light, the relation of purpose also expresses the never quite pacified movement of objectivity, which permanently maintains itself in unfreedom, in the *unmediated* actuality of absolute difference, and which wears away each object as ontologically inadequate and determined to destruction.

What is used for carrying out a purpose and what is essentially taken to be means, is the means to be consumed in accordance with

its own *determination*. But the object as well which should embody the fulfilled purpose and which should present the latter's objectivity, is transitory. It fulfills its purpose likewise not through a peaceful and self-sustaining existence but only insofar as it is *consumed* as well. (L, II, 401 ff Emphasis added.)

Objectivity arrives at what it really is *only* in this process of consummation. Hegel himself gives an example at this point: a house is what it is only through permanent "use and tear." By contrast to the tools and material that have been used for its production, it appears as their purpose, but precisely as the accomplished purpose it is subject to "wear and tear." Such objects "fulfill their determination only through their use and tear and correspond to what they ought to be only through their negation" (L, II, 402).

It becomes thereby clear that, strictly, a realization of purpose in the sphere of objectivity is not at all possible and that all objects are there only as means to be consumed. So long as the purpose itself is restricted to the sphere of objectivity, it is subject to the ontological character of the latter, namely, to sacrifice itself as a presupposition (L, II, 402). On the one hand, objectivity thereby reaches its true being: "The resolution, the declaration, this self-determination is the merely *posited* externality of the object, which is therein as immediately subjected to purpose and has no other determination against it besides the nothingness of this being-in-and-for-itself" (L, II, 403). But on the other hand, because the concept exists in the sphere of objectivity (thus as existing object) through the division of objectivity into means and purpose, the *free* for-itselfness of subjectivity is there not merely as an "ought and as striving, but as concrete reality identical with immediate objectivity" (L, II, 405), for now the purpose (the being of the object in its completed form) is separated from the immediate and simple thereness of the object (this is only presupposition, means of the purpose), but in this separation it has not gone beyond the object; rather the entire set of relations from the immediate and simple thereness of the object to the posited purpose forms a *self-enclosed context of movement*, within which the object first constitutes itself as the concrete unity of means and purpose, as a "concrete totality." Even as ready and inhabited, the house

is only a means to its end, it *fulfills* only its purpose in this *movement* of “use and tear.” Purpose is never realized in it, as it is at hand, but in the concrete totality of the inhabited house it is still there, fulfilled. “Identity that is for-itself,” the concept as purpose, *exists* exactly in the motivity of the purpose-related object as the “objectivity in-itself” which is *distinguished* from it and still one with it in concrete *unity* (L, II, 406).

The Free and True Reality of the Concept: The Idea

We can summarize the structure of the concept of objectivity outlined so far as follows. The immediate simplicity of the thing that exists in-and-for-itself, the mechanical object, has been destroyed. The object exists as distinct from its concept in such manner that now it has a "purpose" which is no longer immediately available to it. Rather the object exists for the sake of this purpose, which in turn moves the object as well as determining the meaning and goal of its motility. In relation to its purpose, the immediately existing object is a mere "pre-supposition." It is an externality which first is to be posited and then "sublated" through the process of its relation to its purpose. The proper unity of the object is first constituted through this difference, for the purpose is not one that is alien to it and beyond it, but is its own "concept," the actualization of its in-itselfness which is only effected in this self-enclosed process. The relationality of purpose, the positing of the object essentially as a "being toward", constitute the *essence* of objectivity and its "self-determination" (L, II, 405). The concept is essentially then the following: as identity that is for-itself, it is distinct from its objectivity that is in-itself and in this capacity possesses also externality, but at the same time it is the self-determining identity of this external totality. The concept is now "*Idea*" (L, II, 406).

According to this exposition, the Idea is a form of existence of the concept, namely, the "realization" of the concept (L, II, 237). The concept is "realized in it" (E, 128 ff). The Idea is

the expression of “the real or objective concept” (L, II, 408); in fact, it is an expression of the “appropriate,” “adequate,” and “true” realization of the concept. The Idea by no means is a formal universality, merely an inward reality or subjectivity. The Idea has objectivity and externality but an actuality that is determined through it alone. Let me preliminarily give a concrete example of the Idea: “Life.” Life exists by means of the absolute difference of “soul and body” (or of “I” and “world”) in such a way that it is alive only as the unity of this difference. Its existence is such that the body and the world, as the corresponding objectivities of the soul and the I, are “appropriate” and “adequate” to them, for the soul “possesses” its body, and the I its *world*, not as if they were mere indifferent “existents,” but as if the body and the world were thoroughly penetrated by the soul and the I; they are lived through by them. What is alive is never merely at hand; it always lives toward a purpose. At each moment, its currently existing form is only a “presupposition” which must be posited in accordance with its determination. This entire cycle of movement, which wholly entails the difference between subjectivity and objectivity and which is a self-enclosed unity unfolding in the transparence and freedom of the concept, forms the “Idea” of Life.

Such an existent is now defined as “true being” (L, II, 404). “Being has attained the meaning of truth” (L, II, 409). Two aspects of this statement require clarification: first, to what extent can truth be described as an aspect of *Being*? Second, to what extent can the concept as Idea function as the truth of Being?

First, that truth is an aspect of Being and not of knowledge is a fundamental premise of Hegel’s thought that is repeatedly emphasized. I cite a few characteristic passages.

By “truth” I understand the specific sense in which objects come to themselves. An untrue object may well exist and we can have a correct idea of it, but such an object is not as it ought to be; it is not adequate to its concept. (*Briefe*, II, 79)

By truth is first of all meant that I know how something is. But this is truth only in relation to consciousness, or formal truth, mere correctness. As distinct from this, truth in its deepest sense consists

in that objectivity is identical with its concept. It is this deeper meaning of truth that one has in mind when, for example, one speaks of a true state or a true art work. These objects are true when they are what they ought to be, that is when their reality corresponds to their concept. (E, I, 386, §21, Addition; cf. *Ibid.*, 384; L, II, 384)

One can see here what the truth of being consists in for Hegel. It signifies the “adequacy” of reality to the concept, of “being” qua existence (*Dasein*) and qua being-at-hand to being-in-and-for-itself. The “ought” in this context does not mean a valid norm but an immanent determination, intrinsic to the Being of beings. It is easy to see that this concept of truth is based on that of absolute difference. Only because “being” carries diremption, “fallenness,” and accidentality in itself, all of which lead to its existing here and now in “inadequacy,” can being be both true and untrue. As the “adequacy” of reality to its concept, truth cannot mean the simple, immediate identity of these, for this is excluded by the absolute nature of difference and by that “freedom” which is an essential determination of authentic being. Rather, truth can mean only that unity which always conceals difference within itself, which sustains itself within this difference throughout its movement, and which overcomes it only in order to regenerate it. (Likewise in the case of “true” human beings, soul and body do not simply and immediately correspond to one another. Only in the course of a lifetime is this difference in every moment canceled and their true correspondence attained.) The essential nature of truth for Hegel is its *motility*: “Truth is not what is merely at rest and simply there; truth is what moves itself, what is alive; it is the eternal differentiation and subsequent reduction to unity” (*Briefe*, II, 79 ff).

In the sense of the philosophical absolute, I define truth as what is in-itself concrete, that is, as the unity of opposed determinations, such that this opposition is still maintained in unity. In other words, truth is not what is static, fixed . . . but what is in motion, Life itself. (*Ibid.*, 120).

Hegel's grounding of the concept of truth on that of absolute difference is even more striking in the course of his discussion of error in the section on the transition from objectivity to the

Idea (E, I, 384, §212, Addition). If, in opposition to the pure concept, reality is necessarily otherness and difference which is opposed to implicit being and if this difference is an absolute one, then truth is possible only on the basis of untruth; indeed, this otherness is itself no other than falsehood. It is at the same time a metaphysical untruth, through the sublation of which alone, truth, qua the self-adequation of the intrinsically untrue reality to its concept, can come to be. Insofar as this otherness and its sublation constitute a process immanent to all being, being deceives itself, for it falls into the reality of otherness, and through the sublation of this error brings itself back to truth.

The Idea deceives itself in its own process, posits another opposed to itself, and its activity consists in sublating this deception. Truth can only emerge from this error and the reconciliation with error and finitude lies here. Otherness or error that is sublated is itself a necessary moment of truth, which only is, insofar as it makes itself its own result. (E, I, 384, §212, Addition)

The Idea as well, that “truthful being,” possesses its own untruth, the “hardest opposition,” and the most intense motility, just as essence had its own unessentiality.

Second, to what extent can the concept as Idea function as the truth of Being? The extent to which the Idea fulfills this aspect of truth is already clear. Objectivity now exists in thorough-going congruence with its concept and has “its substantiality only through these concepts” (L, II, 411). Qua the reality of the Idea objectivity is what it “ought be be”: “Externality now only is such as it is determined to be by the concept and as it is absorbed into its negative unity” (Ibid.). Body is the body of this soul, and the soul is the soul of this, its body. This does not mean that objectivity is already there as what it ought to be. On the contrary, in relation to its concept, it is and remains an other, one that is juxtaposed to it, a negative. Objectivity never is what it ought to be “in-and-for-itself,” but it can be only as the negativity of its being in-and-for-itself. It is not an indifferent being, “subsisting for itself, rather it is only qua becoming” (Ibid.), as the becoming of what is in-and-for-itself. This is a becoming that never comes to a standstill,

because its in-and-for-itselfness constitutes this very becoming. "The identity of the Idea with itself is one with this process" (L, II, 412). Let us now briefly consider that nature of the motility of the Idea.¹

As the "true being," the Idea must exhibit the universal structure of the motility of all being in its purest form, which is to say that it must be free from the concealing forms with which "the concept dresses up its differences," free from the "semblance" (*Schein*) of causal differences, the reciprocal interaction of independent substances, and the like. In the course of a more precise determination of the Idea as "process," Hegel returns to the most fundamental determination of being as motility, namely, being-by-oneself-in-otherness, the being-for-oneself (*energeia*) of in-itselfness (*dynamis*). The "identity" of the Idea is "absolute and free," "insofar as it is absolute negativity" (HE, 132), insofar as "it determines itself to [exist in the mode of — Tr.] objectivity and this externality . . . leads it back to subjectivity" (Ibid.). The negativity which the Idea possesses in the mode of objectivity, therefore, is "absolute," for it constitutes the very being of objectivity. The very meaning of objectivity is to be simply the "material basis" (*Materiatur*) for the Idea (L, II, 411). Objectivity finds fulfillment in becoming a "means," in its "wear and tear" for a purpose, in its "relation to purpose."

Subjectivity, on the other hand, attains the objectivity adequate to its free for-itselfness first through this process of difference. Only as "the drive to overcome this separation" (L, II, 412) can it attain its truth for it is only truth in overcoming untruth; it can be by-itself only in its otherness. The freedom of comprehending being is possible only in opposition as well as in relation to the necessity resisting it:

On account of the freedom which the concept has attained in it, the Idea also contains the hardest opposition within itself; its repose consists of the security and certainty with which it eternally generates such opposition, overcomes it, and remains as one with itself in it. (L, II, 412)

With reference to this "double movement" of the Idea, which on the one hand contains the differentiation from objectivity,

and on the other is the sublation of this differentiation, Hegel states the following in the *Heidelberg Encyclopaedia*: “It is *neither temporal* nor separate and distinct” (HE, 132; E, I, 389, § 214 Emphasis added). Let me briefly explicate this misleading characterization. Hegel himself offers the following account at the same point in the text. The Idea in movement is “the concept, which *has* exhibited itself in its objectivity; it is the object, the inner purposiveness of which *is* essentially subjectivity.” The emphasis is on the “has” and the “is.” Insofar as the Idea exists, this differentiation *has been* clearly *accomplished*, and the separation and the reunification of the distinct parts have already taken place. (Insofar as Life exists, it lives already in the difference of soul and body and their specific movements.) This differentiation *has been* accomplished and *has* taken place in such a fashion that the process which has already occurred is the condition and the ground of the real and concrete movement of the existence of the Idea; as what has already taken place, it remains always present. In this sense Hegel defines the Idea as what is “truly present” (E, I, 387, §213 Addition). The nontemporality of the motility of the Idea in no way implies, therefore, an extemporality or even a supratemporality. This is especially clear during the exposition of time in the Philosophy of Nature, where Hegel distinguishes the specific temporality of the Idea from the temporality of nature. He defines the “temporality” of the Idea as “eternity” and writes: “The concept of eternity must not be understood negatively as the abstraction from time, and as if it could exist outside time” (E, II, 54, §258). Eternity does not possess “natural time” (Ibid., 55. Emphasis added.). In this sense it is “absolute atemporality,” but this is not the annihilation of time; it is rather its highest fulfillment. Eternity is without natural time and timeless, for it itself is in time. “Not any moment of time nor the now, but time as time is the concept of eternity; as every concept, however, it is eternal and therefore the *absolute present*. Eternity neither will be nor has it been; it simply *is*” (Ibid. Emphasis added.). In this sense the Idea is “without process” (*prozesslos*). It is “without process” not because it is not in motion but because it is motion *itself*. Precisely because it is alive *only* as process, it is without process; that is to say, it will

not be “pulled into” the process, will not become a “part” of the process. “The Idea . . . is beyond time, for the concept of time is likewise so. It is eternal, in and for-itself, it will not be pulled into time, because it will not lose itself on the one side of this process” (E, II, 56). (In order to understand this exegesis properly, however, it must be remembered that here Hegel is concerned only with “natural time,” and this is thoroughly understandable in light of the subject matter with which the Philosophy of Nature deals.)²

The motility of the Idea fulfills what has been required from true movement from the very beginning, namely, the condition that what is in motion remain thoroughly by-itself in this movement and return to itself first through this movement. This movement which is only the “development” of what is already “in-itself” signifies the fulfillment of the latter.

The seed of the plant is just so. . . . It has the drive to develop itself; it cannot tolerate to be merely implicit. . . . It emerges in manifold forms; but all this is already contained in the seed — admittedly it is not developed, it is veiled and already present as ideal form. . . . The highest form of externalization, the predetermined end is the fruit, that is, the bringing forth of the seed and thereby a return to the first state. The seed will want to generate itself and return to itself. What is in it will be taken apart and it will withdraw once more into the unity from which it has proceeded. (GPh, I, 35)

This example of the developmental movement of the plant makes clear that the latter does not present the highest form. For beginning and end, seed and fruit are still “two different individuals,” although of “the same nature” (Ibid.). Therefore the movement is not fully self-contained and by-itself. This is first the case when “beginning and end coincide,” when at each stage of movement the “other” to which the movement has arrived is “the same” as that for which it is an “other.” Only then is what is in motion “by itself in its otherness” (GPh, I, 35). Only Spirit that knows itself has such a structure: this is a kind of knowledge through which Spirit grasps itself, as well as its own forms (*Gestalten*) and ways. (At this point it is not necessary to characterize what Hegel means by “Spirit” more precisely. For the time being it is sufficient to state that Spirit is that form of being which has itself as the content of its

existence (as objectivity, as world) and which relates to this in the mode of comprehension.) The movement of Spirit is only the “eternal contemplation (*Anschauung*) of itself in the other” (HE, 132), and thus the fulfillment of being-by-oneself in otherness.

Through these references to the possible modes of the motility of the Idea, we have already jumped too far ahead and outlined stages which properly belong to the exposition of the Idea. Before proceeding with this task, let me briefly summarize the characteristics of the Idea discussed so far.

Hegel introduces two elements as “more precise determinations of the Idea”: first is the identity of concept and objectivity as universal, and second is the relation between subjectivity that is for-itself and the objectivity that is distinct from it as process (L, II, 412). Being as Idea has reabsorbed into itself all the different determinations of its existence, all “opposition and subsistence of particularity,” such that it exists essentially as “sameness with itself.” Likewise, Life is the “omnipresence of simplicity in the manifold of externality” (L, II, 416). The various external determinations of life have subsistence only as “aspects” of the aliveness that unifies them all. The universality of the Idea must not be interpreted in light of the concepts of formal logic, which for Hegel rather presuppose the concrete universality of the Idea. In this context Hegel writes the following in the *Heidelberg Encyclopedia*: “Individual being is only an aspect of the Idea; the latter requires still other realities which likewise appear to subsist only for themselves; the concept is only realized in all of them together and through their relations” (HE, 128ff). The “existing thing,” for example, can never be Idea in the Hegelian sense, for its particularities still appear as relatively independent and separable properties. It does not exist in continuous “sameness with itself.” Rather this is first actualized in and through its relation to other realities. Although it does exist through the continuous equating of body and soul, neither is the individual human being an instance of the Idea, and this is so precisely because his/her true being, his/her humanity, points him/her beyond particularity toward the unity of the “species” humanity, from which and in relation to which alone s/he can be what s/he is. His/her

true “universality” transcends the self-sameness of individuality. The universality of the Idea can be understood as the conceptual universality of formal logic only in this way, but the opposite — that Hegel has smuggled formal-logical contents into ontology — cannot be said.

The self-same unity of the Idea is a negative unity, a unity which can be one only in dualism, through the “relation of subjectivity that is for-itself” and “of objectivity that is distinguished from it” (L, II, 412). We have already characterized this relation in the preceding as “process,” as a mode of motility that remains by-itself. Through an analysis of the various stages of the development of the Idea, this interpretation should become clearer.

Life as the Truth of Beings. The Ideas of Life and Cognition

If one makes clear to oneself the full significance of Hegel's concept of truth, then it no longer appears strange that, as "what is objectively true" and "truth as such," the Idea should contain "degrees" and "stages" of truth within itself and that it should exist in different forms, for the Being of the Idea attains truth only on the basis of judgment (*Ur-teilung*); only now does this initial separation or division come to exist within the Idea itself as an inadequacy within a framework of thorough-going adequacy. The "for-itselfness" against which the Idea moves is in fact its own objectivity. This opposition belongs to the Being of the Idea and is a mode of its existence, just as the world is that against which the aliveness of a human being manifests itself. As we have seen, ontologically things "fell" into a world that was strange and indifferent to them. When viewed ontologically from the standpoint of the Idea, it becomes clear that precisely for this reason the "judgment" on things, when it was an authentic judgment, had to remain more or less arbitrary or accidental. Examples of judgment were therefore chosen from the realm of the Idea, as in "This individual is bad" or "This action is good," for true adequacy or inadequacy exists only in this realm, in whose Being adequacy is already prefigured and which can win or lose this, as the case may be, as a result of its form of ontological motility.

The first form of the Idea is *Life*. Hegel emphasizes that the analysis of the concept of Life in light of its ontological structure as Idea cannot treat the structures of actually existing,

real life forms. Actual life exists only in the form of living individuals and these presuppose the Idea of Life as the universality through which they are first constituted. The “moments of the Idea of Life according to its concept,” “are not the specific conceptual moments of the living individual in its reality. . . . These latter are constitutive aspects of the fact of being alive. They are not, therefore, moments of this life that is already constituted by the Idea” (L, II, 421). Factual forms of life exist in each case in “the determination of externality,” but it is the Idea of Life that first makes it possible for such life forms to exist in each of these determinations (L, II, 416).

Life, “in its Idea,” is first “in- and for-itself absolute universality” (L, II, 416). It is “present” as the one, simple, self-same being throughout the objectivity of its existence and the manifold externality of its world. Its “simple relation to self” penetrates all manifoldness, making each individual a “part” of its universality without thereby damaging its unity. It gathers together all these forms into itself, subsumes them, and “makes itself their concept,” in such a way that each part contains “the whole concept in itself.”

Life is “in- and for-itself” this absolute universality. It lends substantiality and permanence to objectivity by uniting the existing manifold of objectivity in its being, and by absorbing into itself, via the simple self-relation, that multiplicity which falls into “a wholly varied and self-subsistent confusion.” “This simple Life . . . is not only omnipresent; it is absolutely the *subsistence* and *immanent substance* of its objectivity” (L, II, 416). Objectivity exists in the manifold of time and space, but in such manner that, even in this spatiotemporal externality, it remains related to the unifying unity of the Life that encompasses it. “Omnipresent in this multiplicity into which it has been emptied out,” Life remains “essentially the simple identity of the concrete concept with itself” (Ibid.).

This implicit universality of Life has now become *for-itself*. Life attains this unification of the external manifold and succeeds in penetrating it only qua “negative unity,” as a sublation and absorption into self of various external determinations. It does this by individuating its universality, creating out of itself the manifoldness of its being and thus becoming for-itself. Life

is essentially “subjective substance” (L, II, 417). It is being in the mode of behavior that is aware of itself; it is Life “that relates itself to itself and is for-itself.” “It is thereby essentially an individual.” It can form itself into the negative unity of subjectivity and objectivity by “differentiating itself as an individual subject over and against objectivity” and by presupposing at the same time this objectivity as its other.

Such is the formal-universal characterization of Life and its moments in outline. This definition of Life can be distinguished into the following aspects:

1. “Absolute universality” that is omnipresent in all that is and which runs through all beings.
2. The unifying unity of the existing manifold of being, as “the omnipresence of the simple in the manifold externality of space and time.”
3. “The permanent and immanent substance of beings,” which are only “the objectivity” and “presupposition” of Life.
4. Life as this unifying unity of subjectivity and objectivity as a “subjective substance,” as for-itselfness that is individuated and self-comprehending.

With this characterization the Being of Life moves to the center of Hegelian ontology. With the Idea of Life the original basis of this ontology becomes apparent in the *Logic* as well. Aspects of this Idea of Life have already been implied with the categories of “essence,” “freedom,” and “species.” From this point on our interpretation will lead back to the stages of this foundation as laid out in the *Logic*. The interpretation we present in this chapter is a preliminary one. The reader will be referred throughout this discussion to the second half of this work, the primary purpose of which is to develop an analysis of the ontological concept of Life.

Hegel defines the Being of Life with explicit reference to the phenomenon of judgment (*Ur-teilung*; an originary dividing). “The original *judgment* of Life consists . . . in this, that it detaches itself as an individual subject from objectivity, and in constructing itself as the negative unity of the concept, *presupposes* an immediate objectivity” (L, II, 417). The concept of

“presupposition” is decisive here. Life is life only qua self, qua a living individual. But it can be itself only insofar as “it detaches itself from objectivity,” presupposes objectivity as what is opposed “to it and determines itself in opposition to this objectivity.” Life *creates* a world, an objectivity in opposition to which it can be a self and an individual, first by determining itself as a self. Life is a “creative prepositing” (presupposing; *Voraussetzen*). Only in the process of “returning-to-self” from the objectivity juxtaposed to it will Life be “for-itself” and reach its true self. Objectivity *is* the world of Life, “the predicate of the judgment of self-determination of Life,” the “predicate of the individual.” The world in which Life unfolds *exists* only as *its* world. Objectivity essentially is what is predicated of, and ascribed to, the living subject. More exactly, objectivity *is* what the living subject determines itself to be, what it ascribes to itself. The being of objectivity consists in this positedness by and relatedness to the living subject. The character of the “world” is no longer constituted by the “mechanical or chemical relation,” but through the relation to the living subject. The world is necessarily a “living existent,” the “objectivity of what is alive” (L, II, 419).¹

Thus in the course of the exposition of the Idea of Life, objectivity is “absorbed into subjective unity” (L, II, 419). It is a “predicate of the self-determination of the subject,” presupposed by the latter as the condition of its own possibility and preliminarily congruent with it, “adequate to it.” “The concept of Life . . . is the immediate Idea; it is the concept which is adequate (congruent) to its objectivity” (L, II, 417). Wholly in accordance with this preliminary adequacy, objectivity is the original *opposite* of Life; it is “the externality” *against* which alone the self can first be a self. The “externality” of objectivity “is opposed to the negative unity of living individuality” (L, II, 420). Life itself is only a *negative* unity with its world. It “posits itself as congruent” (L, II, 417), in that it overcomes the lack of congruence.

The purpose and meaning of this process is “to posit the abstract moment of the determinacy of the concept as real difference” (L, II, 420), that is, to posit the specific externality which is already presupposed by Life as *its* own, and to do so

as “real difference” that is grounded in the proper ontological reality of Life and not merely as what is at hand, “abstract” and detached from Life. This movement of Life is “driven” and constitutes the true movement prior to all knowledge, for Life first becomes what it is and “produces” itself (L, II, 420 ff) through this “drive.” At first this process is wholly contained “within” living individuality and is the movement of the organism. But immediately the process transcends itself; “the corporeality of the soul is that through which it unites itself with external objectivity” (L, II, 419). Through its body, it “mediates” the world for itself. In this process all further determinations of Life concern the world of the individual. Hegel introduces three: sensibility, irritability, and reproduction.

In the realm of *sensibility* the *universality* of Life finds immediate expression through the equality-with-self that is sustained throughout the manifold particularizations. It expresses the “simplicity of the sensation of self” to which all the varied external impressions return and in whose unity they are contained. It is inwardness which is “an infinitely determinable receptivity, which in its determinacies does not become something manifold and external but is simply reflected into self” (L, II, 421). In *irritability* Life expresses itself as one with its universality in the form of *particularity*: it is the “revealing of the negativity” of the self, that is “individual identity with itself” only through “the living power of resistance” (L, II, 422). Both moments reach decisive unity in *reproduction* through which alone the “individual” first becomes. In the realm of reproduction the individual *posits* itself as a unity in externality; it establishes itself and presents itself as what it is. It thereby becomes something “concrete and alive.” It becomes “actual (*wirklich*) individuality,” through its effective (*wirkende*) individuality. First in the process of becoming actual and “*in opposition* to another, to the objective world” will it become a “for-itselfness that relates itself to itself.” This means, however, that the “process of Life which is at first confined to the individual” goes over into objectivity, and that “the relation to externality,” to the world will really become a moment of the Life of the self (L, II, 423). Through the process of “forming itself within itself,” the individual enters into “tension against its original

presupposition,” against its world, it is thrown back on its world; it must complete its unity by operating within and against this world. Hegel describes this special process which no longer unfolds within individuality but through the opposition of individuality to its world as the “life process.”

Hegel states that “this process begins with need,” and he defines the nature of this need more precisely as “pain” (L, II, 423 ff). This need is originary, it belongs to the nature of Life and is present in the duality intrinsic to the unity of Life. This diremption consists in that for Life, objectivity is present as *its* world, as the actual possibility of its self-identity and is, at the same time, in *opposition* to it and an other. At one and the same time therefore, the world is the ontological “presupposition” of Life as well as the externality and negativity in which Life has “lost” *itself*. It regains its for-itselfness by “sublating” and by appropriating the world as mere externality. In this relation, objectivity confronts Life at first as a “lack” (HE, § 166), as the negation of the living individual, which must be sublated so that the individual can continue to “live.” “Need” is the immediate relation of Life to “externality” (L, II, 425).

This need is defined as “pain,” for precisely “in this loss Life has *not* been lost” (L, II, 424. Emphasis added). This negativity is the negativity proper to the living individual, for this latter “is negative *for itself*” (Ibid.). Life and Life alone has negativity for itself, feels “this contradiction,” and for this reason pain is the “privilege of living natures.” The stone is indifferent toward its negativity, toward its external determinacy; this negativity does not exist *for* it.

Driven by this need, individual Life now turns against its objectivity in order to “overpower” it and to “appropriate” it. This is a process of infusing with Life the external world that opposes Life. Worldly objects are made to “correspond” thereby to Life (habitability, enjoyability, usefulness, applicability are not simply present as aspects of Life but are posited with Life itself and find completion in its movement). The object is overwhelmed to the point where the living individual “deprives it of its particular nature (*Beschaffenheit*), converts it into a means for itself, gives it its own subjectivity as its substance” (L, II, 425). This final point is crucial: the world seized

on by Life becomes itself Life; Life becomes the “truth” and “power” of this world. The seizure of the world is “its transformation into living individuality” (L, II, 426). Insofar as and so long as the living form is alive, its world is a world that is alive as well as being lived-in; it never is simply an indifferent object, an alien objectivity. Hegel emphasizes this character of the world as Life to such a point that he defines objectivity itself as a “form” of Life. Life posits “the individual living organism and the objectivity external to it as its form” (Ibid.). This animation of the world is only possible because the world is already “implicitly” Life itself, for it is a presupposition of Life, against which Life acts, and it belongs to the Being of Life. “The inorganic nature which is dominated by the living one, suffers this only because it is in essence the same as what Life is for-itself” (E, I, 394, § 219, Addition). For Life is its “substance” and its “truth.”

As a result of this process, Life, which had already been defined as the absolute universality of beings, has now constituted itself to be so. It is the true substance of objectivity. It has mediated objectivity with itself and has permeated it to such an extent that the latter has become now the actuality of its existence and the world of its thereness. Life “goes beyond” all mechanical and chemical processes of objectivity, makes them into its own “product,” and this product is “thoroughly determined” by Life itself. Thus the indifferent externality of objectivity is eliminated, equalized to Life, and assimilated by it. Life “permeates it qua its universality,” and is its “existence,” “truth” and “power” (L, II, 436). At the end of the life process the world is no longer a predicate of the self-determination of the living *individual* but of the *universality* of Life, namely, of the “species.”

The concept of *species* concretizes the mode of being of Life as “absolute universality which is in- and for-itself.” It also refers to the specific *motility* of Life (*genos*; *genesis*) as one that particularizes itself and remains by-itself in this particularization. This process essentially has the character of a becoming-for-self that comprehends (L, II, 429). (Although I provide a complete explanation of the concept of species in the second

half of this work, a general description is necessary at this stage.)

In order to clarify the concept of "species" I refer to the corresponding discussions in the *Jena Logic* where it is introduced in the section on the "Metaphysics of Objectivity" and is treated much more extensively than in the *Logic* itself (*Jenenser Logik*, 151 ff). It becomes clear in this section that the concept of "species" describes a mode of being of the *world*, in the sense which this term has acquired in this text already in the chapter on "The World," and where it emerges as the result of the "World Process." Life as species then is not characteristic of Life that is *opposed* to objectivity, to the world; rather it refers to the nature of the world that *comes alive* in the life process. "The world process is the process of the species" (*Jenenser Logik*, 154). With the dimension which has been reached by the Idea of Life, the unity and universality of the totality of beings have become visible and actual. Until now subjectivity which was for-itself and objectivity which was in-itself had not been congruent. But "the sublation of this difference opposed to an absolute in-itselfness," which has been realized through the transformation of the world into Life, has also actualized "the totality as a universal," as *Life* itself. "This totality, this species is now the intrinsic being" (JL, 151 ff). The living individual and the world which have come alive "express only one and the same universality" (JL, 154); they are only "moments" of the same species.

Let me attempt to interpret this becoming of Life as species more closely. The world has been "assimilated" into the life process, and it has "come alive." It exists as Life, "as objectivity that is identical with Life" (L, II, 427). The world for the plant is *its* world, and likewise for animals and humans. But this assimilation and bringing to life of the world, which always takes place within the life process, is in truth the work of the species and not of the individual. In the final analysis the individual lives in the world of its species. This is so even if Life can occur only through the activity of an individual, even if Life, as the "negative unity" of a comprehending for-itselfness, means necessarily individuation. The individual is "implicitly" the species (L, II, 427), and the species is the true

“individuality of Life itself” (L, II, 428). Seen from this perspective, the individual proves to be one “that is mediated and produced” (HE, § 168), that stands at a certain point in the history of its species and which first “emerges” from it.

The universality of the species fulfills itself as the “truth” of Life in the course of the self-preservation and perpetuation of Life, which is equal to the “reproduction of the living species” (L, II, 428). Humans reproduce humans. Like Aristotle, Hegel sees in the act of generation an ontological category of Life.² This process as well is essentially an individuating one: through it the individual relates to an individual, but the species first realizes itself “by sublating the particular individualities that are opposed to one another” (L, II, 429). Through individuality the species realizes itself as “simple universality.” The immediacy and individuality of individuals are thereby sublated without being eliminated. Life has now become free for the true universality of *cognition*: “The death of Life signifies the emergence of Spirit” (L, II, 429).

We are justified in inferring this much from Hegel’s claim: in formulating the concept of species, Hegel is concerned with regaining that dimension of universality on which “cognition” (*Erkenntnis*), as a form of the Idea, is based. This has great significance insofar as it shows Hegel attempting to find an explanation for the claim to universality of knowledge which is, nonetheless, *opposed* to the solution provided in transcendental philosophy. It is therefore no accident that at this point in the text one re-encounters a significant dispute with Kant, and in particular a criticism of the Kantian concepts of the “pure I” and of the “I think” as grounds for the universality claim of knowledge (L, II, 430–433).

For Hegel the Idea of Life is the ontological condition and the presupposition of cognitive activity, precisely understood in its true form as “universality,” as the unity of subjectivity and objectivity, of the I and the animated world. The original subject of cognition is thus the “species.” It is possible to cognize the being which is juxtaposed to the cognizing subject only because this being is the “creative presupposition” of the subject of cognition itself. This being has become an existent that is for this subject and which stands in opposition to it. The

unity of I and world, or the prior bonding between the subject who cognizes and beings, does not merely result from knowledge; nor is it grounded in the accidental constitution of human knowledge and experience. This is rather an ontological relation, one that holds among beings themselves, one that is true of the "thing in-itself" (*Ding an sich*). This bond precedes all knowledge and in fact makes factual knowledge possible. Hegel elaborates these connections in a passage which is among the most brilliant of the entire *Logic* and which provides a critical evaluation of Kant's critique of "the rational doctrine of the soul."

Kant had based the paralogism of the soul on a charge of "circularity," which we can explicate as follows: the I can never be made purely into an object for itself, because it "accompanies" all objectification and representation already as an "I think." It follows that "we can never have a distinct concept of this I." "In Kantian terminology the inconvenience is that in order to judge it, we must already make use of this concept of the 'I'" (L, II, 431). Hegel concedes this claim, but finds it "ridiculous" that Kant describes as mere "inconvenience" a condition which constitutes not only the "absolute, eternal nature" of the I but also of the concept itself and of the cognizing being. This condition expresses nothing but the absolute difference according to which all being develops, and which is an originary dividing (*Ur-teilen*), and the positing of otherness and negativity. The existence of the I which becomes a *cognizing* being expresses nothing other than this "circle": to be oneself only by otherness and to be always already by *its* object in order to attain being-by-oneself. The being of the I signifies "the absolute relation to self"; as "judgment which divides," it "makes itself into an object and exists solely via the process of making itself into a circle" (L, II, 432). Just as subjectivity cannot be separated from objectivity, so little can objectivity be separated from subjectivity. The I is a living individuality only always through the "real relation to externality," only always through the life process in which it overpowers the world that is opposed to it. Clearly, this "inseparability" must also manifest itself in thought which is no other than an ontological mode in which the I exists:

The I thinks *something*, itself or something else. This inseparability of the two forms in which the I juxtaposes itself to itself, belongs to the innermost nature of its concept, and in fact to the nature of the concept itself; this is precisely, however, what Kant wants to prevent. (L, II, 433).

This mistaken understanding of the essence of the I displays also a false understanding of the essence of Being in general. It is a “conceptlessness” of the same kind which is true of the dogmatic metaphysics fought against by Kant himself. And it appears “all the more meager and empty when compared with the profounder views of ancient philosophers on the concepts of soul and thinking, as is the case for example with the truly speculative insights of Aristotle” (L, II, 433).

In Hegel’s treatment of “cognition” as a particular form of the Idea, several points must be carefully noted. Life is the presupposition of cognition but not as the specific mode of being of a particular existent in the world, but rather as a mode of being of the world itself. From the start cognition operates within the unity created by Life and world, subjectivity and objectivity. It is not directed against an implicit objectivity, for this is already overcome in the life process. The “object” of cognition stands now in a prior relation of adequacy to cognition. “Intrinsically” it possesses the same mode of being as the subject of cognition, namely, the mode of being characteristic of Life. The meaning and goal of cognition are understood thereby as a coming-into-truth of Being itself, as a communication of beings with their proper selves (*Selbst-verständigung des Seienden selbst*). By first coming wholly to itself through this relation, being becomes “for-itself” what it is already “in-itself.” Therefore cognition is essentially “active,” not passive (E, I, § 226 Addition). Taken in its true sense cognition is a higher and more truthful mode of being than mere aliveness, for this latter has not “cognized” itself and is not in possession of its world as penetrated by the light of comprehension, as another self. For the living being its world is still caught in the immediacy of the life process wherein alone it exists.

The following objection comes to mind at this point: How can cognition be viewed as a special form of the Idea, as an independent mode of being of the concept, if cognition itself

is only a possible behavior of the living organism? The mechanical or chemical object exists “next” to Life in self-sufficiency, but cognition can never do so. This is not quite accurate, however, because in the dimension of cognition Life has not disappeared but has been “sublated.” Cognition is the truth of Life and a mode of being of the living when this is forced away from its immediacy and begins to move itself in the transparency of comprehension. The three forms of the Idea — Life, Cognition, and Absolute Knowledge — do not exist simply next to each other. In their threefold character they constitute the unity of the Idea itself. The prior unity of subjectivity and objectivity, being-by-oneself in otherness is common to them all in such a way that this selfhood is there *for* the self. This unity is manifested in the relation to self even if through different stages of transparency. Because Life represents the felt animation of the world, this unity is wholly immediate, while cognition is freed from the immediacy of self-experience in the direction of reaching reflexive consciousness of this self. What is juxtaposed to cognition, the object, no longer has the “external” form of an implicit objectivity. As something cognized, it has the form of the concept (L, II, 429; 438).

To clarify these relations,* it is necessary to examine more closely the concept of cognition which is basic for Hegel. First, what happens to the object of cognition in the process of cognition? Second, what happens to the subject? Only after clarifying these questions, will the significance of the process of knowing activity in its characteristic unity become clear.

To begin with, let us observe that Hegel himself defines the “comprehension of an object” as follows:

Comprehending an object consists . . . solely in this that the I appropriates it, penetrates it, and brings it to its form. The object of intuition (*Anschauung*) or representation (*Vorstellung*) is still external and alien. Through comprehension, the in-and-for-itselfness which the object still possesses in intuition and representation will be transformed into positedness. The I penetrates the object via thought. But the object is first in-and-for-itselfness, as it exists in

* Beginning with this paragraph and continuing to the end of the citation from the *Logic* on p. 167, this section appears in small print in the original. It has been integrated into the main text so as not to interrupt the flow of the discussion. — Tr.

thought. . . . Thinking sublates the immediacy with which the object first confronts us and transforms it into posited being; but this positedness is its [the object's — Tr.] in-and-for-itselfness or its objectivity. (L, II, 222)

The whole complex significance of cognition, with its unity of the “subjective” and the “objective,” is compressed into this passage. As a first step, let me analyze the *object* as it exists for comprehension (*Begreifen*).

The immediacy of the object is transformed into a positedness; its objectivity, its in-and-for-itselfness, is constituted thereby. When an object is comprehended, the “externality” and “strangeness” with which it still confronts consciousness in the mere act of “representation” is sublated. The object is repositied within the “unity of consciousness.” At first this claim does not appear to be very different from the Kantian understanding of conceptual knowledge; indeed Hegel provides the explication of the activity of comprehension immediately after the Kant critique just examined. But the positing of the object within the unity of consciousness is only possible for Hegel because I and the concept, consciousness and the object, have the same “nature.” This “nature,” which is common to both forms of being, is first defined in its most universal “form”: “Universality which is immediately determinateness, or determinateness which is immediately universality” (L, II, 222). The being which joins together universality and determinacy immediately (“essence” that is equal-to-self and the specific “existing thing”) is the being who knows, and this is consciousness. Thus the unity in which consciousness is grounded and in which it culminates is no longer the unity of transcendental apperception, which Kant had seen as the highest ground of the possibility of human knowledge; rather the highest ground of this possibility is what Hegel considers a “principle” of Being itself. “Consciousness” here means the Being of the one who comprehends as well as that of the comprehended object.

Through this positing of the object within the unity of consciousness, the kind of process which is characteristic of comprehended beings becomes visible. The comprehended object is no longer an immediate one; its becoming is made manifest in its “genesis,” in its process of having become such and such.³

The substance of this object is now understood as a subject which allows all determinacies to emerge out of itself while mediating them with itself and while constituting itself as a relation that remains identical with itself. Through this process the unity of the object is attained and formed. Furthermore, the being that is comprehended attains its own truth through this act of comprehension which brings the object to its truth. For the uncomprehended object is mere in-itselfness; all in-itselfness, however, requires fulfillment in for-itselfness. The object that is only in-itself cannot attain the freedom of for-itselfness on its own. Thus the fulfillment of the very meaning of its Being is dependent on its being comprehended by a consciousness. By comprehending the object, "by making it its own and giving it its own form," the I does not place the object in a realm which is strange and external to it; rather through this act it lends the object the truth of its Being: "it is in-and-for-itself as it is . . . in thought," "this *positedness* is its in-and-for-itselfness or its *objectivity*" (L, II, 222). The process of conceptual knowledge is thus at the same time the completion of a movement taking place within the very object of comprehension. The "definition," that limiting determination given by cognition to its object, when "true," is a self-definition of the object. It is a self-determination that delimits it from otherness.⁴

In the *Jena Logic* these relations are clearer than in the larger *Logic* (Cf. JL, 114ff; 198ff.).⁵ In the *Jena Logic*, to describe the process of cognition, Hegel uses the striking formula that the object of cognition will be transformed "from the one defined to the definition itself" (JL, 150), from something that is determined from without to a self-limiting determination. It shows itself "that qua definition . . . the object defined must be posited as one that is reflected-into-itself, as universal, so that what is juxtaposed to it, and from which it abstracts does not fall outside it, but that it remains equal-to-self in otherness" (JL, 116). True definition is not an alien formula thrust on the object defined; rather the "subject" underlying the definition is "identical with it, and no other than this" (JL, 109). As a limiting determination, the definition is no other than the manner in which the defined subject delimits itself from other

subjects, determines itself, thus “preserving” itself (precisely for this reason Hegel speaks of “definition *or* self-preservation”!). “In the case of the definition of living things, the determinations in question are necessarily based on weapons of attack or defense as the means through which the former preserve themselves against other particular beings” (JL, 109). Cognition finds its truth, therefore, when the determinations of the object of cognition are derived as from a “living centre” (L, II, 463), as the necessary movement of the latter. In this way nothing can be and can occur in cognition which is not in and which does not occur to the object itself. For Hegel the question of how such a congruence [between definition and its object — Tr.] is possible presents an ontological rather than epistemological issue. He has already explained why this is so in those sections of the *Logic* dealing with cognition. The being who knows and the being that is known possess “in themselves” the same being: the substance of the object of cognition as well is “subject.” Its true being is self-relation as the equality-with-self-in-otherness, and its truth is comprehension.

Let me return now to the second question: What happens to the subject of cognition? Viewed from the standpoint of the knowing I, what happens in cognition is clear. The I makes the object “its own,” “penetrates it,” and brings it to “its proper form” (L, II, 222). By becoming cognized, the object assumes the form of the I. Its substance is grasped as subject and, more precisely, as the subject who comprehends. In cognition the I is actually always by-itself. In accordance with its substance, each being is always already a “unity of self-consciousness.” Only on the basis of this unity can the absorption of the object of knowledge into the unity of knowing consciousness, as it is completed in the act of cognition, be constitutive for “experience.” Only because the being that is in-and-for-itself, the “object,” the “objective unity” is no other than “the unity of the I with itself,” “a major claim of Kant’s philosophy can be justified, namely, that in order to know what the concept (the true substance of beings) is, one must recall the nature of the I” (L, II, 222).

These explications in no way suffice as an interpretation of the Hegelian concept of knowledge, but perhaps they can con-

tribute to our understanding of that peculiar unity⁶ of “subjective” and “objective” processes which mean cognition for Hegel. Cognition is not the conduct of one specific being, namely of the human I, in face of the totality of beings; this conduct rather is the expression of a return-to-self, a becoming-for-self of beings themselves. It is no accident, therefore, that the actual explication of cognition in the *Logic* no longer refers to the *I* of cognition. In the realm of cognition the I is no longer juxtaposed to a world in-itself. Already the realm of Life presented the unity of objectivity and subjectivity, and cognition is only the uncovering of this unity, the “drive” to sublimate the “presupposed” otherness, and to “perceive the identity with self in the object” (L, II, 439). The subject of this drive is the concept itself; the being moving itself within this unity is *not* “Life” qua a living individual, for its death is a necessary condition for the “emergence of Spirit”; but *neither* is it Life in the form of the “living male and female,” but Life as pure “species,” as “pure universality” (L, II, 429).

Thus viewed, cognition cannot represent the highest form of the Idea and the authentic Being and its process of movement. It is true that it is by-itself when it is by its object and by its other; it is also true that it leads this object to its true form, that is, the form of the concept, but it is essentially *dependent* on the presence of this object. The object is “given,” it is “pre-found” (L, II, 438, 445). It can be brought to its truth and pointed toward its self-determining necessity only in this form: The fundamental finitude of knowledge is rooted in this fact: “Cognition is *finite*, because it presupposes a *prefound* world; therefore its identity with this is not *for-itself*. The truth to which it can arrive, therefore, can only be finite” (HE, 136). The unity of the cognized and the cognizing discussed is never to be realized in knowledge and for knowledge, however much it may already be there and however much it may constitute the ground of the possibility of cognition. Cognition is always dependent on the pre-giveness of its object, of the world as “being” (HE, 135). It can never let this emerge in its true and intrinsic necessity; thus, in the final analysis, cognition can never grasp that the object is thus and not otherwise. Cognition can only lead “the external determinacy” of being toward “in-

wardness”; it can let it emerge with necessity out of the very “concept” of beings, but it can never produce the determination which is “intrinsic and immanent” to the subject (HE, 140). “The concept does not *become* one with itself in its object or its reality” (L, II, 477. Emphasis added.).

Is there then a higher truth of Life which does not suffer from the deficiency of cognition? Is there a mode of being which lets the world emerge, and which “lets go forth” its object such that this object no longer has the “appearance” of in-itselfness, of a self-sufficient objectivity which stands over and against one? Put differently, is there a being which would reveal a more intensified form of being-by-oneself in otherness? Indeed, this is the “practical Idea” of action, the Idea of the “good.” In this case the being that comprehends stands opposed to “actuality as itself actual” (L, II, 478), knows itself in its determinacy to be the “purpose” of this actuality, and gives this reality determination and content by transforming it through its action. So long as the “good” to be realized through the practical Idea is considered a “subjective purpose” alone which is not implicitly contained in objective actuality but which first must be embedded in it, then action is just as deficient as knowledge, but in the opposite sense: for action objectivity presents an “externality that in- and for-itself is nothing.” Now all truth has been transposed to the subjectivity of the one acting, just as previously, in the case of cognition, all truth was attributed to the in-itselfness of objectivity, and cognition was viewed as the passive completion of this truth. Both modes of the being of Life then, cognition as well as action, each taken for itself, do not unfold in the transparency of their truth although they implicitly contain it. Pure cognition views its world as an other which is implicitly true, thereby misunderstanding the subjectivity of objectivity, whereas action treats the world as an empty receptacle for the actualization of its subjective purposes, thereby misunderstanding the objectivity of subjectivity. “While the intellect is concerned only with taking the world such as it is, the will aims at making the world into what it *ought* to be” (E, I, 406, §239 Addition). What separates the acting will from the actual truth of being is simply the fact that “for it external reality does not possess the form of true

being," a stage which *cognition* has arrived at for itself. "The Idea of the good must therefore be supplemented through that of truth" (L, II, 481). The "Absolute Idea," actual being in its highest truth, is no other than the "unity of the theoretical and practical Idea," or it is action that knows and a knowledge that acts.⁷

This transition to the "Absolute Idea" is made possible through the fact that the "good" no longer appears as mere subjective purpose but as an ontological determination of beings themselves: "The objective world is Idea in- and for-itself, as it posits itself eternally as *purpose* and produces its actuality through its activity" (E, I, 408 §235). Indeed from the beginning the *Logic* has attempted to demonstrate that the good, as purpose, goal, and what ought to be is contained in the Being of beings, and this is no other than the process of the eternally recurring and eternally self-dirempting (*urteilend*) fulfillment of what beings ought to be.

If we keep this conclusion in mind, it should be clear that all *moral* concepts must be removed from Hegel's Idea of the "good." Hegel here comes close to the Platonic idea of the *agathon*. An explicit reference that the "good" must be understood as an objective-ontological determination is given in Hegel's introduction to this concept in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* and in his discussion of Socratic philosophy. With the concept of the "good," Socrates is said to aim at a determination of "essence" or "substance," "qua that which is in- and for-itself, qua what preserves itself, substance has been defined as purpose (*telos*) and more precisely as the true, the good" (GPh, II, 43). Thus the "good" is understood as the "universal, which has determined itself in itself" (Ibid., 70). Likewise Anaxagoras had comprehended the "universal" as *nous* and the philosophers of nature had sought to define it as one or more self-sufficient substance. Hegel views it as Socratic "one-sidedness" that he applied this concept of the "good" to the moral sphere alone, whereby "subsequently all followers of moral idle talk and popular philosophy declared him their patron saint" (Ibid., 47). But "the good that is purpose in- and for-itself . . . is also a principle of the philosophy of nature" (Ibid., 75).

The Absolute Idea

When Hegel now makes the transition from the unity of the theoretical and practical Idea, from action that is also a form of knowing, to the “Absolute Idea,” we cannot interpret this as a transition in the “ordinary” sense, for at the stage of the Absolute Idea not a single, *new* ontological determination ought to emerge. Already in the ontological mode of Life beings moved within the realm of the truth of Being. Beings existed through the immediate unity of subjectivity and objectivity, through their other which was their world, and thus remained only by themselves. But “the deficiency of Life consists in that it is only *implicitly* the Idea [*an sich*]” (E, I, 408, §236 Addition). Life in its immediacy lacks *knowledge* of its truth; therefore it can and must “lose” itself, without at the same time perishing in this loss. It is never completely by-itself and free, but never completely removed from itself and beyond itself either. Cognition, however, is not subject to the same drawback as Life itself of being immediately lost [in its other — Tr.]. In the realm of cognition the immediate independence of the world is sublated, and the latter becomes a pure object (*Gegen-stand*) of cognition, which now thereby can freely move in the element of for-itselfness. Yet this does not do justice to the truth of objectivity. The world is not merely object for a being that is freely for-itself, but it is intrinsically an “in-and-for-itselfness.” This is the meaning of “objectivity,” “something that is in-and-for-itself.” Indeed, the in-and-for-itselfness, the intrinsic being of objectivity is in truth *subjectivity*, that is, being

in the mode of a comprehending and comprehended relation-to-self — the concept (*der Begriff*).

In order to proceed from these “deficient” forms of the Idea to its “absolute” form, all that is required is gathering together its already attained “forms,” and to show the truth of such a synthesis by demonstrating its concrete character. The Absolute Idea is nothing new. It is not the final unveiling of an absolute being. Absolute Idea is no other than the completely revealed truth of what had been the object of the *Logic* from the very beginning, namely *Being* itself. It was before our eyes from the very first page, and the entire investigation until now has been no other than its exposition and explication.

When one speaks of the Absolute Idea, one can assume that here the truth finally comes out, and that everything is brought forth. One can make all sorts of empty declarations about the Absolute Idea; its true content, however, is none other than the entire system whose development we have observed till this point. (E, I, 409, §237 Addition)

These pointed words of Hegel ought to make clear what Absolute Idea means: the “Idea” of Being itself, as it exists in pure form and truth, the true “universality” implicit in all beings, whose varied and more or less “adequate” concretizations present only different modes of being.¹ Let me use a dangerous equivocation and say that the Absolute Idea means the existing thing as well as the living individual as they *are* according to their *Idea*. In this sense, Hegel defines the Absolute Idea as the “universal mode” through which all particular modes of finitude and infinity are “sublated and unveiled” (L, II, 484ff). The Absolute Idea is the “infinite” or simply the “form” to which all content is juxtaposed and whose determination can be no other than “its own complete totality.” We have recognized the “universal form” of Being, however, as a *motility* (*Bewegtheit*). Accordingly, the only precise explication of the Absolute Idea given by Hegel is a summary account of the form of this process of motility. This process exists as a “completed totality,” out of which all particular forms of motility emerge as forms of being. “What is under consideration here is not the content as such, but the universality of its form, that

is the method" (L, II, 485). Here method means "the *movement* of the concept itself" (this meaning of movement is elaborated later), "the absolute activity, a movement that is self-determining and self-actualizing" (L, II, 486. Emphasis added.).

The analysis of the motility of Absolute Idea which follows can be defined as the actual core of Hegelian ontology (cf. L, II, 487–504). The presentation of the Idea of Being as motility lies at the core of Hegelian ontology. Parallels to this discussion can be found in Hegel's analysis of the concept of "development" in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, which invokes more explicitly the categories of *energeia* and *dynamis* (GPh, I, 49–56). But here our interpretation is confined to the exposition in the *Logic* and is occasionally complemented by the relevant passages from the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*.

Every movement must be shown to be the movement of something. What will this something be? Conceptual thought at first meets and "proceeds" from something which is "immediate," something which has not yet *been* comprehended from within. In the realm of the Idea, which is concerned with the "absolute form" of all particular content, this immediate something can no longer be "an object of sensory intuition or representation," for these are always "manifold and individual." It can be only an immediacy of thought itself, "a simple and universal one" (L, II, 488). At first nothing can be said of what is simple and universal other than that it presents a simple "relation to self." This is a unity which becomes universality through the relation of a manifold to itself. However, this had been the first characterization of "being" as an immediate presence-at-hand (*Vorhandensein*). "Indeed this first universality is immediate and for this reason possesses just as much the significance of *being*; for being means this abstract relation to self" (L, II, 488). Accordingly, the process of movement will now be analyzed in relation to the mere being present-at-hand of such a simple and universal being.

All that is present-at-hand is *determinate*. The simple and universal being as well has such *determinacy*. It is separated from and surrounded by others which it is not. But Hegel is concerned here not with such formal-logical concepts but with concrete ontological interpretations: "The universal . . . is not

merely abstract, but an objective universal, that is to say, it is in-itself a *concrete totality*" (L, II, 489). It signifies the concrete wholeness of what is present-at-hand as it is in this state. Yet the thorough determinacy which characterizes all that is present-at-hand means its essential *deficiency*. All that is present-at-hand is implicitly *more* than the determinacy which it presents itself to be. This something "more," which it is not immediately, belongs to its "in-itselfness." It is "immanent" within it, and the being which is present-at-hand is dependent on it. "The immediacy of the beginning must implicitly possess the deficiency and the resulting drive which will lead it forward" (L, II, 489). The deficiency and negativity of being is the ground of the movement which already lies within it and which is in need of no external impetus: "as such the concrete totality . . . in-itself possesses the beginning of a process of development" (L, II, 490).

Here we meet once again the fundamental phenomenon of Being which has accompanied us throughout the ontology. The unity of what is present-at-hand with its negation, as it is intrinsic to the former, results in "the emergence of *difference*, of judgment" (L, II, 490). Thereby the concrete form which the being that is present-at-hand has, in virtue of presenting the "beginning" of movement, is defined more precisely, and with it the second form of movement emerges as well. We now reach "the point when, a universal first, considered in- and for-itself, shows itself to be its other"; "the immediate shows itself *to be* mediated, to be related to another, or the universal now exists *as particular*" (L, II, 494. Emphasis added.). In this mode of being something as another, all dualism and schism characteristic of being is expressed. As determinate being, all that is present-at-hand is the other of itself. Its in-itselfness, however, is never really lost in each of its determinacies. It always has more and other possibilities; it possesses a greater *power* (*Mächtigkeit*) and thereby also the "drive" to realize other possibilities [than are revealed in its present determinacy — Tr.]. On the basis of this duality, it becomes clear why, when viewed more precisely, this motility can be characterized as a process of returning-to-self, and becoming *for-itself* of what it is already *in-itself*.

What has been described up to this point as the first “state” of the motility of beings turned out to be immediate present-at-handness; already, however, this has been shown to be an intrinsically “synthetic” phenomenon. Immediate being appears in its determinacy as the negation of its intrinsic being, but this latter transcends its determinacy and reaches over to its own potency and possibility. It determines itself “as the other of itself” (L, II, 491). In this “difference” between its in-itselfness and its immediacy lies the “drive” of its movement which leads beyond immediacy. Being sets itself in movement.

The second stage of motility is characterized by that being which has *fallen* into determinacy as into its own negativity. At this point in-itselfness has fallen into oblivion; it has perished. Facing us now is not an in-itselfness *as* being-other, but rather “the other *in-itself*; the other of an other” (L, II, 496). The first immediacy “has now *perished* in the other” (L, II, 496). In this process, it has brought about and posited a new situation, namely, the second state of motility, which is one of negativity as such, something that is no longer immediate but mediated.

This definition of motility in its second stage, however, immediately turns into its opposite. The negativity of beings cannot be observed when they are considered as isolated from each other; they have to be viewed “as the other of the *first*, as the negative of the *immediate*” (L, II, 495). As a concrete entity a being is not a simple unit, rather it is “a relation or a bond.” It always points toward its origin, to that out of which it has emerged and *whose* determinacy it is. This origin is not to be understood as if it referred to the cause that preceded being, and which subsequently disappeared in the effect. This second stage to which being has arrived, *is* only the result and the continuation of the first. “It contains the determination of the first in-itself. The first is thus essentially preserved and contained in the other” (L, II, 495).

When viewed in light of the preceding exposition, one can no longer consider these determinations trivial. Hegel himself defines them “as the most important in rational cognition.” The whole *Logic* presents nothing other than “the absolute truth and necessity” of this insight. By thinking this context of relations to their final point Hegel also arrives at the funda-

mental structure of historical happening, and in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* with reference to this, he writes: "The entire moment of difference [*der ganze Unterschied*] in world-history" depends on this distinction (*Unterscheidung*) (GPh, I, 34).

Here is the point, however, where the two fundamental processes of happening part from each other. If the Being of the self-moving entities is such that they are totally absorbed by their current negativity, without nonetheless being able to grasp and relate to this as their negativity, then entities are doomed always to change, to become other than they are, and ultimately to perish. The meaning and purpose of this process of happening as well are absolute difference and the fulfillment of the implicit being of entities; but in this case this meaning and purpose come about only through change, passing away, and demise. If, however, the Being of entities is characterized by a form of self-relation which knows itself as such, then the "turning point" of Being in general is the one which emerges in the second stage of its movement. Existing in the condition of negativity, being "must posit the *unity* that is contained within it" (L, II, 496), must absorb each negativity into itself as *its* very own, must sublimate it, and must relate itself to itself through it. Thereby it must win the unity of its existence, and preserving this, it must unfold itself out of it. Hegel names this grasping (*Ergreifen*) of negativity through its comprehension (*Begreifen*), the "negative relation to self" (L, II, 496ff). First, through this relation does being become an entity which exists "for-itself," that is, a "subject, person, a free being" (L, II, 497). This alternative mode of being leads to a completely different form of happening [than the one examined — Tr.]. It represents the "innermost source of all activity, of a self-motion which is alive and spiritual"; on this "subjectivity alone depends the overcoming (*Aufheben*) of the opposition between concept and reality, and this constitutes truth" (L, II, 496). This negative relation to self presents the third stage of this process of motility. The thrust toward authentic Being, the return of beings to themselves in the "realm of freedom" begins here.

Yet we must not interpret this as if the third as well as the fourth stage of motility which follow simply no longer existed

in the case of those entities which showed themselves incapable of sustaining such a relation. It is true that in this case they no longer appear as the stages of "this same being" which unfolds itself only by continuously changing, but they are present as independent entities, distinct from this being. The intrinsic unity of these stages of motility is accessible only to the conceptual comprehension (of humans) but not for the beings themselves. In this way the *unity* of the process is retained in the face of ontologically different modes of being. In the process of "change" as well the substance undergoing such transformation is now asserted to be "subject." (I use the term "change" with reference to all processes of this kind, and distinguish it from the "free" process of transformation which is "development.")

This "negative relation to self" ushers the fourth stage of this process of movement. Being has brought its negativity in relation with its in-itselfness, it has grasped and accepted it as *its* own. It has *posited* itself as existing within this negativity. Thus it has become *positive* itself and has attained the true unity of its being as a form of unity through difference (L, II, 497). It has now returned to itself such as not to lose itself in the manifold of its determinations; rather it comprehends itself and sustains itself as "the identical and the universal" in the manifoldness of its negativity. In this condition it necessarily exists as immediacy, as an individual determinacy, but now this immediacy is one posited by itself. Thus it is "concrete"; it is an actuality which has grown together and which has mediated all its determinacies as its own possibilities and has freely posited them. And conversely, because all its possibilities are implicitly contained in it, it now becomes for-itself what it always already was. Through all its actual determinacies it returns only to itself. It is by itself in all otherness and only *is* itself in actual otherness.

One should never consider and postulate these four stages of the process of movement of beings in isolation from each other, for they form a self-moving unity and a self-enclosed system of movement. Hegel himself does not abstractly divide this into four but considers the "negativity" of stages three and four together as a unity, so that only three stages result at the

end (L, II, 497). In the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* the explication of movement as development refers only to *two* stages, characterized as *dynamis* and *energeia*. Let me consider them briefly here.

In order to grasp what development means, two stages — so to speak — must be distinguished. The first is known as the inner constitution [*Anlage*], capability [*Vermögen*], in-itselfness (as I name it), *potentia*, *dynamis*. The second determination is for-itselfness, actuality [*actus*, *energeia*]. (GPh, 33)

Here Hegel subsumes the first two stages of movement under the concept of in-itselfness, for he explicitly emphasizes that “the in-itself is already concrete” (GPh, 37). It is not an abstract possibility, but “is one and the other, and both are one” (GPh, 37). This concrete in-itself is now both inner constitution and capability, that is to say, *dynamis*, in the twofold sense of possibility and potency. It is always potentially something that it is not in actuality, and it has the power to bring this possible self into actuality. This concreteness of in-itselfness is the ground and impetus of its movement:

It is differentiated from within — as in-itself, as possibility it is neither posited as different, nor is it posited in unity (this would contradict differentiation); it is simple and yet it contains difference. This inner contradiction of the concrete is what drives it to development. (GPh, 37)

Motility then means the development, the unfolding of the in-itself, the outward display of what is implicit in the latter; in this process being becomes *for-itself* what it already implicitly is. Here Hegel uses the example of creatures endowed with reason: intrinsically a human being possesses reason; already the child possesses the capacity, the *dynamis* of reason, without, however, *being* already reasonable. Only when rationality becomes a reality *for* the human being, only when it “enters into his or her consciousness” and becomes the object of such consciousness, does the human being *exist* in actuality, as *energeia*, as what it had always been potentially.

In comparison with the *Logic* this presentation is schematic and can be easily misunderstood. First we must observe that this explanation is concerned with “development,” with a form

of motility that is specific to beings who are capable of comprehension. But even in this case, we must not interpret these determinations as if they simply meant that development was transformed into a process of consciousness alone. As has been emphasized since the outset, the category of “for-itselfness” is the most comprehensive in the entire *Logic* (cf. p. 61 above): it refers to all shades of the unity of entities which exist as “selves” in the manifold of their determinations. This category extends from the perishable and transitory unity of the existing entity to the self-moving unity of the living individual. Indeed here as well the category of becoming for-itself is defined so as to fit the development of a being who also possesses comprehension, and in fact therefore signifies a process of becoming conscious. Nevertheless it remains a category that is applicable to *every* form of movement. In this sense it means simply that process of “negative relation to self” through which unity is constituted, and which *implicitly* is contained in the movement of the existing thing without manifesting itself as such a relation therein.

Let us return once more to the exposition in the *Logic*. In the fourth stage of motility, being (*das Seiende*) has returned to itself; it has freely constituted itself for-itself as an actual unity. In this capacity being first comes to exist as *subject*. In this determination the two traditional definitions of ‘subject’ come together: being exists as what underlines the manifold of its determinations which transform themselves (*hypomenon, hypokeimenon*; substance), and as what lies at the ground and which sustains itself, it also exists as free self-relation, as I. By constituting itself as an actual unity through the negative relation to itself, being has come to *ground* its first immediacy (the first stage of this process of movement). Beginning with the stage of for-itselfness it has attained, being has proceeded backward to mediate with itself and to reposit the immediacy which was at first merely given to it as its *own*; it has thereby posited it as the *ground* of its for-itselfness and has made its own implicit being (*Ansichsein*) its own “basis” (*Grundlage*) (L, II, 502). This unfolding process of beings, which moves forward to reabsorb into a unity and to posit in mediated form every prior determinacy into which being has “fallen,” is just as much a move-

ment backwards to ground this unity. The implicit being of the beginning in which all possibilities of development were already contained thereby proves itself to be the truly *universal* amid the manifold of determinations, for "it forms the basis" (L, II, 502), for "implicit being in fact governs the process" (GPh, I, 34).

The enrichment proceeds alongside the *necessity* of the concept, it is sustained by it, and every determination is at the same time a reflection-into-self. Every new stage of *going outside itself*, every further determination, is at the same time a withdrawal into the self, the greatest extension, therefore, signifies at the same time the greatest *intensity*. The most concrete and the most subjective is, therefore, what is richest, and what withdraws into itself in its simplest depth is at the same time the mightiest and the most comprehensive. (L, II, 502).

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that throughout the entire process of movement beings have not proceeded outside, beyond, and away from themselves but have always remained by themselves. Being (*das Seiende*)

sustains itself in its otherness; universality in its particularity, in judgment and in reality; at each stage of progressive determination it sublates its entire previous content, and through this dialectical advance not only does it not lose anything or leave it behind, but it carries with itself all that it has acquired, thereby enriching and solidifying itself. (L, II, 502)

Let us recall that the exposition of the process of movement presented here is a "determinacy" of the Absolute Idea, of the simple universal, and "absolute" "form" of beings in general. These attributes therefore now acquire a double meaning. The absolute form is not only the universal but also the most actual and the truest form. The Absolute Idea not only stands at the end of the *Logic* as the most universal *form* out of which all that has preceded it emerges as particularity but also is purely the *true* form of being. All the concrete interpretations of different forms of being strive toward it as that in which being, in the truest sense, attains by-itselfness in all otherness, thereby returning to itself. We cannot repeat here all the stages of this demonstration. The following suffices.

The first phenomenon encountered in the course of the

ontological interpretation was that of being as motility (*Bewegtheit*) and its basis, namely, the absolute difference between in-itselfness and existence (*Dasein*) as it was present in various forms throughout all the regions of being. The central question for further interpretation resulting from this phenomenon was, How can the unity of beings constitute and sustain themselves in this movement which is always also one of negativity and of falling into otherness? In accordance with the ontological beginning point, this was equivalent to the following: which is that form of motility which takes place in such fashion as to at the same time construct unity? Thus from the beginning the question concerning the actual unity of beings is related to that of their proper motility. The ground and the "form" of the unity of beings must lie then in the mode in which they are. Each region of being then corresponds to a certain form of the unity and process of motility.

The conclusion of the Objective Logic was that the actual unity of beings could be thought of only as the unity of the concept; accordingly in reality motility can be no other than being as a process of comprehending (*das Sein als Begreifen*). Only then can being truly exist as subject. This is an ontological mode which previous modes of being implicitly possessed, but only as an obscure possibility which transcended them and which they could not master.

Ontologically subjectivity as well possesses stages of truth in which it is at first confronted by an unmastered and uncomprehended objectivity, on which it is ontologically dependent and *through* which alone it can *exist*. Only with the Being of Life is the unity of objectivity and subjectivity attained. In the life process the world is animated. Life lives *in* its world such that the latter is the "presupposition" of its very being.

The truth of the "Idea" of Being is first revealed in the realm of the living. This truth is that objectivity is none other than subjectivity and that the "concept" grasps the difference between the two regions in their unity. In the realm of "cognition" (*Erkennen*) the Being of objectivity is present in its true form; it becomes clear that its "substance" is the concept and hence that objectivity is in fact subjectivity. The "thing itself" (*die Sache*) will be recognized as an in-and-for-itselfness; the chang-

ing manifold determinacies of beings will be returned to the “universality” of their Being. This universality allows these determinations to unfold out of itself via a concrete process of genesis, which behaves throughout these determinations and toward them as a continuing unity. What cognition expresses as the concept of its object, is not only the truth of cognition but the ontological truth of the object itself.

Cognition by itself, however, cannot reach its truth, for it presupposes a “profound” world which it is essentially “dependent.” It can grasp the necessity of this world, but not its freedom which first allows this necessity to take place (L, II, 476). The cognizing subjectivity does not recognize in the objectivity it knows its own being. For this reason cognition still remains caught in “the difference and finitude” of judgment, in an essential division (HE, 141; *Ur-teilung*). It exists in its own world as by another, by a negativity which it has not yet grasped to be its own. To this extent the movement of cognition as well is not the highest form. Cognition loses itself in another (even if this only seems to be another); it is not wholly by-itself in otherness.

This condition could first be fulfilled by a kind of cognition which recognizes itself in its object, and “for which the object as such is the object of cognition or for which the concept is object” (HE, 141) Only such a being can be truly by-itself in otherness which not only *lives* in the immediate unity of itself with the other, but which also *knows* this unity, and which thereby no longer appears to be lost [in its other — Tr.]. The “Absolute Idea” of Being is first concrete as a subjectivity which grasps objectivity to be subjectivity and which knows it “as an objective world, whose inner ground and actual permanence is the concept itself” (L, II, 483). This is a kind of subjectivity which completes itself in a form of self-comprehension, in a form of self-objectification (*Sich-selbstgegenständlich-sein*). “This is the *noesis noesos* which Aristotle had already described as the highest form of the Idea” (E, I, 408, § 236 Addition).

It is not our task here to investigate whether the reference to Aristotle at this point is justified. It is at least clear that in not postulating “thought thinking itself” as a thesis from the beginning which would then dominate the ontological investi-

gation, but in letting this thesis arise out of an analysis of different modes of being as motility, as representing the “highest” among them, Hegel stands on the ground of Aristotelian ontology. But a purely formal interpretation of his determination on the basis of the concept of movement which Hegel considers basic would also be insufficient. The concrete determination of the Absolute Idea as the unity of theoretical and practical Idea or as the unity of Life and cognition would speak against this. Despite the difficulties that it involves, we must insist on the double meaning of the Absolute Idea, which on the one hand simply means the universal mode of being and, on the other, the highest and truest form of being. Such definitions of the Absolute Idea as “universal Idea,” “universal modality” [of being — Tr.], “infinite form,” “logical Idea,” belong in the first category, while those like “truth which knows itself,” “all of truth,” “personality,” “atom-like subjectivity,” “imperishable life” come under the second (L, II, 484 ff). (Maybe in this ambivalence one can note the influence on Hegel of the conflation in Aristotelian ontology between the two directions of the *on ei on*, on the one hand, and the *timiotaton on (theion)*, on the other). We can say that in general in the *Logic* Hegel aims at the first line of interpretation, while in his later *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* and the *Encyclopaedia* the second becomes more dominant.

After these explications, the characterization of the motility of the Absolute Idea as “method” should not appear strange. When being is comprehended according to its “Absolute Idea,” its motility can be only a movement of knowing. What is comprehended through such a movement is nothing other than its own process of development (*Geschehen*); this is at one and the same time the process of motility of the subject matter (*die Sache selbst*) in- and for-itself: “It is the proper method of the subject matter itself because its activity is that of the concept. This is also the true *meaning* of its universality” (L, II, 486). The process of movement through which cognition defines objectivity to be the concept, and deduces it from the latter, is at the same time the proper movement of objectivity itself, while the latter, in accordance with its “Idea,” is a being that comprehends. The movement of cognition is “both a form and

mode of cognition, of the concept which knows itself to be subjectivity, as well as being the objective form and mode, that is, the substantiality, of things" (L, II, 486).

Let us return to the interpretation of Absolute Idea as "absolute form." In the fourth stage of motility existent being had returned to itself and had constituted itself as a true, authentic unity, grounded and held together from within; thereby it also succeeded in grounding and in mediating with its being as subjectivity, the immediacy which it had been at the beginning. In this mode, being once more exists as immediacy, only now as a "mediated immediacy," as the realization of its actual being, as the concept. As something that is ready and at hand (*Vorhandenes*), however, it exists once more through "difference," through "judgment." Once again it is subject to a determinacy which appears as its negation and which must be mediated and repositied anew. This is "the new beginning" of movement (L, II, 502). Observed from the standpoint of the totality of beings, which had been thrown toward (*entworfen worden war*) their "authentic being" through the Absolute Idea, this means that the Being of the Absolute Idea is none other than that immediate "being" with which the *Logic* had begun. It is the unveiled and transparent truth which the immediate "being" of the beginning had been "implicitly," and wherein it had its ground and permanence. "Thus, with the Absolute Idea the *Logic* too has returned to that simple unity which was its beginning; the pure immediacy of being . . . is the Idea which has reached its appropriate sameness with self through mediation and the overcoming of mediation" (L, II, 504). Viewed from the ontological standpoint reached now, however, the immediate "being" of Objective Logic proves itself in truth to be another, namely, an immediacy which has emerged out of the highest and most intensive form of mediation. As a ready presence (*Vorhandenheit*), it refers back to a long genesis which has become actual in it. Likewise it is an exteriority, which leads back by itself to an interiority, to the interiority of the Absolute Idea as the condition of its own possibility. The immediacy of "being" shows itself as a specific "form" of the Absolute Idea: "As a totality existing in this form, it is *Nature* (L, II, 505).

Once it has reached this point, the ontological explication can proceed to interpret immediate being in its truthful mode, that is, this kind of explication can now assume the form of a *Philosophy of Nature*.

This development of the Hegelian system from the “Logic” to the “Philosophy of Nature” can be understood only when one considers the function of the Absolute Idea: to present at one and the same time the universal and true form of Being in contradistinction to the manifold of beings *and* to various modes of being (on the relationship of the unity and singularity of the concept to the manifold of existing beings, see L, I, 18; The Idea is but one form of the concept). Entities *exist* only through the variously occurring difference of in-itselfness and existence, as for-itselfness in otherness. “Nature,” that immediately existing being, as it is found in the external dimension of space and, as it is the otherness of the “Idea,” is rooted in the Idea of Being itself. The Idea *is* always also already nature whenever and wherever Being has “resolved itself” (*sich entschlossen hat*) to be as existing being (Dasein); whenever entities *are*, this resolution (*Entschluss*) has already taken place. For this reason, the further definition of the Absolute Idea as “nature” is “not a becoming and a transition” (L, II, 505). It is not to be compared to any other transition with the *Logic*, for it is a free “resolution,” a letting oneself be in otherness on the part of the Absolute Idea. This resolution (*Entschluss*) of the Absolute Idea is a process of self-determination (*sich-entschliessen*) and self-revelation (*auf-schliessen*) of Being itself to let itself go as an immediately existing being. It is in this process and through this process alone that Being is and becomes.

This step defines the relationship of the entire *Logic* to the Philosophy of Nature and to the other sciences. The *Logic* considers the Idea of Being in its purity, *prior* to its “realization” in that sphere which constitutes nature (L, II, 505). Viewed in this light, the famous definition of the *Logic*, “that it is the exposition of God, as he is in his eternal being *prior* to the creation of nature and of finite spirit” (L, I, 31) loses its fantastic quality. Indeed the idea of Being presented in the *Logic* *precedes* every form of nature, just as every ontology *takes pre-*

cedence over a Philosophy of Nature. At the end of the *Logic*, when this definition is referred to once more, the purely “logical” or “ontological” character of this “precedence” is clarified: the Absolute Idea is “still logical, it is enveloped in pure thought, it is the science of the divine concept” (L, II, 505).

Overview of the Preceding and Transition to Part II

Only now in retrospect can we clarify some of the essential points of our analysis. Hegel's programmatic claim in the introduction to the *Logic* that the activity of thinking and being, the individual thought and its content (*Sache*), concept and the thing-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*), are thoroughly identical has been particularly misleading in this respect and has covered up the original meaning of the entire *Logic*, for this claim has been viewed as a premise underlying the whole ontological exposition and as thus presupposed by it; and it has been ignored that, far from being presupposed by it, this thesis could develop only out of this ontology.

The formulations of this principle of identity frequently change in the *Logic*, but the basic meaning remains the same throughout. Let us concentrate on the formula presented in the introduction to the *Logic*: the pure science contains "thought insofar as this is just as much the thing itself [*die Sache selbst*] or the thing itself insofar as this is pure thought" (L, I, 30). At the same point in the text Hegel also claims that the higher truth of the "old metaphysics" in contrast to transcendental philosophy is the following:

Thought and its determinations are not something alien to the object but rather [constitute — Tr.] its very essence, or that entities and thoughts about them . . . agree intrinsically with one another. The immanent determinations of thought and the true nature of things have one and the same content. (L, I, 26)

The concrete significance of this claim, which for Hegel is indispensable for understanding the entire *Logic*, first becomes clear when we reach the stage of the Absolute Idea. Here Hegel gives an objective justification of the dual meaning of the term "thought." On the one hand, thought means the process of thinking itself and, on the other hand, the "reality" thought about and the reality revealed in thinking, that is, the *true* reality, and this means true thoughts. For example, the concept of a plant wherein I think the essence of the plant in its concrete fullness is a true thought. When thinking about this concept in this manner, I allow the manifold determinations of the plant to emerge from its essence as from its ground, and I ground in this unity of essence and process the existence of the plant as the equality-with-self of a specific mode of self-relationality. This *is* indeed the essence of the plant; not as it appears in perception or mere representation but rather such as it is grasped in true thought. The locution "is indeed such as" must now be understood literally; it does not signify a vague epistemological "correspondence" or an a priori transcendental constitution. The thing itself is such as it is grasped to be; it is intrinsically a mode of conceptual self-relation; the concept is its true actuality.

This principle of ontological rather than epistemological identity presupposes the demonstration, supplied by the entire exposition of the *Logic*, that authentic Being and the absolute form of Being are structures of self-relationality which are also forms of self-comprehension (*begreifendes Selbst-verhalten*). Only because the idea of Being which is understood in this manner encompasses both the being of subjectivity as well as that of objectivity can the truth of thought coincide with the truth of things as they are in themselves. Only for this reason is cognition more and other than a mysterious approximation toward, or an emerging out of, things themselves whose true Being would seem to lie eternally "outside" cognition itself. Rather cognition is a process taking place within the Being of things themselves. The "relation" between things and thought, the "dependence" of objectivity on subjectivity and vice versa, is a fundamental phenomenon lying within the Being of beings. Accordingly, the truth of Being first becomes manifest through

the overcoming of the absolute difference [between being and thought — Tr.] in a structure of self-comprehending self-relationality. Objectivity first attains its truth through the process of letting-something-stand-in-opposition to (*das Entgegenstehen-lassen*) which is accomplished by subjectivity in conceptual thought. Thus, when Hegel writes that “the objective is first constituted through the relation to us” (GPh, II, 44), this sentence possesses a wholly different meaning than in transcendental philosophy. This sentence says nothing about the epistemological relation of the human subject to the things themselves but is concerned solely with the relation between objectivity and subjectivity as contained within the unified idea of Being itself. It refers to the prior unity of subjectivity and objectivity out of which alone the difference between the two forms of being emerges.

This principle of the ontological identity of thought and being sends us back to the question of how the “division” (*Entzweiung*) between subjectivity and objectivity is related to the original “absolute unity” out of which both emerge. Formulated already in Hegel’s first published writings, this question also points us back to his basic disagreement with Kantian philosophy out of which this specific problem emerged. This issue is dealt with once more in explicit fashion in the introduction to the *Logic* and is then made the basic premise of the entire investigation that follows.

In the introduction to the *Logic* Hegel distinguishes it from traditional logic as follows: “The concept of logic prevalent till the present is based upon the unshakeable distinction drawn by ordinary consciousness between the *content* of knowledge and its *form*, or between truth and certainty” (L, I, 24). Hegel then defines this unexamined distinction more closely. First, a ready-made world which is present in- and for-itself outside of thought is distinguished from the empty form of thought; second, the object as something that is complete and ready for-itself is distinguished from thought which is essentially incomplete and dependent on the object; third, objectivity and subjectivity are defined as independent spheres, “separated from one another,” such that thought can never go beyond itself and penetrate things-in-themselves (L, I, 24ff). “These views

on the relation of subject and object” have blocked for a long time the entry to philosophy and must be rejected by it (L, I, 25). Kantian philosophy as well has not succeeded in overcoming the view of subjectivity and objectivity as two fundamentally and essentially distinct spheres of being; it also presupposes a subjectivity which is for-itself and which somehow must “reach out” to the things-themselves. This philosophy too regards thought and the world in light of “the relation of two separate parts. . . and cognition is then produced out of them in mechanical and at most a chemical fashion” (L, I, 24ff). For the unity which Kant arrives at through the transcendental constitution of appearances in consciousness is not authentic, insofar as it represents only the absolutization of one of the two “parts,” namely, subjectivity. “Out of fear of the object,” critical philosophy “gave logical determinations essentially a subjective meaning; they thus remained dependent upon the very objects which they sought to flee from, and there remained a thing-in-itself, an infinite impetus, as a permanent beyond [*Jenseits*]” (L, I, 32).

By contrast, Hegel defines the standpoint of true philosophy as

the science of pure thought which has pure knowledge, and not the abstract but the concrete, living unity, as its principle. This unity is concrete because in it the opposition characteristic of consciousness between a subjective for-itselfness and a second objective in-itselfness is known to have been overcome; being is recognized as the pure concept in itself and the pure concept as true being. (L, I, 42)

True philosophy comprehends the in-itself differentiated totality of beings under the unified idea of their *Being*. Being is thereby viewed as form of self-comprehending self-relationality (*begreifendes Sich-verhalten*), developing out of the process of remaining-by-oneself-in-otherness. It is also out of this unity that the difference between subjectivity and objectivity springs forth while remaining permanently contained in it. Such unity is not an abstract but rather a “concrete and living unity,” which is also the concrete process of unfolding (*das Geschehen*) of beings themselves in their truth. The relation of “determinations which earlier *existed as if* for-themselves, like objectivity

and subjectivity,” to this unity of Being, which is a “principle” as well as an “element” of the *Logic*, is now that of mere “forms,” that is to say, they relate to this principle as *specific* forms would to the *universal* and absolute form of Being (L, I, 43).

These formulations through which Hegel explicitly juxtaposes beings and Being itself make clear that from the beginning the [Hegelian — Tr.] “concept” aims at the *Being* of beings. A clear interpretation of the concept qua Being is also given by Hegel in his preface to the second edition of the *Logic*. Here Hegel writes that the “concept” of the thing is “what is universal in it,” as when for example, *prior* to all his/her individual characteristics every human being “possesses their *prior principle* (*Prius*), namely, that of being a *human*, just as every single animal possesses the *prior principle* of being an animal” (L, I, 15). Just as in these passages the “*determinate*” concept (human, animal), qua the *prior principle* of the entities, man and animal, signifies their “*determinate being*,” so too the concept *in general* signifies the principle of beings as such, namely, their Being. Throughout these formulations there remains a duality of meaning: on the one hand the “concept” means true, authentic being and, on the other, the absolute “form” of being in general. (In this sense Hegel appropriates Plato’s “Ideas” for himself: “The Platonic Idea is no other than the general or specific concept of the object; an entity comes to have reality only through its concept. Insofar as it is different from its concept, it ceases to be real and is a nothing” (L, I, 31ff).)

The significance of arriving at such a unified concept of Being which goes beyond the different totality of beings first becomes clear, however, when we keep in mind that the “concept,” qua the truth of Being, first wins a form of reality adequate to it as “Idea,” and in particular as the Idea of *Life*. Life moves in the sphere of the true unity of subjectivity and objectivity, for objectivity actually *exists* as an object, as a world for Life itself. Indeed for Life this objectivity is *its* world in which it lives. The ontological dependence of objectivity and subjectivity is thereby given a much sharper and deeper justification than it could ever receive in Kantian philosophy. If the truth of Being is first reached in a mode of free for-itselfness

and if as a free and transparent mode of self-relation, for-itself first becomes actual with "Life," then the truth of Being as such is grounded on the truth of Life. The insight of Kantian philosophy that the manifestation of Being in general is dependent on human subjectivity is retained, but even beyond this, it is asserted that this relation constitutes the "absolute" truth of Being itself.

The Idea of Life now stands not at the beginning but at the end of an ontological exposition which encompasses all stages from the existing thing to the living individual as they unfold along the principle of a universal and unified concept of Being. This universal unity of Being proves to be more fundamental than difference itself, because all difference first proceeds from it. Despite the special place occupied by Life amid the totality of beings, it is not separated from them as through a ravine but is thoroughly rooted in them. The *very same process* allows *all* entities to emerge out of itself, and this means inorganic nature as well as humanity.

The concept in its entirety must be viewed on the one hand as *existing* and on the other hand as *concept*; in the former case it is only a concept in-itself, the concept of reality or of being; in the latter case, it is the concept as such, the concept for-itself (to give a few concrete forms as examples: the concept as it is for thinking individuals and as it is for sensing animals and for organic individuality in general. Certainly in these latter cases the concept is neither conscious nor known; the concept is in-itself only in the case of inorganic nature). (L, I, 43)

The two fundamental processes, namely the process of "nature," which is in-itself, and the process of a free and self-comprehending self-relation, which is for-itself, both come together in the originary unity of Being as motility.

The fact that Hegel goes beyond the traditional opposition of subjectivity and objectivity [to their original unity — Tr.] has crucial significance, for it makes the dimension of historicity accessible. Human history no longer happens to take place *in* a world which is essentially its other, but occurs in unity with the happening of this world without losing its essential uniqueness in this process.

If we now consider the interpretation given above in the

context of the basic purpose of this work [namely, to gain access to the fundamental nature of historicity — Tr.], we can specify several decisive points at which the *Logic* is revealed to be the preparation for a theory of historicity:

1. The thesis that the meaning of Being consists in the original unity of subjectivity (being-as-I; for-itselfness) and objectivity (being-as-object; in-itselfness) and the formulation of this unity as a process of development of beings themselves (a process of unifying unity which comes about through the equality-with-self-in-otherness) dissolves traditional ontology into a *history of beings*. The different regions of beings then unfold as varied forms of a *processual happening* (*das Geschehen*).

2. Because beings are understood as structures of unifying unity in *movement*, the dimension of *essence* (*das Wesen*) is disclosed as the actual having-once been (*gegenwärtige Gewesenheit*), as the “timeless past,” of beings.* Their having-been is a decisive factor in the history of beings. It is this dimension which first allows the unity of the process of becoming of beings, as well as making possible the persistence of beings as independent selves in otherness. The dimension of the having-been gives this unity its “ground” and its “identity.” The dimension of essence is where beings retreat from (“re/flection”) their immediate presence back into themselves; it is the sphere of “mediation” wherein beings grasp their “present existence” (*Dasein*) as a “presupposition” (*Voraussetzung*) of their essence, and through their essence transform it into “posited being” (*Gesetztsein*). (Mediation, presupposition, and posited being will later prove themselves as the essentially historical categories of Hegelian ontology; a being that exists in this fashion is a historical one.)

3. The history of beings is directed from within toward an immanent goal: it reaches completion in the freedom and truth of a being that comprehends, in the Being of the “Idea.” Beings come first to their truth as “Idea”; only as Idea is their process

* Marcuse is once more using the etymological relation in German between the past participle of the verb to be, “*gewesen*,” and the concept of essence, “*das Wesen*,” to stress that the dimension of essence is reached when the process of becoming of beings, when their past, is seen as constitutive of their present. In this sense, to reach the essence of something also means to “re-collect,” to “re-member” its past — Tr.

a true one. With this claim, however, the Being of humans, *Life* itself, moves to the center of the ontology. For Life is the first "form" (*Gestalt*) in which the concept is realized in its truth and freedom, and in which the Idea of Being has become actual. First with the being of Life do *all entities* grasped by Life become actual and manifest their truth.

Do these "breakthrough points" suffice to justify our claim, however, that the *Logic* is the basis of a theory of historicity? The exposition of these crucial theses seems rather to convey the impression that historicity (if we can at all speak of it in this context) is frozen still and driven aside. The history of beings, as presented and according to its very meaning, appears to be completely different from historicity as the ontological meaning (*Seinssinn*) of human life. The former could at the most serve as a presupposition or enabling condition of this history. Indeed, at these breakthrough points the outlines of the decisively *Diltheyan* categories of historicity have become visible, but the ground on which they rest is one that is completely alien to the proper meaning of these categories. The "sublation" (*Aufhebung*) of the different modes of Being into the general ontological principle of the unifying unity of subjectivity and objectivity appears to eliminate the specific ontological mode of human life which Dilthey had characterized as historicity. Furthermore, it seems that the spheres of "nature" and "history," the natural world and the world of spirit, are thrown together in such fashion that the possibility of gaining insight into the unique character of the historical process is wholly blocked. To view Life from the perspective of the "logical" movement of the concept and as a form of the "Idea" appears to have finally eliminated the historicity of Life.

Insofar as these objections themselves, however, proceed from a conception of historicity whose adequacy to the matter at hand has not yet been examined, we have to suspend them until the ground has been cleared for such an examination. It is altogether conceivable that the regional separation of "nature" and "history" essentially reduces the full content of the historical process and that Hegel's contribution may be most far-reaching precisely in its sublation of this separation. It is also possible that the history of beings is first fulfilled and

completed in the historical process itself which thereby actualizes the truth of beings. Furthermore, it may be that only after the concept of Life has been placed within the framework of inquiry into the meaning of Being in general that the specifically ontological form of human life and the fundamental character of the historical process will gain clarity.

We have at least attained one secure beginning point from which to proceed in testing these objections, and this is the essential relatedness (*wesensmässige Bezogenheit*) of historicity to the Being of human life (we leave open the question of whether this relatedness is limited to the Being of human life or whether it extends through the medium of this life to another form of Being). But is it the case that in Hegelian ontology this ontological relatedness is considered to be basic and that the categories of the history of beings can be unfolded from or unfolded back into this principle? Only when this is the case, only when the concept of Life in its historicity is an actual and fundamental concept of this ontology, can it be viewed as the basis of a theory of historicity. We must therefore reconsider the interpretation of the concept of Life in the *Logic* and examine it in light of this question.

To begin with let me briefly recapitulate the place of “Life” in the *Logic*.

Life is the first form of the “Idea”; it is the mode in which the Idea exists “as presupposed or immediate” (L, II, 414). Life is the Idea in the simply given, not yet posited or mediated “form of its existence.” The Idea in turn is the “concept” qua “objective and real” (L, II, 408), namely, the actuality of the concept. The “concept” for its part is the “completion of substance,” its “truth” and “freedom” (L, II, 216) or it is the mode in which substance is true and free. This is what beings *are* in their highest and truest sense.

Thus in the Idea “Being . . . has attained the meaning of *truth*” (L, II, 409). The Idea is “what is objectively true or truth *as such*” (L, II, 407); it is not only truth but truth *insofar as* it has objectivity, and is there “in itself.”

Qua “Life” beings are “at first” and still “immediately” manifest in their truth and actual through this manifestation. Life fulfills that meaning of Being which serves as a basic principle,

and this is the full unity of objectivity and subjectivity as a structure of full equality-with-self-in-otherness. The objectivity of Life consists in the mode in which its subjectivity *exists*. Insofar as the unity and self-equality of Life can take place only via the freedom and transparence characteristic of conceptual thought, the concept of Life is also adequate to the principle guiding it toward the Being of the knowing I: Life is a form of Being that comprehends.

Now Hegel distinguishes sharply this “logical view of Life” from “natural Life” and from Life “insofar as it is connected with Spirit” (L, II, 415). Neither natural nor spiritual Life define the place of this Idea in the *Logic*. “Logical Life” attains its place only in the context of the history of beings, through the immanent unfolding of different forms of being on the basis of the meaning of Being in general — it is “introduced because of the proper necessity of the concept itself” (L, II, 414). Accordingly, “logical Life” has no “determination for its externality” (L, II, 416) and no “presuppositions which exist as forms of actuality” (as is the case, for example, with natural Life which has organic nature and with spiritual Life which has the purposes of Spirit as their condition). The only presuppositions of logical Life are those “determinations of being and essence” which have been previously developed in the *Logic* (L, II, 414). These are determinations which beings have gone through in their history whenever Life *exists* and which are all “sublated” and fulfilled in the Being of Life.

This means, however, that the question posed [concerning the ontological relatedness of historicity to human life — Tr.] has been answered negatively. The history of beings is not developed on the basis of the historicity of Life, but to the contrary, Life emerges as a “form” within the history of beings (themselves developed in accordance with a prior conception of the meaning of Being). Indeed Life is only a stage which will be overcome and sublated as “Absolute Idea.”

But if the category of “Life” in the *Logic* is problematized within the *history* of beings as a specific form of *motility*, should not then the historicity of Life, as the specific form of its movement, also be a problem? *Could* Hegel simply ignore the historicity of Life? The categories of Life developed in the

Logic essentially pertain to the movement of Life: unity and wholeness which characterize Life as the first form of the "Idea" essentially are formed through the movement of Life within its world. The Being of Life as a "creative presupposing," its maintenance as "reproduction," the animation of objectivity in the course of the "life process," its consequence which is the "omnipresence" of Life in the animated world — all these determinations, in their true meaning, relate to the concrete process of Life, unfolding within the totality of beings encountered as the "world." Indeed, as we will see, they are essentially *historical* categories which define the being they are ascribed to as a historical one; and on this point Hegel himself is quite explicit (Cf. PhG, 223). If this is the case, however, then the development of the "Idea of cognition" and of the "Absolute Idea" out of the Idea of Life, itself specified to be historical, would have introduced historicity into these "higher" Ideas themselves and would have brought them to their true "absolute" meaning. For the Idea of Life is already "Idea," already in-itself; therefore, a progression beyond Life itself onto new ground is no longer possible.

Hegel's attempt to distinguish purely "logical Life" from the natural and spiritual one gains its special significance from this fact. The sublation of the historicity of Life into the absolute history of beings in general could succeed neither so completely nor to the extent of eliminating all tension between the systematic place of Life in the *Logic* and the categories of Life developed at this point. This tension and dualism force the interpretation back to those stages of the ontological framework which have preceded the *Logic*. The category of Life in the *Logic* is only the extremely compressed form of a concept which was worked on by Hegel via a longer route and which was explained in its full scope. The category of Life can be clarified only by returning to the stages along which this foundation evolved. This clarification not only concerns the concept of Life but also allows us to hope that the question of the internal relation between the *Logic* and a theory of historicity may be answered in this process.

II

The Ontological Concept of Life in Its Historicity as the Original Foundation of Hegelian Ontology

Life as the Fundamental Concept of the *Early Theological Writings*

The dualism that first becomes visible in the course of Hegel's analysis of Life in the *Logic* is systematically expressed in the changed significance of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in Hegel's work prior to and subsequent to the conceptualization of the *Logic*, that is, between 1807 and 1817. In 1807 the *Phenomenology* appeared as the first part of a system, the second part of which was supposed to be the *Logic*, the *Philosophy of Nature*, and *Philosophy of Spirit*. In 1817 (and in the final version of the larger *Encyclopaedia*) the *Phenomenology* is no longer the first part; it is replaced by the *Logic*. Instead the *Phenomenology* is abbreviated and essentially transformed into one section of the third part of the system, namely, of the *Philosophy of Spirit* (Heidegger first drew attention to the complete significance of this change in his lectures during the winter of 1930–31). This internal and external transformation of the system was necessary. Viewed from the perspective of the *Logic*, the *Phenomenology*, as we try to show, could no longer serve as the basis of the system because it contained the ontological concept of Life in its full historicity as a foundation; furthermore, the Being of Spirit, as true actuality, had been developed out of the historicity of Life itself. Already in the *Phenomenology*, however, the tendency to repress the dimension of historicity was present. Following this trend, the history of Life is interpreted retrospectively from the standpoint reached by Absolute Spirit. History culminates in Absolute Spirit, for it gains its eternal ground through it and unfolds out of it, but it can no longer permeate or transcend it.

Despite the fact that the *Phenomenology* bears greater affinity with and is more fundamental to the problem of historicity than the *Logic*, the present work had to begin with an interpretation of the latter rather than of the former. For in the tradition that dealt with the problem of historicity, Hegel's ontology became influential *not* in its original form but as it had been explicated in the *Logic*. Just as by itself the *Phenomenology* tends toward the systematic ontology developed in the *Logic*, in which context alone its decisive determinations come to show themselves, likewise it also tends backward to its own past history. There are studies that have preceded it, out of which it has emerged and with which it remains deeply connected. Because this reference to its previous history is particularly decisive in the case of the concept of Life, our interpretation follows it, and we begin at that point where the philosophical significance of the concept of Life is first recognized, namely, in the *Early Theological Writings*.

In the first chapter of this work the set of problems which led Hegel to formulate the question of Being as a question concerning a certain mode of *unity* were outlined. Quite self-consciously, Hegel attacked the "highest point" of transcendental philosophy and transformed the original synthetic unity of the "I think" into the unifying unity of subjectivity and objectivity in general, into the absolute process of the becoming of beings as such. Furthermore, he defined this process as a structure of equality-with-self-in-otherness, thus, essentially as a unity in *movement*. In the course of the explication of this thesis in the *Logic*, we noted that the orientation to the unity of the "I think," to the Being of the knowing I as the highest form of equality-with-self-in-otherness, was not introduced surreptitiously as the fundamental thesis of the development and categorical determination of the various forms of being, but rather ran parallel to Hegel's fundamental concern with the basic phenomenon of motility. The priority of this orientation toward the knowing I must now be further questioned, for the formulation of the question of Being as one of *unity* emerges out of a presupposition which is even more basic than the one uncovered in the *Logic*. It is on this original basis that the

essentially ahistorical idea of the knowing I is placed on top of the essentially historical idea of Life.¹

The emergence of this philosophical question out of the *Early Theological Writings* can be characterized through the formula, "Life as an ontological concept (*Seinsbegriff*)."² Dilthey's efforts to develop the origins of Hegel's philosophical concerns in this period in light of the "fundamental concept (*Grundbegriff*) of Life" remain the first and the last of such investigations.²

The fragmentary character of these writings leads all too easily to a homogeneous systematization, but in this chapter we attempt only to trace more precisely the beginning of the path which eventually leads to the *Phenomenology*. This path can be discerned in an extremely dense formulation at the beginning of the Nohl edition of Hegel's *Early Theological Writings* (TJ, 302 ff; English translation by Knox, cf. 257ff.). Of particular interest here is the section from the "Spirit of Christianity and its Fate" and the interpretation of the message of John the Baptist.

God and Logos must be distinguished for we must consider beings (*das Seiende*) in a twofold perspective. Despite the fact that it gives them the form of being reflected, reflection also supposes them not to be reflected. On the one hand, it assumes them to be one and united, without division and juxtaposition, and on the other hand, at the same time as being potentially separable and infinitely divisible. God and Logos are only different in that God is matter in the form of Logos. Logos is with God; both are one. (TJ, 306 ff).

In this passage one finds all those elements that form the meaning of Being as the unity of absolute difference, and of this unity as a unifying structure of equality-with-self-in-otherness. "Beings" (*das Seiende*) are the unity of "infinite" division; because they *exist* as division only in virtue of the structure of a *unifying* unity, this is at the same time "*no* division, no juxtaposition." This division exists in beings themselves as their "possibility" (*dynamis*). Not accidentally, at this point in the text the "possibility" of unity in division is discussed in the context of "matter" (*hyle*) and "form" (*eidōs*). God is "matter in the form of Logos," the infinite one in the form of infinite separation. This division, although it exists only through and by means of the unifying structure of unity, is *actual*: "The manifoldness,

the infinity of the actual is the actuality of infinite division" (TJ, 307). The being of the actual, actuality, only *is* through such a process of infinite dividing; it can exist only as difference; only through this dividing can it exist as "infinity." What this means is clarified by the next sentence. Actuality (which is also named "world"), so long as it exists only in this division, is thereby juxtaposed to the "whole," as something "singular, and limited." But it is as "juxtaposed, dead . . . a branch at the same time of the infinite tree of Life" — actuality is simultaneously itself "a whole, and a *Life*" (Ibid.).

Life then designates generally the ontological mode of actuality, of the "world." It refers to the "character of all actuality" (Dilthey), and indeed it signifies at the same time that the actual, although it exists "in this division," is not divided but a "whole," and as "part of the infinite division" is contained together with all other parts in an "infinite unity." Hegel's usage of the concept of Life to designate this unified and holistic character of actuality is not to be understood as vague pantheism and the like. Rather, this formulation presents the first determination of a special mode of *Being* itself. Already in this text Hegel refers to the Being of Life as it exists in "division," "in the context of division," with the category of "reflection" which is also fundamental for his later work. Reflection already in this text means a form of Being: beings themselves have "the form of the reflected," are "as reflected," and this ontological mode characterizes their Being "in the context of division." But as reflected, that is, as something that bends over back from itself toward itself and thus as standing over and against itself (being that is juxtaposed), being also is "*not* reflected," for precisely in this juxtaposition and division, it unifies itself and becomes the unity of the parts separated in reflection. Hegel now defines the unity of Life in reflection more precisely as the unity "of the relation as subject and as predicate." Animated Life (*zoe*) and conceptual Life (*phos*, truth) are both contained in this unity (TJ, 307). But how is this relation of Life and conceptual Life to be understood? What does the designation of conceptual Life as *phos* and as truth mean?

Life exists via the relation of subject and predicate, or as

Hegel expresses it in linguistically tough but conceptually precise fashion, it exists in the relation as subject and as predicate. Life, as the unity which underlies all the changing determinations in which it can exist, is at once *subject*; it is also *predicate*, for it exists only in a determinate form or is itself only determinacy. At the same time it is this “*relation*” *between subject and predicate* and this *conceptualization* (*Auffassen*) of itself as the unity of subject and predicate. If we were to state this in terms of the terminology of the *Logic*, we would say that Life exists essentially as the originary division of judgment (*Ur-teil*). When Hegel distinguishes “life” (*zoe*) and “conceptual life” (*phos*), this does not mean two different “forms” of Life and the like. Rather, both are ontological forms of the same Life: *zoe* is Life as it is immediately, prior to the conceptualization of itself, prior to self-determination. In grasping itself (*im Auf-fassen*),* this Life grips itself (*fasst sich*); it comprehends (*erfasst*) and grasps (*ergreift, begreift*) itself as a self existing through the “division” and the “juxtaposition” of its various determinations. “Grasped” in this fashion Life exists as *phos*, as light which allows beings to be seen in their truth. We will see shortly how it is that this light not only allows Life as such but also the “world” of this Life to exist in “truth,” how Hegel does not juxtapose “Life” qua subjectivity to objectivity, but how Life always refers to the (still problematic) unity of I and world.

As the distinction between *zoe* and *phos* expresses, Life as it exists immediately and still potentially can never have reached its truth. “Finitudes” (*zoe* and *phos*) “have their opposites; for light there is darkness” (TJ, 307). In the course of the interpretation of this Life which is immersed in finitude (according to the message of John the Baptist), it becomes clear that this grasped unity, and therewith the truth of Life, includes the unity of I and world, world and God (whereby Hegel makes the connection with the sentence which preceded this exposition: the “infinity of the actual” signifies only the division of the one God through *Logos*, and Life refers only to this entire unity of divided elements). So long as God appears as what is juxtaposed to the world or so long as unity is only “felt” (but

* For an explication of Marcuse’s etymological play, the reader is asked to consult the glossary, under *auffassen* and *begreifen*. — Tr.

not “grasped”), Life is still not *phos*, truth. “Only a consciousness which is the same as Life and yet at the same time different from it only through the fact that the latter is being, while the former is the reflection of this being — only this can be *phos*.”

The “equation” of consciousness and Being, which dominates Hegel’s later ontology, has already appeared here. Consciousness is Life’s Being “as reflected,” comprehended, conceptualized, as gripped and as grasped. Consciousness is not one mode among Life’s many other forms; rather it is the attitude through which it comes into its truth, and *exists* as truth. As stated previously, the difference between Life and consciousness would mean that Life exists in immediacy. In a more extensive sense, however, Life qua Life would be *phos*, and truth, already if comprehension and consciousness were to belong to the *Being* of Life. This would be the case, for the immediate existence as well as the untruth of Life can then exist only on the basis of its truth. This is a truth which is not-yet or no-more but in any event it is never without *phos*.

Actually, in a passage which builds a remarkably abrupt transition from the teaching of John the Baptist to the Being of humans in general, Hegel goes back on his claim concerning the difference of Life and consciousness.

Regardless of the fact the Johannes himself was not *phos*, the latter is nonetheless in every human being who emerges into the human world (*cosmos* — the whole of human affairs and of human life . . .). Not only is the human being as he enters into the world *photi zomenos* (a being in the light); *phos* is in the world itself. It is a whole, and all its relations and determinations are the work of *anthropou photos* (a human of the light), of a human who develops himself, without it being the case, however, that the world in which these relations exist takes cognizance of him, who is the whole of nature come to consciousness. (TJ, 307)

This is the decisive sentence by means of which the world is absorbed into the Being of Life, and through which the knowledge of this unity breaks open into the midst of Life’s historicity. But prior to the interpretation of this sentence in light of its philosophical presuppositions, one must emphasize the context from which it emerges. This is the sense that the original, religious consciousness of Christian existence must not be de-

stroyed, and already in the subsequent sections of this passage Hegel returns to the text of Johannes's Evangelism. Even if it is assumed, however, that Hegel has firmly maintained this religious foundation, we can still say that from this moment on he has laid bare the dimension of historicity. In this sense Dilthey has emphasized that [for Hegel — Tr.] religious relations would become "expressions of the metaphysical relation of humanity to the Absolute" (Dilthey, IV, 104) and that from this point on "new perspectives into historical life" open up for him, who "plunges from the heights of his metaphysics to the profoundest depths of history" (Dilthey, IV, 157).

The passage cited sharpens the formulation of the concept of Life ["The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate," TJ, 307; Knox, 258 — Tr.]. Via the concept of truth (*phos*), the meaning of Life comes to focus exclusively on that of *human* existence, and the "world" which until now had only been discussed as the "infinity of the actual" and which had been included under the unity and wholeness of Life is now placed in a significant relation to human life. Ontologically this world is that of *anthropou phos*; indeed, in all its "relations" and "determinations," it is "the work of humans who develop themselves." First with the Being of human Life does the world acquire its truth; by becoming "grasped" by Life, by being illuminated through it, the world becomes what it in fact is. What happens to the world is not a matter of accidental confrontation, an event that remains external to it, rather in this process the world comes to fulfill its Being. Not only is the human being who enters the world *photizomenos photi alethino*, illuminated by the true light, but "*phos* is also in the world itself." The world is not a darkness that is opposed to light; the self-developing humans, "nature which has reached consciousness," are the Being-in-truth (*Wahr-sein*) of the world itself.

Let us recall the category of Life in the *Logic*, where the world would become animated in the course of the unfolding of the life process, where it would "become equal" (*angeglichen*) to Life and would be "appropriated" by it. The category of "work" as an ontological determination of actuality will emerge in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as well. But an interpretation which would follow these suggestions and even go beyond them

would necessarily leave the religious context behind. Dilthey has justifiably warned against interpreting the concept of “development” in this context, for example, in the conceptual sense it acquires later in the system (Dilthey, IV, 148).

Let me now summarize the crucial philosophical aspects of the concept of Life as developed in the introduction to the teaching of John the Baptist. Life refers to the “infinite unity” and wholeness of beings as they exist in a state of “division”; Life also refers to “actuality,” to “reflection” as a mode of Being which makes this unity and wholeness possible. The consequence of this last thesis is that both human and nonhuman life become now strongly defined in terms of “consciousness” which represents the process of Life’s coming to truth. Finally, Hegel relates the Being of the “world” and its truth to the emergence of humans into the world as *anthropou photos*.

We can now return to the comments which preceded this particular section of the *Early Theological Writings* (TJ, 302ff, Knox, 254ff.) and which Dilthey has named Hegel’s “metaphysical conception” (Dilthey, IV, 101). Indeed, in the course of this metaphysical conception, the concept of Life is abstracted — only for a short while, however — from the context of interpretation of John’s Evangelist and defined as a purely ontological concept.

The task is to think pure Life; to take distance from all deeds, from all of what man has been or will become; character only abstracts from activity and expresses the universal in certain actions. Consciousness of pure Life would be consciousness of what the human being is — in this case there would be no variation, no developed and actual manifold. (TJ, 302)

The “consciousness of pure Life” would be the answer to the question of what the human being is, it would also be the answer to the question, What is being? For “pure Life is being” (TJ, 303). To what extent, however, can Life be defined as “being”? In order to understand this we must briefly refer to other fragments of the same period.

“Pure Life” is juxtaposed here to “variation,” to “actual manifoldness”; thus it is once more defined as a form of *unity, unification*. This definition refers back to the fragment on “Faith

and Being" ("*Glauben und Sein*," printed as Addition 11 to the Nohl edition of the *Early Theological Writings*) where Hegel says: "Unification and being mean the same; in each sentence, the copula "is" expresses the unity of subject and predicate — a being" (TJ, 383). Why do "unification" and "being" mean the same? Since Parmenides, the convertibility of *hen* and *on* belongs to the main ideas of Western ontology. This fact alone should explain why a more complete investigation of this Hegelian "equation" cannot be undertaken here. We must be content with following the interpretation which Hegel himself gives in this context. But this limitation of our presentation is partially compensated for by the relation this issue bears to the detailed discussion in the first half of this work.

The starting point in defining being as unification is the presence of an "antinomy," the fact that the given manifold of beings exists as a manifold "limited by opposites," which stand in an antagonistic relation to each another (TJ, 382). These opposites are "united" whenever we add "is," whenever we say something *is* such and such ("unification of subject and predicate"). This unification presupposes an opposition within beings themselves, but the "opposites can be recognized only as opposites through the fact that they have already been united" (TJ, 382). Opposition then presupposes a fundamental unity, lying at its ground, an original synthesis (!), which forms the criterion for "all" comparisons and juxtapositions. One can only "believe" in such an original unity; one can never demonstrate it, for "to prove would mean to exhibit the dependencies." Such a unity, however, is simply "independent"; it is the one on which all juxtaposing and sublating unity is dependent. All opposing and relation [of elements — Tr.] takes place "with reference to it" (TJ, 383).

The original unity "signifies" simply "being," insofar as it "is" everything that always unites subject and predicate and makes all else *possible*. It is the *presupposition* of beings, because in every case a being presents only "the unification of subject and predicate." Because, however, there are many meanings of "is," different modes of unification correspond to it. Hegel differentiates among them in accordance with the degree of "completeness" or "incompleteness" of the unity involved: "The

different forms of being are the more or less complete forms of unity" (TJ, 384). A being is "higher" or "lower" depending on the degree of completeness of its unity. The most complete unification, the completed unity would also be the highest being. But which being fulfills this condition?

We have already seen how Life was considered a form of unification and thereby a form of *Being*. The animatedness of Life will now be expressly characterized as the "true" and "completed unity" in which nothing dead, partial, and opposed to it can subsist. "True union, true love can only take place among the living who are equal in power and thereby thoroughly alive for one another; such love excludes all opposition" (TJ, 379). In this context, the thought reappears that Life, this completed unity and truth, cannot simply exist but becomes through a process of "development": "Life has run through a complete circle in the course of culture from undeveloped unity to a completed one" (TJ, 379).

Let us return once more to the passage we started from (TJ, 302). We find here that proceeding from an understanding of the meaning of Being as process of "unification," Hegel has come to define "pure Life" as a completed and fulfilled unity. Pure Life "contains no differences"; it is "the simple one," but not "abstractly." Were it only so in abstraction, this quality of being the "simple one" would merely remain an unfulfilled demand or it would mean only that one would abstract from certain determinations; rather, pure Life is simple as "unity," as "the source of all individual life, of all drives and acts" (TJ, 303). Thus this is an originary unity which is itself alive, which allows beings to spring forth from it, which sublates and carries all individuations and partial determinations within itself and lets them proceed forth (*geschehen*). Pure Life is "being," for it is simply a process of unifying and precisely *as* pure unification, it simply *is* alive.

With this concept of pure Life as Being we find once more all the elements which had characterized the meaning of Being for Hegel's *Logic*. The only missing element is the conceptualization of this unifying unity as a knowing and conscious entity, as "consciousness." But even this feature is expressed in the text through the fact that in two instances where "pure Life"

is mentioned, Hegel had first written “self-consciousness” or “pure self-consciousness” (TJ, 302 Note). This is a significant vacillation on Hegel’s part through which the two original and leading categories of his ontology [Life and consciousness — Tr.] had been weighed against each other!

Precisely because the later foundations of Hegel’s entire ontology seem already present at this point *in nuce*, the careful and anticipatory nature of his definition of Life must be particularly emphasized. One can in no way say that already here Life is the basic category for a general ontology. Hegel himself says, to think pure Life is the *task ahead* and that consciousness of pure Life “would” be the answer to the question of what human beings are. But this task goes *well beyond* the “determinate” life of humans, for it requires the distancing from all “what humans have been or will be.” The pure “being” of humans has its origin in divine being; pure Life is “the divine” (TJ, 303ff); therefore it is in essence the object of *faith*. The concept of Life is fundamentally a *religious* one. By investigating the relationship of (finite) human life to (pure), divine life more closely, however, Hegel comes to understand “Spirit” as the condition of the unification of both and thereby as the condition of the fulfilled unity of Life.

To be human ontologically means to lead “a finite (limited) life” of “determinacy,” “always as one who does *this or that*, or who suffers, or who acts *so and so*” (TJ, 303). Insofar as the human being is subject to these limitations imposed from the outside and never wholly controllable by him/her, s/he is not “pure” life. This “purity” is “partly placed *outside* human beings” as the source of their singularity; finite and the infinite Life “cannot be wholly one” (Ibid.). Even within the totality of Life a duality remains. The “universality” of Life, that is, the undivided oneness which would remain throughout all particular individuations, is possible only for human beings as an “abstracting” away from “all acts, and all that is determinate” — but this means that the limitations and determinations still remain in this process. (Note that already here the term “universality,” which later signifies a complete form of unity and of equality-with-self-in-otherness, emerges.) Hegel clarifies what this abstraction from all acts could mean. This abstraction

should come about in such a way that in this process “the soul of each act, of all that is determinate” would be “retained.” One cannot abstract from all determinacy then; for humans who live in ontological specificity this is impossible. One abstracts rather from determinacy as mere determinacy, as “this or that” which is accidental and which comes on one from the outside. The specific doing and suffering will be removed from determinacy and will be grasped as possible in-determinacy which is in need of self-determination. Thereby determinacy will be joined once more with pure Life as its source and will be filled with the divine.

Such a union, such a bond between limited and pure Life, between the finite and the infinite, the universal and the individual is possible, however, only when Life is comprehended and lived through as *Spirit*. “Where there is no soul, no Spirit, there is nothing divine; regardless of whoever feels himself determined . . . in this abstraction the limited will not be wholly detached from Spirit, rather what remains is only the opposite of what is alive” (TJ, 303). Only a spiritual being can overcome and transcend all its limitations without juxtaposing itself to them (such juxtaposition would not be unity but estrangement pure and simple). “Only Spirit holds and contains Spirit within it” (TJ, 305). Only a spiritual being can penetrate and bring to fulfillment all its limitations in such a way that it continues to remain alive *in* them as the one and the universal.

Thus the concept of Spirit is briefly introduced in this context as one form of the structure of unifying unity, as the fulfillment of the ontological meaning of Life. Hegel gives a more detailed justification of this category, along with the first philosophical formulation of the concept of Life, in the “Frankfurt System-Fragment” of 1800 (TJ, 345 ff).

The new context within which the concept of Life comes forth in the “Frankfurt System-Fragment” has often been interpreted as follows: along with the transition from the religious to the philosophical concept of Life, it is argued, Hegel seeks an ontological determination of “nature” on the basis of this concept. But in his interpretation of this fragment, T. Haering has emphasized justifiably that this “new” aspect should not be overestimated.³ From the beginning, the concept

of Life is defined in such a fashion that it could also include nonhuman forms of being. This nonhuman being first means the divine, but later also the being of the "world," of the "*kosmos*" (TJ, 307). This specific characterization of the concept of Life has to do with Hegel's guiding intention to formulate a concept of *unity*, namely, to define that Being which originally united different modes of being to be a "process of unification." Life is made object of investigation from the standpoint of the specific form of its process of happening, a process in which the *totality* of beings come to their truth (cf. the interpretation of *anthropos photizomenos*). Hegel sees this process to have been actualized in the life of Jesus. The concept of Life which was first developed with reference to religious Christian consciousness is now treated as a fundamental philosophical category. The religious basis of this concept does not disappear with this step, but the latter leads Hegel to give the entire philosophical tradition, which is alive for him and whose poles are formed by Aristotle and Kant, a stabler form. As a consequence of his critique of this tradition, Hegel is able to develop the ontological concept of Life further. With this observation, however, we already enter Hegel's Jena period. But let us return to the "System-Fragment" of the Frankfurt period.

In the first of the only two fragments which have been preserved, the concept of Life is first defined with reference to the ontology of *human* life. Life is the "multitude of the living" (TJ, 345; Knox, 309ff.): it is essentially a manifold of beings, each of which are themselves Life, and each of which exists as "part" of "an infinite manifold" that, qua manifold, is also a unifying "whole" (TJ, 346); every part [of this whole — Tr.] is itself alive. This manifold of Life "will meet with opposition" and will develop as follows (let me add that if we look ahead to the form this central thesis assumes for Hegel, already here we must interpret the term "will" in a special way, for this opposition is intrinsic to the Being of all that is alive).

Two "aspects" belong to the being of Life:

One aspect of this manifold . . . will be observed simply *in relation*, as having its being only in the process of unification — the other aspect . . . will be considered as *in opposition*, as having its being only in the separation from the former, and each aspect will

thereby be determined as having its being in the separation from the other. (TJ, 346)

The first aspect is the being of the “*individual*” (“individuality,” “organization”); the second aspect refers to the being of “*nature*” (“the unlimited limit,” “fixed Life”).

Through this definition of the ontological split within Life on the one hand as a form of being constituting itself in relation to another and, on the other hand, as one constituting itself in opposition, the crucial ontological categories of for-itselfness (consciousness) and being-for-another (being-as-object, *Gegenständlich-sein*) make their appearance. Originally both are brought together under the ontological category of Life which itself remains undivided through this split. “Individuality” and “nature” as two aspects exist only insofar as they are for and against each other. Their opposition to one another can only *be* as their unity; their separation exists only in their “relation.” But there is an essential difference in the ontological constitution of each part, for the being of individuality is formed by the *relation* itself (Life, “whose being is the relation,” TJ, 346). Individuality can *exist* only as the “unity” of a “manifold,” and indeed of the manifold of the determinations within which it lives as well as the manifold determinations of external nature with which it lives. Nature, however, has its “being only as *in opposition*.” It *exists* as the opposite of individuality. But this opposing element is not simply the other of unifying Life; nature is not “for-itself” excluded from individuality which organizes, and torn apart into an “absolute manifold.” Rather it must “also be placed in relation to the living entity which it has distanced from itself.” The opposition is possible only on the basis of an originary process of unification.

Hegel clarifies what he means by “nature” as the opposite of (individual) Life once more with reference to the concept of *reflection*. Nature “is a posit of Life, for reflection has introduced to Life the categories of relation and separation, of the individual and the universal, of what subsists for-itself and of what subsists in connection, the latter as limited and the former as unlimited, and has made them into nature by positing them” (TJ, 346 ff; Knox, 310). Nature is a posit of Life insofar as

Life is reflection. Here “reflection” does not mean, as Haering asserts,⁴ a “mere” activity of the understanding, but signifies as previously a special mode of Being of Life itself, a “process of the totality of the living” (Dilthey, IV, 142). In reflection Life returns back to itself from the “infinite manifoldness,” from the “totality of Life,” particularizes itself as this one “limited” Life, separating itself from all other living entities and excluding “the rest” from itself; it posits itself as in opposition to and constitutes itself as a “self-subsistent” entity, as “a single one,” as an individual. Through this division, effected by reflection, of the originally unified wholeness of Life into two aspects, “nature” first becomes the other, the other of the individuality which excludes it, and which constitutes itself as a being subsisting for itself. Life that is reflected is essentially *human*. The wholeness of Life is so divided that the human person becomes “one aspect and all else the other” (TJ, 346). This division, however, is a division within *Life*. Life exists only insofar as both are *its* aspects. Life is a division existing on the basis of an ordinary unity, and as a process of opposition it is also one of unification. The human person is only “individual life, insofar as it is united with all the elements and all the infinity of Life outside it.” The person is only a part, “insofar as it is none, and insofar as nothing has been separated from it” (TJ, 346).

It is clear that in this exposition of the concept of Life, nature does not mean a “substance,” ontologically distinct from human existence, like the *res extensa* which is juxtaposed to the *res cogitans*. Hegel defines the relationship between subjectivity and objectivity in a manner wholly different from that of two ontologically different substances (already in the second manuscript of the “System-Fragment,” Hegel characterizes Life and its opposite through the later categories of “subjectivity” and “objectivity”). Nature is the *other* of Life which is “posited” ontologically by each living individual; it is the other *in opposition* to which individual life can first become. Nature is “all the rest” besides individual life. This concept includes the organic, inorganic, human and nonhuman worlds. It is the “infinite manifoldness” in which and with which the “single” individual which is “subsistent for itself” lives. But this manifoldness is not simply dispersed into an “infinite manyness”;

rather it is itself “unity.” Indeed, insofar as it first *becomes* a unity through the positing of individual life, while uniting itself thereby with this life, this unity is *unified* by and unified with human life.

At this point Hegel gives the concept of “original synthesis” a concrete meaning which appears far removed from any relation to the “highest point” of transcendental philosophy that we presented at the beginning of this study. This concretization becomes all the sharper in that Hegel specifies the character of “nature” as the opposition to human life more closely. Insofar as it is *opposed* to this human life “nature itself” is “not Life,” but insofar as it is opposed to *Life*, and insofar as human life penetrates what is opposed to it and animates it, nature becomes “fixed *Life*” (TJ, 347). Life which creates its opposite is essentially Life which animates; it has the purpose of infusing life into its opposite, such that the “manifold” in the “unification” with Life, becomes “animated” and an “organ” of Life (TJ, 347). Thus nature is not an abstract and “dead multiplicity”; it is itself an infinite manifold of “organizations, individuals, as unity” (TJ, 346), nature is a living “whole.” Nature itself is a “bonding,” a “synthesis.” In its unifying function Life must not only be characterized as the mere “unity of opposition and relation” but as the “unity of unity and non-unity” (TJ, 348). Life does not unify a dead manifold, lying before it and to which it is juxtaposed as an abstract unity. Rather this manifold exists only insofar as it is unified by Life and as an animated manifold, and the unity exists only as process and hence as a living unity. What Hegel later presents as the achievement of the cognizing I and its original synthetic unifying activity shows itself at this point; here, however, it is presented as an achievement of *Life*.

As in the *Spirit of Christianity*, to characterize this living unity more precisely, Hegel once more introduces the concept of *Spirit*.

By contrast to the abstract manifold, we can name infinite Life Spirit. For Spirit is the living unity of the manifold, in opposition to which it is also its true form . . . but it is not opposed to the latter as a dead, and empty manifold, separated from it. . . . Spirit is the living law in unity with the manifold which is only animated through it. (TJ, 347; Knox, 311)⁵

The Being of Life, when characterized through its animating and unifying unity, can be understood only as the Being of Spirit. Only Spirit can have its opposite, its object as a posit which it penetrates, pierces through, and grasps (*begreift*). Thereby the object loses its quality of standing over and against something (*Gegen-ständigkeit*) and becomes one with Spirit. In its object Spirit remains wholly and undividedly by itself; it becomes a concrete, living unity which has grown together as one.

It is important to observe that one cannot simply equate Spirit with Life. Hegel writes: "One can name *infinite* Life Spirit," and infinite Life as Spirit is the divine being (just as qua "Life" it is also "united" with all other living beings). Life which sustains itself in the dualism of individuality and nature, which lives "as an infinity of forms" of self-subsistent individuals, each of which is juxtaposed to "all others," is essentially "finite Life." This ontological dualism, which indeed exists on the basis of unity and which is a unified dualism but which does not transcend the infinity of individual forms subsisting for themselves constitutes the "only remaining opposition" of finite to infinite Life (TJ, 347). To the existence for-itself of individual forms is opposed the last and wholly infused *unity*. When Hegel now requires that finite Life "raise" itself to infinity (TJ, 348), this cannot mean that the essential dualism and limitation of finite Life forms somehow must disappear a priori since this dualism and limitation form the *Being* of this mode of life. Rather, this unity with and this ascent to infinite Life take place only insofar as finite Life is *divided*. I have already suggested how this process comes about: one can abstract from all determination and activity to such a degree that only the soul of all activity and all that is determinate remains (TJ, 303). This basically implies a transformation of Life itself *into* activity and *into* determinacy (a transformation which Hegel later describes as "freedom.")

In the "Frankfurt System-Fragments" the transformation of finite Life into infinity proceeds only on the basis of *religion*; this is a process through which Life is actualized as *Spirit* and the highest meaning of Being, the most authentic Being, is realized as a form of fulfilled unity. Philosophy, by contrast, is

assigned the task of “showing the finitude of all that is transient” (TJ, 348; Knox, 313). Thus the concept of Life leads beyond the *philosophical* framework into a higher dimension; expressed differently, philosophical conceptualization does not suffice to lay the foundation.

Life as the Form of “Absolute Spirit” in the *Jena Logic*

After Hegel’s “System-Fragment” of 1800 one of the possible directions in which the concept of Life could have been further developed is cut off. This does not imply that the Jena writings present a break with the *Early Theological Writings*. The original relationship between the “Idea of Life” and divine life is retained in these later writings as well, but it no longer forms the foundation for the treatment of this concept. This new foundation, in addition to being different, is also more extensive. As an ontological concept, “Life” now stands within the framework of a purely philosophical-ontological investigation, which aims from the beginning toward the development of a “system.” For this reason an interpretation of the concept of Life in the Jena writings that does not refer to and explicate the direction of the system becomes impossible. However, we have to leave this task aside and rest satisfied with a short presentation of the internal relation between “Life” and “Spirit” within the system. While the systematic place of the concept of Life has already been sketched via the interpretation of the larger *Logic* given in the first part of this work, the concept of Spirit remains unspecified.

In the Jena System, “Life” as a category is unfolded not within the “Logic” but at the beginning of the “Philosophy of Nature.” But its significance here differs sharply from the one it holds in the section on the Philosophy of Nature within the *Encyclopaedia*. In the case of the latter, Life is a “stage” (real form) of nature; it is the fundamental concept of “organic”

nature as opposed to inorganic physics and mathematics. In the Jena System, Life is a determination of the Being of nature in general, of its "proper essence," of its "material" (JL, 89), which encompasses all the individual "systems" of nature. Indeed the concept of Life leads beyond the dimension of nature altogether: nature is only a specific *mode* of Life, "only formal life" (Ibid.). Nevertheless, when the concept of Life is still explicitly treated only within the Philosophy of Nature and not in the sections on Logic or Metaphysics, this is evidence of a certain vacillation on Hegel's part concerning the foundations of this work, for the Jena System is already more oriented toward the idea of the knowing self and thus limits the central concept of Life to one *part* of the system, without, however, being able to eliminate its foundational role altogether.

Hegel now defines Life in view of its internal relation to *Spirit*: "Life is Absolute Spirit according to its Idea or its relation to itself" (JL, 189). The phrase "according to its...relation to itself" in general means according to the modality of its process of happening and the nature of its motility. The next sentence indicates right away that, "qua Spirit," Life expresses a certain structure of motility, a certain kind of "process": "Life qua Spirit is not a being, and a kind of non-cognition, rather it exists essentially as cognition; it is a process in which the life-process is absolutely a moment" (JL, 189). In order to understand this definition, we must briefly explicate the Idea of Absolute Spirit invoked here.

In the Jena System "Absolute Spirit" terminates the highest mode of "subjectivity" of "Metaphysics." It thus occupies approximately the same place which it later has in the *Logic*. With Absolute Spirit the transition to the *Realphilosophie* is effected; Absolute Spirit lets itself go into immediacy, into the "other of itself," into nature (JL, 186). Like the "Idea" in the *Logic*, Absolute Spirit is both the highest Being and the most general form of beings. The idea of Being, guiding the exposition of the system from the beginning, culminates in this category. The meaning of Being is essentially the same in the *Jena Logic* as in the later *Logic*, and for this reason the reference to the first part of this work is justified. I have already indicated that in the Jena System the movement of Being has been defined

as "relation" (*Beziehung*) and more precisely as a relation to self. And according to the different kinds of being, this relation either runs along or between independent entities (*die Seienden*) or is internalized and realized by them in the form of "subjectivity." Again, depending on the kinds of being concerned, they stand either in a "simple relatedness" (*einfache Beziehung*) or "in relation to one another" (*Verhältnis*, as in the case of "being" or "thought") or are in "proportion with" one another (as is the case with "cognition"). These various modes of relation are directed toward the idea of truth, in the sense that each displays a progressive mode of coming-into-truth of beings themselves. Truth is the complete *unity* of beings which exists through and as relation. It signifies the totality of being-equal-to-self-in-otherness. This unity is attained ontologically by the knowing *I*. "It discovers itself as a condition of absolute equality-with-self which emerges out of the disappearance of all determinacy. It finds what is opposed to it within itself and precisely thereby as its own self, as in-itself. . . . it finds itself; it is Spirit or rational" (JL, 178ff).

Let us deduce generally from this passage that Spirit is now characterized as a mode of selfhood, whereas until now it had been viewed as a mode of (finite or infinite) Life (we return below to the significance of this issue). At first the Being of the "I" is "formal Spirit," indeed "a highest essence, but not the absolute essence (*Wesen*) or Absolute Spirit" (JL, 179). For the "relatedness" in which the I stands cannot represent the entire modality of equality-with-self-in-otherness. It is true that what the I relates itself to, against which it is (theoretically and practically) active, has been absorbed into its selfhood and that its objecthood and its in-itselfness have been sublated. The latter exists only as the "opposite" and the "negative" of the I (JL, 180). But precisely this pure *negativity* of opposition is the lack which the I is still subject to and which makes it into purely "formal Spirit." But if this opposition, this "other of itself" belongs to the essence of Being, then in the case of the most actual being as well, namely of Absolute Spirit, it must both sustain and sublimate itself and not remain as the "pure negative." True equality-with-self-in-otherness requires a positive, actual otherness. The *actual* lack of equality must be sublated *in ac-*

tuality. Spirit must recognize “the unequal self as itself,” must contemplate itself “as the other of itself”; only then has it become “Absolute Spirit” (JL, 181).

The form in which the process of movement of Spirit is developed in this text expresses its basic *actuality* as will later be explicated in the *Phenomenology*. Actuality, effective and effected existence, belongs to the very *Being* of Spirit. Spirit can exist only through a form of Being and motility which is actual; only as a real process can this be a spiritual one. Only when the opposition within which Spirit “finds” itself, while remaining equal-with-itself, is not “merely negative” but is an actual inequality, an actual otherness, which as such is interiorized and sublated by Spirit — only then can the ontological meaning of Spirit be realized.

In saying this, however, we have also implied something else, namely, that Spirit has an actual history and is itself none other than this history; a process, that is, in the course of which Spirit “falls” into otherness, overcomes this through “labor,” and thus returns to itself. This whole process, which constitutes the Being of Spirit, does not happen *to* Spirit or take place *with* it; rather it is grasped and comprehended by Spirit and is carried out and sustained via this cognition. Spirit makes itself the actual subject of this process and, qua subject, mediates along the way its actuality with itself. As we will see, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel defines exactly this kind of movement as “history.”

The actual history of Spirit is the process of the *totality* of beings themselves. The character of Spirit as actuality is thereby emphasized even further. Spirit is not only reality, but *all* of reality. The “cycle of Spirit” is all of reality (JL, 185). The various regions of beings are but different moments of this cycle, defined by the falling of Spirit into otherness (“Nature”) and its return to itself (the spiritual world). Spirit is first constituted in this processual totality: “First this totality of the return-to-self is in-itself and does not go beyond itself to another. Spirit is the Absolute, and its Idea is absolutely realized first when its moments are themselves Spirit. But then there is no more going beyond” (JL, 186).

These preliminary explications of the concept of Absolute

Spirit are necessary in order to understand Hegel's definition of Life (JL, 189ff). Life means Absolute Spirit, insofar as this is "relation-to-self." Life then generally signifies the ontological mode in which Spirit exists. Life presents this relation-to-self so long as it is also a mode of being-reflected-into-self. And Hegel adds expressly, Life is not so through "an external reflection" but "in itself, or as it exists" (JL, 189). We know what this means from the *Early Theological Writings*: Life is "absolute equality-with-self" only through the relation of the manifold of its determinations (its "moments") back to itself; only through the grasping, cognizing, and sublating of these moments into the totality of the self sustaining itself through these very moments can Life acquire this character. In two respects this definition decisively goes beyond what has been said until now: first, the mode of this self-sustaining self-equality will be defined as "cognition," and second, precisely through this concept of cognition the lives of *nature* and that of *Spirit* will be distinguished from each other; indeed both will then be characterized as different modes of cognition.

The "Idea of Life" signifies an "absolute process" through which a "totality" sustains itself in its diverse moments as itself; indeed, this is possible only insofar as it is "*dependent*" on its moments and insofar as it *acts toward them (sich verhält)* in a certain way. The totality of Life constitutes itself as the "negative unity" of its moments through this relation. This is a unity formed through a process of sublating unification (*aufhebende Einigung*). This negative unity, however, is equally a "positive" one. It presupposes "the subsistence of these moments," and hence is not separated from them. From the standpoint of the unity of Life all moments are equally valid (*gleich-gültig*); Life exists through them all as their universal.

Life sustains its *selfhood* through this relation to its moments which is also the further subsistence of these moments themselves. As a subject, it itself creates the unity and the wholeness which belongs to it. Its activity is one of "cognition," for it implies a directional dependence on something other than it. Every moment is present *as* a moment, and is grasped and sublating as such. It is clear that the concept of cognition possesses this scope, for cognition encompasses both the activity

of natural entities (their relation to self) as well as of spiritual ones. Nature is indeed cognizant but is not a Life that “cognizes itself”; for this reason nature is “only a formal Life.” Such a mode of relation to self Hegel characterizes as “determinacy” (*Bestimmtheit*), a category with which we are already familiar from the *Logic* and which is juxtaposed to “determination” (*Bestimmung*) as a category of the relation proper to spiritual forms of Life. Nature is “Life *in-itself*, but not *for-itself*; for-itself, it is an infinite, *unreflected* Life” (JL, 189. Emphasis added.). The living, natural entity is not the self-relating subject of its own process; it is not one that is self-creating and self-positing; rather, it is a universal which “indifferently” sustains itself. This mode of Life is accidentally subject to its process [rather than being its active subject — Tr.]. It lives indifferently throughout all the determinacies it encounters, without being able to oppose itself to them and transcend them. Throughout its determinacies it behaves as a “universal” without, however, being able to “sublate” its own determinacy in them, such as to transform its determinacy into self-determination. “Life is thus posited in an essential determinacy” without being able to posit *itself* as *determination*.

The deficiency of this mode of Life, the lack of a truly completed form of unity and selfhood, is also expressed through the relation of individual, living entities to the totality of Life, to nature. Nature is

the Life of absolutely many individuals, which are themselves wholes, divided in themselves and externally limited, juxtaposed in their relations to one another, and disappearing into each other, in a process of universal metabolism, and even in their individuality they are the universal, that is the species. (JL, 190)

Because each living individual, is not a true self that can subsist by itself, it has its reality “in another” and through the other, namely the “species.” But the species as well is not a for-itselfness which particularizes itself qua self into individualities. It is not a “self-reflected” totality which differentiates itself and which posits each difference as its own moment. Over and against its differences, it posits only an “indifferent universality” (JL, 192), which exists only as the “common” elements of

all its individual parts. Thus the species as well is dependent on another through which it acquires its reality, namely, the individuals. The unity of natural life dissolves into two "parts" which are not united in and through themselves: "Qua one that is not in-itself but in another, it is as individual and as species" (JL, 191), and the relationship between both does not transcend mere "metabolism." Individual and species do not unite into a synthesizing and mediating "concluding result" (*Schluss*).* (This particular interpretation of the lack of unity between species and the individual is taken up by Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and contrasted to the true unity of universal Spirit with its individual forms.)

When the merely "formal Life" of nature is contrasted with true Life as *Spirit*, one must note a double meaning here: "in-itself" nature is already Spirit, for it is a moment of the processual totality of Spirit and indeed the moment of its true otherness. The juxtaposition of nature and Spirit then is not that of two substances. Both are modes of Life, and "Life as Spirit" represents only the *completion and fulfillment* of that Life toward which nature is directed in-itself.

This interpretative orientation once more points toward the conceptualization of the completed and fulfilled *unity* of Life as a mode of complete and fulfilled "relation-to-self." Only a Life which recognizes itself in every "moment," which determines each of its determinations, which reflects back into itself away from every mode of accidental individuality can present "absolute-equality-with-self" in otherness. This can be only a self-comprehending and self-knowing "subjectivity," a spiritual being. I need not repeat the demonstration of this thesis here. I try to show only how the relationship of the "universality" of Life to individual, living entities is also contained and preserved in the fully attained unity of "Life as Spirit."

In the case of nature the species related itself to the "many ones" which "subsisted" as parts, and we have also seen the varied manyness of this unity and its disintegration. Spirit as

* Marcuse is here drawing attention to the double significance of the term *Schluss* which means both a result and a conclusion, in the sense of a judgment that is reached at the end of a process of reasoning. He has already explored this double meaning in the context of Hegel's *Logic* in chapter 12 — Tr.

well lives only through a multitude of actual “moments,” actual spiritual individualities, but its universality does not represent the highest species for these individuals. The universality of Spirit is rather that of a “totality reflected-into-itself” (JL, 189; 192), which separates itself into its moments and which particularizes itself into individualities. It is not “indifferent” toward its determinacies but relates itself to them as their “absolute difference”; indeed, it is not only quantitatively but also qualitatively a universal (JL, 192). It differentiates itself and allows its varied manifold to emerge out of itself as a process. It remains the subject of this process qua “for-itselfness,” in that it does not simply remain the indifferent and “common” element of its moments, “subsisting” alongside them. It rather “sublates” itself in these moments, takes these back into itself (“reflects” them), and gives them a purely “ideal” existence as ideal moments of a whole. Hegel does not yet explain what is essentially positive about this self-reflected totality of Spirit. He points out only that these spiritual universals are “higher than the species” (JL, 192) and that their actualization in individualities is a process of self-gathering, a true “result” (JL, 191; *Schluss*). The positive and essential explication of this process is provided by the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in that it is developed as a *historical process*.

The Jena System is decisive for understanding the original place of this concept of Life within the ontological framework, because “Life” is seen and defined here from the beginning as *Spirit*. Life is regarded as an ontological mode of Spirit (that is, as an ontological mode of the most actual Being which at the same time defines how beings *are* “essentially”). In the *Early Theological Writings*, by contrast, “Spirit” signified a mode of *Life*; Spirit was defined and established in relation to Life. This sharp contrast is not meant to suggest a break. My aim is much more to point to a crucial point of Hegelian philosophy, where its guiding ideas meet and where the original and guiding idea of Life is displaced by the later conceptions of knowledge or Spirit. These guiding motifs are not isolated from and juxtaposed to each other but are brought into close struggle with each other and get intertwined, and this process is prevalent throughout the Hegelian ontology. The definition of Life on

the basis of Spirit and its determination as *cognition* necessarily orient the ontology toward *human* life wherein cognition is first free and wherein it can first fulfill the actuality of Spirit as a mode of self-knowledge. Qua cognition, Life represents a mode of *Being*; the unfolding of "life as Spirit" requires the unfolding of the *Being of human life*. But then the analysis of *history* as an ontological mode of human life also follows. As soon as *cognition* is defined as Life, history follows; as soon as Life is defined as *cognition*, however, historicity is pushed away from the history of Life. The truth of Life is then defined in relation to an absolute and thereby *unhistorical* mode of knowledge. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is Hegel's first and last attempt to unite as equally fundamental both motifs and to construct the ahistoricity of Absolute Spirit on the basis of history. One can describe this attempt with a brief formula: to show how Life, as historical, carries within itself the possibility of its own ahistoricity and how it actualizes this possibility in the course of history. Hegel's later lectures on the *Philosophy of Right* and the *Philosophy of History* no longer consider historicity as an ontological feature of Life. History is here viewed from the beginning ahistorically and from the standpoint of Absolute Knowledge.

Life as an Ontological Concept in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

20

Introduction and General Definition of the Concept of Life

The concept of Life developed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* corresponds to the intentions of this work to show the unfolding of different modes of being to be modes of unfolding of appearing Spirit. The explicit emphasis is on “Life as Spirit,” on Life as a being that knows and is conscious of itself and “cognizes itself.” Thus from the beginning *human* Life is in the foreground of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Life will be introduced as “self-consciousness.” Self-consciousness reaches its truth through the being-for and -against each other of “Independence and Dependence,” “Lordship and Bondage”; these opposites are then united through “*Bildung*” (cultural formation) and “labor” — these are all ontological determinations of human Life and, what is decisive, of human Life in all its historicity and concrete happening in the world. In no way does this mean, however, that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* provides a phenomenological analysis of human Life in its historicity or a philosophy of history and the like. In this work human Life is not treated as an ontological mode alongside others; it is not an independent object of analysis at all. Rather, the being of this form of Life is viewed from the beginning as constitutive of the mode of being of absolute *Spirit*, as a mode of being in which all others complete and fulfill themselves, in which being *in its totality* attains truth. The character of Spirit as “totality,” which was decisive for the Jena System (see above), also underlies the concept of Life in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, only here it is developed in a wholly different manner. In the *Phen-*

omenology of Spirit, the totality “realizes” itself in the process of human Life, in the process of Life as “self-consciousness.” The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is through and through a universal ontology, but one based on the being of Life in its historicity. The work does not fall into a “philosophy of history” on the one hand, and a “systematic” part on the other. Neither does it employ history as illustration, example, and the like; yet it is not a philosophy of history either. Beginning with the first sentence, the concept of Life provides the unified ground sustaining all the dimensions of this work. Spirit “appears” (and appears necessarily) as historical only in order to sublimate its own historicity as historical being. With the first sentence of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Life becomes a historical object; even at this stage, however, historicity is viewed from the standpoint of “Absolute Knowledge” which sublimes all.

It is not my task here to give a comprehensive analysis even of those parts of the work which are decisive for the ontological concept of Life. Instead, I attempt to develop an interpretation of these passages so that the concept of Life becomes visible in its full historicity as the groundwork of Hegelian ontology; in the course of this interpretation, all elements of subsequent theories of historicity will also come to light.

The ontological concept of Life is explicitly developed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* twice: first, at the beginning of section B, called “Self-consciousness”¹ (PhG, 134ff; 104 ff), when appearing Spirit for the first time begins to move itself within “the familiar realm of truth,” in the “truth of self-certainty.” Here Hegel provides the fundamental ontological determination of Life. Second, Life is discussed as the object of “observing reason” (PhG, section VA, 193 ff; 145ff). Here it is viewed as an object of rational self-consciousness, as a real form of beings. But even here, when viewed as an object, Life represents a decisive turn within the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Rational self-consciousness “finds” *itself* in its object and thus begins to overcome the mode of objectness (*Gegenständlichkeit*) as such. Thus, for an interpretation of the concept of Life, the necessary beginning point is the one provided by Hegel himself.

“The essence of Life” was preliminarily characterized in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* prior to the section on self-conscious-

ness. When the “unconditioned universal” becomes the object of the understanding, the “supersensuous world” and therefore the truth of the sensuous world are shown to lie in the character of “infinity” (PhG, ch. 3). The sensuous and the supersensuous worlds are united in the universality and self-equality of “law” which contains the “distinction” of both as sublated “within itself.” This self-equality, which is “in-itself distinction,” that is, which distinguishes itself from itself and which sustains itself through these distinctions, is named “infinity” by Hegel (PhG, 125; 99): “The simple infinity, or absolute concept, may be called the simple essence of Life, the soul of the world, the universal lifeblood, which courses everywhere and whose flow is neither checked nor interrupted by any distinction but is itself all distinction as that which sublates them within itself; pulsating within itself, but itself motionless; shaken to its depths without being unrestful. It is *equal-with-itself*, for the distinctions are merely tautologies; they are distinctions that are none. This being, equal-with-itself, therefore stands in relation only to itself” (PhG, 126; 100).

The term “simple infinity” refers to those characteristics of the motility of Life as a unifying unity, already familiar to us from the Jena System and referred to there as “relation-to-self.” This motility is called “infinite” for it never runs merely along or afloat but is sustained and carried by the *unity* of the living. Every “distinction,” every determinacy into which the living entity “falls” in its movement, is sublated into the unity of Life, such that Life carries distinction within itself and is itself “the inner distinction” (PhG, 125; 99). The self-equality of Life can thus sustain itself throughout all otherness; it relates *only* to itself. Much more emphatically than before, Hegel characterizes this ontological mode of Life with respect to its form of *motility*. Equality-with-self is understood as the peaceful restlessness of “pure self-movement” (PhG, 127). But why this “essence of Life” should be named “the soul of the world,” “universal blood-life” is still obscure and in need of clarification. But through such descriptions of Life as “omnipresence” (*Allgegenwärtigkeit*) and “universality,” what becomes visible is the inner *totality* of this concept which has already been emphasized.

The explicit development of the ontological concept of Life begins when infinity is said to be an ontological aspect of Life (PhG, 134ff; 106ff). The *Phenomenology of Spirit* demonstrates the unfolding of modes of being to correspond to the movement of knowledge and of consciousness (on what grounds will be clear with the interpretation of the concept of Life itself). For this reason, the ontological determination of Life is preceded by a characterization of the essence of self-consciousness through whose knowledge Life first appears (PhG, 132–134; 104–106). Because Hegel then develops the essence of self-consciousness once more on the basis of the ontological concept of Life (PhG, 137ff; 109ff), thus concretizing it, here we can right away proceed to this latter interpretation.

“The essence (of Life) is infinity as the *sublation* of all distinctions, the pure rotation on its axis, peacefulness itself as the absolute restless infinity, *independence* itself, in which all distinctions of movement are dissolved” (PhG, 134; 106). Here the concept of “independence” is crucial. Life is independence itself, but not as if it were one independent being next to others like it, as if it were some intrinsically self-sufficient being existing alongside others; independence is a determination of the *being* of Life and indeed constitutes the peculiar “infinity” of Life. It constitutes its unique totality and universality, the manner in which Life stands over and against the entirety of beings and “relates” them to itself. Life itself is in movement in such a way that it absorbs and “dissolves” all distinctions into itself; all being that it distinguishes from itself (those determinations of existence into which it falls as well as the existence of other beings) is essentially dependent on it and is encountered by it as being non-self-sufficient. By encompassing all being within this “relation-to-self,” by making its independence the “axis” around which the entire manifold of “distinctions” turns, Life becomes the “universal medium,” “universal fluidity,” the “simple fluid substance” of all being (PhG, 134). These determinations make up those central characteristics of Life through which it becomes a foundational and universal concept of Being and return throughout Hegel’s ontology. Indeed, we have already met them in the discussion of Life in the *Logic*. The being of Life is nothing thinglike, objectlike, at which

beings would break, or something which can be overcome by another being; it is not a being among others. It is much more a *medium*, a middle for all beings, through which all being is mediated such that it can be encountered only through this mediation. It is "fluidity," which carries all being in-itself, which runs through and penetrates all, and which, qua this fluidity, constitutes the "substance" of beings. It is that through which all being receives "sustenance." As this universal fluidity Life does not run to exhaustion but remains infinitely equal-with-itself as a form of infinite independence.

This characterization preliminarily explains what is meant by Life as the "soul of the world." It would be plausible now to understand this universality and independence of Life in terms of a universal consciousness, such that all being would be regarded as being-for-this-consciousness. But this interpretation, which forces itself on us particularly through the analysis of Life as "self-consciousness," would be a misunderstanding. The ontological relation of Life to the totality of beings must not be distorted into the epistemological relation of consciousness to objectivity. Life is consciousness and self-consciousness first and only because it is the "universal medium" and "fluid substance" of beings. Life qua "self-consciousness" presupposes this ontological "essence of Life"; when referring to a mode of Life the label "self-consciousness" signifies a certain mode of independence. At this stage of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* the relation of consciousness to the object has been precisely sublated. As we will see, in the sphere of Life there is no mere objecthood, only dependence and independence. Life is a mode of being with whose existence all entities become deobjectified, are "related" to life, and come alive. Life is principally animating being; it relates *only* to itself. It relates to itself even when it relates to what is not independent: for only that being can be independent, which "intrinsically," according to its possibility, is already Life.

As the "universal medium" in which all being *exists*, as the "universal third," which flows through all entities and which alone constitutes "the subsistence or substance" of all "distinctions," Life is a totality in *process*, and a "substance of pure

movement in-itself." The whole is a self-enclosed cycle of movement which Hegel divides into following "moments."

The totality of beings existing in the universal medium of Life immediately presents a manifold of distinctions extended in space and time, and each being is a form "for-itself." The self-equality of the universal medium at first exists only as the universality of *space* and *time*, in which each being exists in a distinct form. Thus the "essence" of Life is "the simple essence of time, which in this self-equality assumes the solid form of space" (PhG, 134; 106). "Essence" here means *only* essence and not "actuality," that is, an "abstraction" which has not yet become "result." The subordination of space to a form of time cannot be explained here. Hegel justified it in the *Jena Logic* (202ff). The unity of Life which brings the extended and differentiated manifold of beings together first presents itself as a universal "form" of space and time alone in which every being exists.

The unity of Life, therefore, is a "bifurcated" one, which is separated into a multitude of distinct forms subsisting for themselves. Life is in-itself a "negative unity," for it is a unity only through the sublation and unification of what is bifurcated. "In this simple, universal medium, however, distinctions exist all the same as *distinctions*; for this universal fluidity exists as negative nature only when it *sublates* them, but it could not sublimate them unless they had a subsistence of their own" (PhG, 134; 106). This passage, as emphasized numerous times previously (see above), expresses that this form of opposition represents a mode of actuality as a result of which alone unity becomes a process of unifying activity. The distinctions contained by Life are either *existing* determinacies or determinant *existences*: "independent forms," "parts that are for-themselves," that "subsist." But the independence of these forms will be dissolved. It will be shown that "their being . . . consists only in that simple, fluid substance of the pure movement in-itself," that their for-itselfness is "just as immediately their reflection in the unity," "and because it is *subsistence*, distinction acquires independence only in it" (PhG, 136; 107).

The course of the internal movement of Life, the processual mode of its totality, is delineated thereby. The self-subsistence

of those distinct forms, existing for-themselves, will be dissolved and the inwardly differentiated unity of Life will show itself as their true being, as their “substance.” But because Life is not a power external to them but their own substance, this “subordination of every subsistent form under the infinity of distinctions” can be viewed only as completing the *process* proper to these forms themselves, not only as a whole but in every individual part as well Life is process. As the “life process” it takes place within each entity. The individual form that is for-itself comes forward “in opposition to the universal substance, denies this fluidity and its own continuity with it, and insists that it is not to be dissolved into this universal but that, on the contrary, it is to preserve itself in and through its separation from and its consumption of its own organic nature” (PhG, 135). This is the *first moment* of the unity of Life, namely, the life process of individuality. Let me discuss it more closely.

The individual has stepped outside the universality of Life. Life has opposed itself to Life. For the individual all that exists outside it is an “other”; it can relate itself only to what is opposed to it in that it “consumes” the other, absorbs it into its own Life, utilizes, and depletes it. The other is its “inorganic nature”;² its selfhood consists in its organizing activity which creates organs for-itself in order to appropriate the inorganic (already in the “Frankfurt System-Fragment” “organization” was the term for “individuality”). But this other of the individual, this inorganic nature that expands itself in space and time, is precisely the immediate form of universal Life, of universal substance, as opposed to which, all that is individual, including the organized individual, presents an existing determinacy and a partial distinction. By absorbing inorganic nature into itself, the individual at the same time absorbs Life into its individuality. The universal substance of Life “exists now for the *distinction* that is in- and for-itself; it has, therefore, become the infinite movement through which that peaceful medium is consumed, Life as living being” (PhG, 136; 107). Universal Life is there *for* this distinction; the individual becomes the *subject* of Life and makes itself the universal medium of beings. Life is essentially an (individual) living being. The living medium of beings no longer means the simple expansion of forms in the

universal form of space and time; rather, it is the living individual which centers this whole domain on itself as its "other."

"This inversion, however, is on that account again an invertedness in its own self" (PhG, 136; 107–108). The individual *is* only an individual in juxtaposition to the universal, but the universal is, in turn, the "essence" of the individual; it is what Life has always been before it can be individuated and through which alone the individual acquires "subsistence." The individual *exists* only as the form of "universal Life," from which it comes and to which it returns. By consuming the universal, the individual consumes the essence from which alone it lives. It sustains itself, not qua individual but as what is distinct from the *universal*, namely, as "species." In the process of individuation, individuality consumes itself.

What is consumed is the essence; individuality which maintains itself at the expense of the universal, and which gives the feeling of unity with itself, sublating thereby its *opposition* to the other, *through which* it exists for-itself. The unity with self, which it gives itself, is precisely the *fluidity* of all distinctions, or universal dissolution. (PhG, 136; 108; Baillie, 223)

The individual that is for-itself, the subsistent element, is thereby subordinated under the infinity of distinction. This is the *second moment* of the inner motility of Life.

The two moments of Life distinguished above, unite themselves once more into *one* totality in process. Life exists only in the bifurcation of living forms that are for-themselves, but the same process, which actualizes the individual form, also sublates individuality, and what is realized is much more a new form of universality. (Anticipating the subsequent concretization of this issue, we can say that "the work" which the individual leaves behind, the actuality of its Life and deed, truly exist only as moments of the universal actuality of Spirit, out of which they proceed and upon which they depend. This determination is just as true of the relation of natural works and realities to the natural species as it is of the relation of spiritual works and actualities to universal Spirit.)

At this point in the exposition, Hegel combines together the hitherto developed aspects of the concept of Life into the

totality of a self-enclosed cycle of movement. "This whole cycle constitutes Life"; neither the individual moments nor their simple sum but only the unity which is in process, which bifurcates and reunites itself, constitutes Life: "A whole which is self-developing, which dissolves its development and which simply preserves itself in this movement" (PhG, 137; 108).

But the decisive characterization is still missing: *what* is this *new* unity and universality of Life which results from the combination of these two juxtaposed moments? What constitutes the whole and true *actuality* of Life? And through what does it differentiate itself from the first immediate unity (the simple separation into distinct forms)? Hegel distinguishes this unity from the first by juxtaposing it as reflected and mediated to a unity that is nonmediated and that is merely at hand "as being." The actuality of Life no longer consists of the "forms that are peacefully divided" in the universal medium of time and space but in the *process* that sublates and carries within itself the whole form as one of its "moments." It is a "reflected unity," which generates itself by uniting bifurcation, one that bends back into itself out of the multiplicity of existing distinctions, and which relates to itself as equality-with-self amid distinctions. Hegel continues: This unity is "the simple *species*, which in the movement of Life itself does not exist in this simplicity for itself, but in this result points Life toward an *other* besides itself, namely, toward *consciousness* for which Life exists as this unity or as *genus*" (PhG, 137; 109).

The difficulty in interpreting this passage lies primarily with the concept of *genus* (species), and with concretizing what it refers to. Let me begin by interpreting the conclusion to this passage.

The reflected unity, which constitutes the actuality of Life, does not exist for-itself "within the movement of Life." Neither "is" this reality simply present amid the totality of beings, nor is it embodied in an existent which would reveal it, for the actuality of Life is itself the processual totality of beings. On the other hand, Life, as actual, must exist; "it is only actual as form" (PhG, 136ff). Furthermore, Life "points toward *another* besides itself"; it is essentially *for* another, it is object. The reflected unity carries its own objectness *within* itself. As re-

flected unity, it must be objective for itself in the existent manifold out of which it bends itself backward; it must have the manifold of its distinct forms *before* itself in order to unite them and in order to mediate itself through them. Life then points intrinsically toward an other which is essentially only *its* other; this other of Life is “consciousness.” Here consciousness carries the distinctive meaning given to it in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: it means a being for which an other is essentially object such that it relates to this other and comes to *cognize* it.

From the character of Life as *totality*, Hegel now derives its more precise features as “genus,” and from its character as reflection he leads to its aspect as “self-consciousness.”

Life as Species

We have seen how in the Jena System the universality of “Life as Spirit” was considered a “higher” totality than that of the species. When in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, however, the totality of Life is designated as “simple genus,” then this means that this concept has undergone a fundamental change. It no longer means primarily the “natural species” as the form through which the universality of natural Life actualizes itself but a most significant actualization of universality that produces and sustains itself in this process. The natural species is only a specific and not a very authentic mode of being of this *genus*. With this new concept, Hegel returns to the original meaning of *genos*, which bears an internal relation to *genesis* as a form of motility.³ Let us note that Hegel writes of *the genus* or of the simple genus (in the singular). Life is not one genus among others, neither is it one higher than others, but the genus as such. This is so because the genus represents the only process through which true universality actualizes itself as “living” and through which unifying unity particularizes itself into real and distinct forms without being torn apart in the process. For Hegel, the essence of species consists in its exemplary motility. In its true form the genus is a “movement” which empties itself into “simple, immediate parts that are intrinsically universal” and “real” as “parts” (PhG, 221). It “separates itself from” and “moves itself among its indistinguishable elements,” such that

“in its opposition, it is at the same time non-distinguishable for-itself” (PhG, 225). It is a form of equality-with-self that is actual, that sublates itself in its real distinctions and that sustains itself as their “negative unity.” But the genus fulfills these determinations only in its *true* form, as remains to be shown, qua “consciousness” and more precisely qua “self-consciousness.” Insofar as Life is such a processual, universal and self-unifying structure of equality-with-self, it is simple genus; insofar as it fulfills this process in its form as “consciousness,” it becomes “self-consciousness.”

The characterization of Life as genus brings us a decisive step closer to the concretization of the concept of Life in general. The genus is a universality to be found in all regions of being and under which all kinds of different modes of being particularize themselves. The conceptualization of Life as species permits one to develop the inner *totality* of Life in its relation to all regions of being, and the process of Life as species provides the basis on which all species of being can be viewed in their ontological relation to the “simple genus” of Life.

Life as “Self-Consciousness”

We have seen several times that Hegel characterizes the structural movements of unifying unity and self-equality, which are specific to Life, in their true form as processes of movement of *knowledge*, of a *being* that is conscious. Life is not genus and in addition, self-consciousness. Both refer to the same thing: qua species Life is self-consciousness. The motility of *Life* is the motility of self-consciousness. Only a being in the mode of self-consciousness can realize the activity of unifying unity and the structure of self-equality specific to Life. At a later point in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which treats Life as the object of observing self-consciousness, this “identity” of movement is cited by Hegel as the reason why, in the course of observing “organic Life,” self-consciousness discovers that it *itself* is its own object. First, Hegel summarizes the movement of organic Life: it has “itself as its own end,” so that through “the movement of its doing,” “through the transformation which is introduced by its deed, what it arrives at is only itself” (PhG, 197; 157). Indeed,

“distinction” is an aspect of the movement of Life, but “it is only the appearance (*der Schein*) of a distinction” (between what it is at any point and what it is aimed toward; PhG, 196ff, 156ff.) Hegel then proceeds to describe the movement of self-consciousness: “But this is just how self-consciousness is constituted: *precisely* in such a way that it distinguishes itself in this way from itself without at the same time producing any distinction” (PhG, 197; 157. *Emphasis added.*).

These formal determinations of Life qua knowledge, for their part however, are based on another set of relations which follow from the character of Life as explicated in those passages of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* discussed (PhG, 137ff; 109ff). In its “result,” in its true and full reality, Life points “to another besides itself.” Life is essentially *for another*, an *object*, but object in a sense proper to Life itself, which in this case means either independence or dependence. It is important to see that this dependence on another which is essential to Life encompasses both the togetherness and antagonism of living “individuals” which may or may not be independent in their being-with-one-another (*das Miteinandersein*) as well as signifying the objectivity of the whole “domain” of Life *for* the individual living in this vast expanse. It is of the essence of Life to demand not only to be cognized but also to demand recognition. Qua Life, it *exists* not only for a self-consciousness but for *another* self-consciousness. The consistency with which Hegel emphasizes this double being-for-another as an ontological feature of Life pushes the subsequent development of this concept toward the dimension of the concrete happening of Life in the world. The two dimensions of “being-for-another” are to be explicated in light of the existential categories (*Lebenskategorien*) of “desire” and “recognition.” They find concrete expression first in the relation of “Lordship and Bondage.”

Yet this fundamental relation between Life and self-consciousness still does not justify the ontological determination of Life *as* self-consciousness. Had not self-consciousness been introduced precisely as something other than “Life”? (see above) It all depends on seeing that exactly now, when the unfolding of the concept of Life leads over into that of self-consciousness (PhG, 137; 109, second paragraph), that no tran-

sition, in the usual sense of the word, takes place. The being of Life is not transcended by another; rather, in this transition it is grasped precisely in its true sense.

Right after referring Life back “to something other than itself, namely to consciousness,” Hegel continues: “This other Life, however . . . is self-consciousness” (PhG, 137; 109), thus that something other than Life is itself another Life; it is itself Life. The relation of both lives to one another is then described as follows: self-consciousness is Life “for which the genus as such exists and which is genus for-itself.” Yet “genus” was the characterization of Life qua “reflected unity,” qua the totality and universality of Life in its actual being. Self-consciousness, therefore, is “for-itself” what Life has been until now implicitly, as object of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The description of Life as self-consciousness signals the transition from the implicit being of Life qua object to its for-itselfness. The true ontological concept of Life is first attained when Life is comprehended as self-consciousness.

In the course of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Life appeared as the object of self-consciousness (just as the thing was the object of perception, and appearance and the supersensuous world, the objects of the understanding): “The object which is the negative element for self-consciousness has . . . in-itself become Life” (PhG, 133; 106). The exegesis of the concept of Life began with these words. How Life appeared as object was explicated with reference to its objectivity, and it was shown that that *for which* Life became an object not only was that on which Life depended ontologically but that together with its object, this constituted the being of Life. Self-consciousness is for-itself what Life, as its object, is only in-itself. The “identity” of consciousness and object, which is first attained with self-consciousness, must be understood in this special way. Self-consciousness is the “other” of Life, insofar as Life is taken as a being, as in-itself, as objective. It is the *Being* of Life itself, insofar as it is that through which and for which Life can first be.

When now in pages 137–140 of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Miller trans., 109–111) Hegel recapitulates that movement which he had previously analyzed as belonging to Life (PhG,

134–137; 106–109) as the movement of self-consciousness, this repetition represents a precise concretization of the concept of Life. Life is no longer described as object, as in-itself, but as a process experiencing its own for-itselfness. The analysis is now centered on the actual being of Life, on its “independence.”

Life, in being for-self, Life as self-consciousness, is re-described at first through the concept of genus, that is, through the specific structure of a self-relational process which represents unity and universality. The genus that is for-itself is now named “simple” or “pure.” “The simple ‘I’ is the genus or the simple universal, for distinctions are none only because it itself is the negative essence of the formed, independent moments” (PhG, 137; 109). The “pure I” should not be understood in this context as an I isolated from the world or as a transcendental consciousness and the like. Hegel explicitly states that this I encompasses “the whole expanse of the sensory world” (PhG, 133; 105). We will see that the concrete unity of I and the world is the outstanding feature of this determination. The process of being “I” takes place in the concrete confrontation with the world, and the I is simple only because it first “expands” (enriches; *bereichert*) itself through this confrontation, thereby reaching its full essence. It is “pure” insofar as at this point all being-for-another, all “implicitly existing” objectivity is encompassed in its pure being. If self-consciousness is at first named “I,” this is because Hegel has in mind once more the specific mode of being of Life qua self-consciousness. The aim is first to point to cognizing subjectivity, which alone can fulfill the complete self-equality with otherness, and second, to emphasize the still “simple,” not yet “enriched” from in which self-consciousness first emerges in the “first moment” of its movement, that is, as an “I” that will expand itself toward the “world” and that will thereby “enrich” itself. Insofar as the genus is the I that exists purely for-itself, it represents the highest unity and universality of all beings. The different modes of being must then be understood in their internal relation to the I as its various “distinctions.”

We have thereby reached the point where an ontology oriented toward the Being of Life is transformed into an ontology oriented toward the Being of the *knowing I*. At first the category

of the “pure I” emerges by itself out of the development of the concept of Life, but subsequently and through further exposition, it assumes a leading role in that it comes to stand for the mode of Being and processual development of Life in general, namely, of Life *as* self-consciousness. In virtue of the totality and universality intrinsic to Life, the “pure I” becomes the genus that is for-itself and to which all “distinctions” are related. But soon and without an explanation of the roots of this pure I in Life itself, the “I” is named “the pure essentiality of beings or the simple category” (PhG, 177; 142.) At first, however, the exposition of the concept of self-consciousness continues in terms of the leading category of Life.

In its movement self-consciousness now recapitulates the “moments” of the general movement characterizing Life: the process of individuality, sustaining itself “at the cost of” universal Life is concretized as “desire,” while the “reflected unity” of individual and universal Life, which results from this process, is concretized as “recognition.” In this process both the unification of I and objectivity (the animation of the world; the worldliness of Life) and the unification of the “I” with another “I” are accomplished (the character of Life as “we”). The I seeks and finds its self-equality in both directions. The completion of this unity naturally does not mean the joining together of elements previously separated and isolated from each other but rather the fulfillment and actualization of a new unity of the bifurcated elements.

The movement of self-consciousness begins as “desire.” The simple I is “genus” or “the simple universal” of Life only “because it is the *negative* essence of the formed, independent moments; and self-consciousness is thus certain of itself only through the sublation of this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent Life; self-consciousness is desire” (PhG, 137ff; 109ff).

But what is this independent “other” which at first juxtaposes itself to the I and which must be “sublated” by it so that the I can be what it is? Hegel defines the independent object that juxtaposes itself to the I as “Life,” and more precisely, as the “expansion, individuation and actualization of the Life that is many times self-distinguishing” (PhG, 152), or as the “whole

domain of the sensory world” as it had been named before (PhG, 133; 105). Thus the object of the I is the world, as it is first confronted as the other of the I, as the expansion, individuation and actualization, in which the I is alive, which constitutes its Life and which is its Life. The object of the I, as the other of the living I, presents itself to it at first only in its life context; it is essentially the object of “desire.”

“Desire” here designates the original attitude of the I toward existents; it does not refer to a psychic act or the like but primarily to a mode of being. Insofar as the I lives in the “expansion, individuation, and actualization” of Life, it lives in an “object-like manner” (PhG, 138). The manifold “moments” confronting it become the independent “forms” of the I. The I does not reflect itself in them, does not recoil into itself from them, does not sublimate them in-itself. This unmediated existence of the I is, however, as we know from the *Early Theological Writings*, its untruth and the loss of its essence. Desire, therefore, through which the I wants to “sublate,” negate, and absorb into itself the world that confronts it as “independent Life,” indicates only the actual task lying ahead of Life, namely, to become “essential” for-itself. Desire which sublates the objectlikeness of the I is only a longing for the proper being of the I. When Hegel introduces desire as a category of Life, he defines it completely with reference to the proper, essential nature of the I. The I lives in the “expanse of the sensory world” such that the latter “subsists for it.” At the same time, however, this world subsists only in the desiring, life relation of the I, in the relation “to the unity of self-consciousness with itself,” as an “appearance” of the I. Only what is essential to the unifying unity of the I will be considered a self-subsistent being and desired. Thus the I lives in “the contrast of its appearance and its unity.” Insofar as the reflected structure of unifying unity, which sublates opposition, constitutes the truth and essential nature of Life, it also must “become essential” for the I, “that it is desire in general” (PhG, 133; 105).

We must emphasize that in “desire” two moments always show themselves: Life in its inessentiality *and* the longing for essentiality. The desire for beings expresses the longing for one’s own proper being. Because the I takes the existent that

it desires to be an object and does not acknowledge it in its truth as an independent or even a dependent being that is related to the “unity of self-consciousness with itself,” the process of desire can never sublimate objectness, appropriate it for oneself, and give it the “form” of self-consciousness. In short, in desire the I never reaches its essential nature. Let us follow this process more closely.

In desire the I takes existents to be the “other” of itself that it must sublimate and appropriate in order to maintain itself as I. Thus it takes the other to be essentially “nothingness,” negativity (PhG, 138; 109), as something that primarily exists *for it*, for the I. It uses, consumes, destroys the other, and it *must* do so because it can sustain itself only as a *self*, as an individual through the sublation of the other, for it is only an individual insofar as it is juxtaposed (*entgegen-gesetzt*) to the other (cf. pp. 215, 234). But what is appropriated in desire and destroyed in its independence is precisely what is desired and sublated as an *object*. The I desires only what it *itself* is not, what is its other and stands opposed to it. Desire is “conditioned” by its object. It can satisfy itself only when the desired object stands over and against it; it thus presupposes (*voraus-setzt*)⁴ the object that it seeks to sublimate. Desire can be satisfied only through “the sublation of the other; for there to be sublation, there must be this other” (PhG, 138; 109). Objectification (*Vergegenstaendlichung*) is the reason why in desire the essential nature of the I must remain unfulfilled: through it the I objectifies its other but remains conditioned through an independent other and thus remains divided from itself. “In this satisfaction . . . the I experiences the independence [*Selbstständigkeit*] of its object” (PhG, 138; 109). Hegel uses here the double meaning of the word *Selbstständigkeit*. This term first means being one’s own (*Eigen-ständigkeit*), implicit being (*An-sich-sein*) and also not yet being one’s self (*Selbst-sein*), not yet being for-itself (*Für-sich-sein*). Through the immediate existence of the desiring I, the difference which is intrinsic to the Being of Life itself, the difference between for-itselfness and being-for-another, now assumes the form of a duality between the I (self-consciousness) and the independent, objective world.

It is now clear that the analysis of the “pure I” does not concern the cognitive relation of self-consciousness to objectivity in general. It is no longer concerned with the Kantian category of the “I think” (although we can hardly think of Hegel’s exposition without presupposing the transcendental, original synthetic unity). In unprecedented fashion and from the beginning, Hegel replaces the transcendental I of cognition with the full, concrete I of Life, with the “whole of human nature,” with the “totality of our being” (Dilthey). Dilthey continues the Philosophy of Life (*Lebensphilosophie*) in most profound fashion from that point on where Hegel has abandoned it (Dilthey, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 18).⁵

The true satisfaction of desire, the fulfillment of the actual being of the I, its coming to itself in otherness, thus requires breaking out of the objectifying mode. The object, that which stands over and against, must be eliminated. The I must no longer seek and find satisfaction in an “objectifying manner,” but as self-conscious being in another self-conscious being. The object of the I, that against which alone the I can be what it is, is implicitly the negative of the *I* and nothing besides. The dualism of being-self and being-other is intrinsic to the living I. “On account of the independence of its object, therefore, self-consciousness can only achieve satisfaction when the object itself carries out this negation” (PhG, 138; 109). That this self-sublation of the object is possible and even necessary follows from the exposition of the concept of Life given till now: “It must carry out this negation of itself in-itself, for it is *in-itself* the negative, and must be *for* the other what it *is*” (PhG, 138; 109).

Life is essentially animated being; Life has only Life itself as its object; thus the object of self-consciousness is essentially a “being-reflected-into-itself,” something “alive” (PhG, 134; 106). The independent, objective world of self-consciousness is essentially the world of a self-consciousness and must be grasped as such by the I.

As the world of self-consciousness, the objective world of the desiring I is essentially a negated one; it is essentially for-another; *by-itself it refers to an other* besides itself. This reference to an other is many-sided: it leads either back to the desiring I or to another object or to the “inorganic nature of Life” in

general (see above). All references come together in this last one: objective Life shows itself to be “*absolute* negation,” it shows itself intrinsically to be dependent on a self-consciousness *for* which it exists in the first place. This self-consciousness is now no longer the desiring I but self-consciousness as the essential purpose of all Life, namely, universal self-consciousness, of which every individual is only an existing “form” (*Gestalt*).

Hegel now takes the decisive step in concretizing this context by showing that this “universal” self-consciousness is *only* actual in the condition of being-for and -against each other of two living and distinct self-consciousnesses. The objective world of the I is in each instance already negated; it is a world referring to a self-consciousness, and in fact referring always to an *other* self-consciousness. It is at the same time the domain on which *distinct* self-consciousnesses meet and size one another up; it is the *common* being-for-another. Through desire the I must penetrate the independent object toward this other self-consciousness, toward which this object of desire already points. This second object is its true opponent through the vanquishing of whom it will first find its fulfillment. The unification of I and object demands the unification among selves. The desiring attitude of the I toward the objective world now becomes the struggle among two distinct self-consciousnesses: “*Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness*” (PhG, 138; 110. Emphasis in the text.).

With the disclosure of the we-like process of Life, which unfolds in the animated world as being-for and -against each other of distinct self-consciousnesses, we have arrived at the dimension of the historicity of Life. The exposition of the process of objectification and its penetrating analysis as a movement constitutive of the *Being* of Life is perhaps Hegel’s greatest discovery and the source of a wholly new outlook on the character of the historical process (which nonetheless was soon to be covered over). Its full significance becomes clearer in light of the concrete development of the process that follows in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. But Hegel himself gives an anticipatory hint of the significance of what has just been worked

out by pointing to the decisive “turning point” in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* which has been arrived at.

With the “doubling of self-consciousness,” Life as self-consciousness begins to unfold in a sphere in which it can complete the activity of unifying unity and in which it can develop as true and real “universality.” “A self-consciousness exists for a self-consciousness. Only thereby is it in fact self-consciousness; for only in this way does the unity of itself in its otherness become explicit for it” (PhG, 139; 110). The object of self-consciousness now *stands* for-itself; it is a self-consciousness. “In that self-consciousness is now object, it is just as much ‘I’ as ‘object.’ With this we already have before us the concept of *Spirit*” (PhG, 139; 110. Emphasis in the text.).

We have noted numerous times before why the unifying unity of Life is to be understood as a movement of cognition and as a *spiritual* (*geistige*) process. Here, however, the “doubling of self-consciousness” (PhG, 166ff) is viewed as “essential” for the concept of Spirit itself, thus becoming an essential aspect of the definition of Spirit. Spirit is “absolute substance which exists in the perfect freedom and independence of its opposites, namely, of *distinct self-consciousnesses that are for-themselves*; it is their unity; I that is *we*, and we that is *I*” (PhG, 139; 110. First emphasis added.). One can interpret this sentence immanently in accordance with either one of the two main ideas, either in the light of the ontological idea of Life or in the light of the ontological idea of knowledge. On the one hand, if the ontological meaning of Life as unifying unity can be satisfied only as a spiritual process, if, however, for its part, this unity is possible only through the existence of distinct self-consciousnesses that are for and against each other, then the “doubling of self-consciousness” must also be essential to the concept of Spirit. On the other hand, if “absolute” knowledge is possible only as the self-identity of knowing in the known and if this must be a knowledge of knowing, but if knowledge essentially requires selfhood, then it follows that absolute knowledge is not only self-consciousness but also the self-consciousness of self-consciousness.

Nonetheless, both formal determinations fail to penetrate to the heart of the matter, and this is precisely the inseparable

unity of these dimensions. Only a complete interpretation of the entire work can do justice to these two dimensions. Here I confine myself to a brief discussion of Hegel's actual orientation in the text toward the concept of Spirit.

Spirit, as absolute substance (this means absolute substantiality, that through which in the final analysis all existents attain "subsistence"; the absolute *Being* of beings), is, like all being, the unifying unity of an "opposition," a being-equal-with-self-in-otherness. This opposition is not in the form of an objective being but is merely an "implicit being," which, uniting itself with the being of Spirit, will become one with it; yet the "universal substance" of beings is *Life*, a cognizing being, which for its part has "sublated" objective being into itself. The opposition, therefore, is among "distinct self-consciousnesses that are for-themselves." Each self-consciousness is an I for-itself; the unity of opposition is thus a unity of distinct I's. It is a "we" but a "we" in which the I is not merely caught but rather sublated, for otherwise the unity would not be a self-unifying one. It would not be an "I that is a we, and a we that is an I." Spirit, which as the activity of unifying unity is a *process*, unfolds as a we that unites distinct I's, and this we-like process is itself a process of *knowledge*.

Such a process, however, represents essentially a process of *human Life*. The actuality of Spirit is essentially related to that of human Life in a way that needs to be explained more precisely. The "absolute substance" of beings fulfills itself through an internal relation to the process of human Life (as process it always has to fulfill itself, for it is never immediately fulfilled).

Thus the ontological concept of Life, in the course of its unfolding, necessarily comes to be centered on the being of human Life. The latter, in the true sense of the word, is a spiritual *process*. The general exposition of the ontological identity of Life is thereby transformed necessarily and immanently into an exposition of the process of human Life which represents the actuality of Spirit realizing itself in this process.

The development of this process is governed by the question of *Being* (*die Frage nach dem Sein*), and in the final analysis, by the question of the most *authentic* form of beings. The *Pheno-*

menology of Spirit by no means concerns, therefore, sociological laws, historical processes, or the like. The temporality of this process, the “moments” of the movement of Life must not be interpreted as if they were actual historical periods. Rather, historical periods correspond to moments of the *Being* of historical Life (with what justification cannot be discussed here). When the history of Life as self-consciousness is analyzed into its different moments, then it will be seen that this is a history which is repeated by every existing, living being, which has already always occurred, and which is sustained in the unity and integrity of every life context. When in the subsequent sections of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Lordship and Bondage, cultural formation and labor, act and work, power of the state and wealth are developed as existential categories of Life, this by no means implies that the work as a whole is divided into theoretical and practical, ontological and historical parts. All these categories together belong to the ontological concept of Life and to its fulfillment as “Spirit.”

The Immediacy of the Life Process

The analysis of the ontological concept of Life has led us to the conclusion that the “we-like” character (*Wir-haftigkeit*) of this process is the necessary basis on which the structure of self-equality-in-otherness characteristic of self-consciousness as well as the infinite unity of Life can be realized. The being-for and -against each other of various self-consciousnesses constitutes “the infinity that realizes itself in self-consciousness” (PhG, 140), and insofar as this infinity results from the cognitive movement of self-consciousness, it is a “spiritual unity.” At the start of this “we-like” process the independent self-consciousnesses are immediately opposed to each other. At the same time, the terrain on which they meet, the common ground of their confrontation, is “the manifold . . . extension, individuation and actualization of Life,” of Life in its “objective mode.” Here the *world* exists as the object domain of “desire.” The “unity” among self-consciousness, realized in this confrontation, is specified more precisely as “recognition” through “doing” (thus from the very start this discussion leaves epistemological categories aside!).

Hegel begins his explication by returning to the result of the preceding exposition of the concept of Life: “Self-consciousness is faced by another self-consciousness; it has come *out of* itself” (PhG, 140; 111). This state of being outside oneself first signifies the loss of the essentiality of self-consciousness, the loss of its untrue, immediate existence, insofar as it is itself by

an “other” and seeks its “satisfaction” in the confrontation with this other. Second, this process also signifies an affront to and the loss of the essentiality of the *other* insofar as self-consciousness seeks only its own negativity and satisfaction in the other. It does not see “the other as essential being, but in the other sees its *own self*” (Ibid.). This double loss of essential being through immediate confrontation indicates positively that the process of confrontation is one of becoming-essential-to-one-self, and this, in turn, has a “double-meaning.” Self-consciousness must “sublate” the other that confronts it as an “independent being” in order to return once more to itself. Through this it sublates its *own* externality-to-self and gives back to the *other* its essential being, sets the other free to fulfill its own independent being, for in seeing and seeking only its *own self* in the other, it has violated the independent essentiality of the other. When now it sublates its own state of being-outside itself and lost in the other, simultaneously it withdraws back from this and “lets the other go free again” (PhG, 141; 111).

The essential and insoluble reciprocal dependence among distinct self-consciousness which constitutes the “we-like” process of Life becomes visible in this “double movement” of the release of the other and “the return to self.” It is not as if the two movements somehow concur and then unite; rather the one *is* the other, “the *doing* of the one has itself the double meaning, of being its own doing and the doing of the other as well. For the other is equally independent and self-contained, and there is nothing in it of which it itself is not the origin” (PhG, 141; 112). “What ought to take place” is now clear: the true satisfaction of desire as the fulfillment of the being of self-consciousness “can come about only through both.”

The “we-like” process of Life, the confrontation through which reciprocal “recognition” is actualized, is thus characterized by an “act” (*Tun*). Life fulfills its ontological meaning as well its universal substantiality, that is, the bringing-to-truth and letting-be of all beings, only through the accomplishment of an *act*, through the concrete actual confrontation with itself and the world. Hegel’s concept of action has a certain precision which must not be overlooked and which clearly expresses the contrast between this full concept of Life and all concepts of

the transcendental constitution of the world through a consciousness and the like. At the same time, however, this action is not opposed to cognition, knowledge, etc.; nor does it represent a “practical” as opposed to “theoretical” foundation. So little is this the case that, in fact, for Hegel action is only a *cognitive* and “spiritual-cultural” doing, one that is filled with true knowledge and leading back to true knowledge. In what follows we frequently return to this concept of action.

The confrontation between distinct self-consciousnesses begins with the *immediate* opposition of two distinct individuals. Each self-consciousness finds itself in the extreme *immediacy* of Life; each is “simple for-itselfness” that can remain identical with itself only through the “exclusion” of all others. It is simply “an individual,” and its immediate individuality is the only essential thing for it by contrast to which all else is “as inessential being, characterized by negativity” (PhG, 142). Hegel had already described the immediate existence of the desiring individual as the merely “objective form” of Life (see p. 243). This characterization is now used to emphasize the untruth of such opposition. Hegel writes that the individuals, immediately confronting each other, exist “in the manner of common objects for each other.” Without a cognizing and relating mediation, they take each other to be two things. They know neither the why nor the where of what they stand on, nor do they know what they ought to do in this position. They do not grasp “what ought to happen”; they are “consciousnesses sunk in the being of Life,” that is to say, they have fallen into the immediate accidentality of Life; they cannot extricate themselves from it, they cannot “mediate” this accidentality with their essence (PhG, 142; 113).

At this point Hegel again juxtaposes this immediacy and untruth of Life to the actuality and truth of its being, thus pointing the direction of the entire, future development of the history of self-consciousness. The immediate and “objective character” of self-consciousness is the extreme loss of its being, for intrinsically it is the “absolute mediation” of all immediacy (PhG, 145); “absolute abstraction” from all objectivity (PhG, 142), the “pure, negative being of self-consciousness that is identical with itself.” Self-consciousness once it reaches this

genuine state of being, has attained *freedom* (PhG, 143). Freedom is the capacity to pull oneself back from each “moment” of Life, the capacity to negate and go beyond every accidentality, the capacity to mediate every being one encounters and every emerging “determinateness” with pure selfhood. This freedom exists only through “confirmation” and “demonstration”; it must always be proven, attained and sustained. Self-consciousness is free only through a continuous self-positing, self-sustaining, and letting-oneself-happen (*Sich-selbst-geschehen-lassen*). It must “show itself” in what it is, it must expose (*heraussetzen*), “risk” (*daraussetzen*) itself; it must “prove itself in the struggle for Life and Death.”

And 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 expansion of Life, but rather that there is nothing present in it which could not be regarded as a vanishing moment, that is only as pure being-for-self. (PhG, 143; 114)

With reference to this kind of freedom Hegel can say that the essence of self-consciousness consists in that “it is bound to no determinate existence,” “not bound to Life itself” (Ibid.). Thus the true being of Life is freedom from Life. This is the final justification for the determination of the being of Life as the *other* of Life, as “self-consciousness.”

We indicated in the first part of this work (see p. 91) that with the category of “actuality,” the ultimate meaning of Being which was not disclosed by Hegel himself in the *Logic*, became suddenly apparent: actual being as a showing-of-itself, as exposing, revealing, and displaying itself. Hegel interpreted Aristotle’s concept of *energeia* in this manner. The ontological characteristics of Life lend further support to this thesis. The Being of Life shows most explicitly that the self-actualization proper to Life presents the truest meaning of Being. The actuality of Life is full effectivity (*Erwirkung*), a process of displaying and exposing one’s possibilities outside oneself. Through knowledge and freedom Life posits itself into existence and sustains itself in existence. In that it can mediate for itself its immediate existence through knowledge and freedom, it comes to act as a real self and remains identical with itself in all otherness.

In order to clarify fully the claim that self-consciousness is the authentic Being of Life, we must jump even further ahead at this

point. The “truth” and “essence” of self-consciousness is the freedom of “absolute mediation,” of “absolute abstraction,” and the “absolute negation” of all immediacy. In the course of the development of self-conscious Life, this immediacy represents in every instance a “determinate existence,” an “objective mode” of existence, a “being sunk into the expanse of Life.” When this living, and as such objectlike immediacy of “determinate being,” is sublated and mediated with free self-consciousness, then this immediacy nonetheless itself remains *Life* that has become objective to itself and is already the “expansion” and “negativity” of an *other* Life. What free self-consciousness mediates with itself, is itself already in the “form” of consciousness. This mediation is in the most eminent sense a *historical* one, in which a living self-consciousness unites itself with another living self-consciousness. The objective existence that is to be mediated is itself a historical existence! At a later point in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel explicitly develops this determination of the true and essential being of self-consciousness to be historical being. The “middle” that free self-consciousness possesses “between universal Spirit and its individuality” is “the system of the structured forms assumed by consciousness, as the Life of Spirit organizing itself into a whole — the system which we are considering here and which has *its objective existence as world history*” (PhG, 223; 178. Emphasis added.). Hegel then demarcates the organic Life of nature from the Life of self-consciousness through the concept of *history*. In its absolute mediation, self-consciousness has “history,”

but organic nature has no history; it descends from its universal, which is Life, directly into the singleness of existence, and the moments of simple determinateness and individual Life, united in this actuality, bring forth this process of becoming merely as a contingent movement. (PhG, 223; 178–179)

This is one of the few passages where Hegel expresses in most condensed form why the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is necessarily world historical. I return to this point later, but first we must continue the interpretation of the “we-like” immediacy characteristic of Life.

The individuals, who are driven by desire and who still immediately confront each other, must *prove* and *exhibit* their freedom and truth as “pure for-itselfness”; they must “become essential” in their innermost beings.

This immediate confrontation among distinct individuals takes the form of a “struggle unto Life and Death,” for the conflict neither simply concerns another existent being nor an object of property by the very being of the individual. The

freedom of self-consciousness is freedom from and freedom toward *all* objectivity, freedom from and freedom toward *all* forms of “determinate existence.” Indeed, it is freedom from and toward Life in general, insofar as Life is essentially immediacy, objectivity, and the negation of “pure for-itselfness.” Because the freedom of self-consciousness is unlike that of any other, and is “absolute negation,” in order to be able to prove and show itself as “pure” self, the individual must proceed to the very negation of Life in general. And insofar as in the immediacy of confrontation the negation of the pure self shows itself essentially in the person of the “other,” each self pursues “the death of the other” and “risks” its own Life “for this purpose” (PhG, 143; 114).

Yet this mediation and assertion of the self in the pursuit of the life and death of the other is only apparent; this freedom is actually unfreedom, for in the struggle of self-consciousness, motivated by pure desire, the other is not sublated but simply annihilated: s/he is not accepted as s/he *is* in “essence” but is instead regarded as “mere being,” as a “thing” (PhG, 144). The freedom and unity with self, which the individual attains through the death of the other, is in turn a “dead” one; in order for it to be alive, the other, precisely because s/he is a necessary counterpart of the self, must *remain*. Individuals must *reciprocally* and consciously set each other free (see p. 250ff) and must “recognize” each other. At this point, however, individuals do not consciously and reciprocally “give and receive each other back, but rather leave each other free only indifferently, like mere beings” (PhG, 144; 114).

Because the desire of the self for its own essentiality remains necessarily unfulfilled in this unmediated struggle for life and death, each “experiences” that it has misused and misunderstood the freedom of pure for-itselfness, that not only pure self-consciousness “but Life itself is as essential to it as pure self-consciousness” (PhG, 145; 115). In the immediacy of its desire, it has used freedom only as freedom *from* Life, but it can be free from Life only insofar as it is free *toward* Life, insofar as it is a free-willing “existence” that is also determinate, a free-willing being who is also being-for-another. In the juxtaposition of pure “self-consciousness,” “Life” means Life as

essential being-for-another, as “essential” existence for the other, as something “for an other.” In this context Hegel briefly says, “Life or being-for-another” (PhG, 145; 115). Life is just as essential as pure self-consciousness, and as “*existing*” consciousness or consciousness in the form of thinghood; freedom is just as essential as unfreedom and “chains”; nonindependence is just as essential as independence. This ontological (*seinsmäßig*) reference to an other, to being-for-another, was retained as a moment in the explication of the concept of Life from the very beginning (see p. 244). The free and true independence of Life can realize itself only in and through this being-for-another.

Self-consciousness, which has experienced its frustration in the struggle unto life and death, has indeed experienced the essence of being-for-another, but the two “moments” of Life have not yet been mediated and united through this experience; “their reflection in unity” has not yet “resulted.” For this reason, the recognition of the essential unfreedom and lack of independence of Life now results in “two opposing forms of consciousness,” two distinct self-conscious individuals who in fact no longer confront each other in a struggle of life and death but rather recognize that they are dependent on each other and that in the totality of Life each is equally “essential.” Nevertheless, neither for its own part has given back to the other, in the one case, its independence and, in the other, its being-for-another. The process of Life continues in this manner as the being for- and against-each-other of “independent” and “dependent” individuals, of whom one is pure for-itselfness, and the other, a being-for-another: this is the being-for and -against each other of *lord* and *slave*.

The immediacy of the “we-like” Life process is first overcome with the relation of lordship and bondage. The distinct, individual self-consciousnesses unite with each other consciously and as freely mediated, and self-consciousness is united with the objective world. Thereby Life is first realized as a “universal medium” and “universal substance” of beings. Through a concrete process and through the unifying unity of self-consciousness, the “other” of self-consciousness as well as of all

encountered beings will be “formed” and brought to “subsistence.”

The one concrete achievement of the relation of lordship and bondage is the animation (*Verlebendigung*) of the (objective) world. Through “labor,” the purely thinglike quality of objects is stripped away; as products of labor, they are transformed into forms of *Life* and are grasped and appropriated by self-consciousness as such. The “labor” process is a concrete instance of the overcoming of objectification (*Vergegenständlichung*), which Hegel had designated as a fundamental aspect of Life (see p. 244). This is attained through the activity of the *bondsman*, a self-consciousness who lives in *objectification* and is fundamentally a nonindependent being.

From the beginning the being of the bondsman is defined with reference to its relation to thinglike objectivity. The consciousness of the bondsman is one “to whose very essence it belongs that it is synthesized with independent *being* or thinghood” (PhG, 145). More specifically, this “synthesis” takes the following form: thinghood is the “chain,” from which, in the confrontation with the “other,” the bondsman cannot “abstract” itself. It cannot set itself free from things, neither in the positive sense of inner freedom nor in the negative sense of external freedom. In relation to things, it is dependent precisely because it possesses “independence in the form of thinghood” and not as pure for-itselfness, for it is what it is only through the things which it may or may not possess (PhG, 146; 116). The bondsman cannot “overcome” things; they are beyond its power and stand in the power of an other, opposed to it. It can neither “annihilate” nor “enjoy” them; it “*labors upon*” them for another. *Labor* is at the same time the fundamental relation of self-consciousness to thinghood, whereby the pure negative objectivity of the latter is sublated and animated. Thinghood first attains its “subsistence” through this animation; it thereby receives and remains in that “form” which makes it actual.

Hegel first explains the negative characteristics of labor as seen by the bondsman. He shows how the labor of the latter fulfills the desires of the lord only so long as this desire is immediately directed toward an independent thing that con-

ditions (*be-dingt*)* desire and which has to be continually re-positied by its afresh; hence desire remains necessarily unfulfilled (see above). In the relation of lord and bondsman this immediacy of desire is mediated. The lord has “inserted” the slave between his desire and the thing (PhG, 146). He relates to thinghood only through the mediation of the bondsman. The objects of his desire are no longer independent but have been worked on by the bondsman. They are offered to him as nonindependent objects. The lord must not perpetually produce and posit them. The bondsman that is an *other* self-consciousness does that for it. The lord can thereby “overcome” things and can satisfy itself through their “enjoyment.” Through this mediation between self-consciousness and thinghood, the relation between the two self-consciousnesses is also mediated. Lord and bondsman no longer face each other in a struggle unto life and death. Appropriated things stand between them as a medium: “The lord relates himself mediately to the bondsman through an independent being (a thing)” (PhG, 145; 115). In the struggle for life and death, out of which the relation of lordship and bondage has resulted, through the risking of his Life, the lord has proved to be “the *power* over being.” This “being,” however, this thinghood over which the lord has attained dominance, was precisely the “chain” to which the bondsman became victim and was subjected. Through the conquest of thinghood, the lord has also subjected the bondsman to itself, has proved itself to be a free self-consciousness in relation to it. Yet at the same time the lord has “recognized” the bondsman in its dependence. It no longer pursues the annihilation of the latter; it is precisely dependent on the bondsman for the satisfaction of its desire.

The lord has thereby attained the “recognition” which was stated to be necessary for the fulfillment of self-consciousness (cf. p. 246). The bondsman posits itself as being-for-another, negates its independence and acknowledges the lord’s truth

* Marcuse is punning on the word *bedingt*, which means to condition and determine but which can be divided as well into the prefix “*be-*” and the root “*Ding*” (thing). In this case desire which is directed toward a thing is conditioned by it in the sense of being dependent on it, but it is also made “thing-like” by it. Desire for a thing makes desire itself thinglike.

and power in that it declares its dependence on thinghood and labors on these things for the sake of the lord. The bondsman cannot “master being and attain absolute negation” (PhG, 146). It lives in the acknowledgment of its unfreedom.

It is clear, however, that this recognition is still “one-sided and unequal” (PhG, 147). For the lord has not yet posited itself as being-for-another and has not yet recognized the bondsman as an essentially *independent being-for-itself*. The bondsman is necessary for him only in its inessentiality and lack of independence. Thus the lord reaches fulfillment only in an unessential being. For its part the bondsman is not only being-for-another, a “chain,” but also, as self-consciousness, essentially pure for-itselfness and freedom. In the course of the positive characterization of labor, which Hegel now provides, bondage “will become the opposite of what it immediately is; as consciousness forced back into itself it will withdraw into itself and be transformed into truly independent consciousness” (PhG, 147; 117). Precisely in its condition of extreme unfreedom, the bondsman will experience absolute freedom over and against all that is, an experience of “the truth of pure negativity and the being for-self”; precisely in its most objectified form will it attain that break through objectification, which it had already achieved in its labor for the lord.

In “experiencing fear of the lord” in the course of its struggle unto life and death, the bondsman “has been fearful, not of this or that particular thing or just at odd moments, but its whole being has been seized with dread” (PhG, 148; 117). Its existence was at stake and was put to risk. This dread has led its Life into the “pure, universal movement,” into the “absolute melting away of everything stable.” The stability and independence of things, surrounded by which the bondsman lived, has been shattered. Through this its consciousness “has been inwardly dissolved, has trembled in every fiber of its being, and everything solid and stable has been shaken to its foundations” (PhG, 148; 117). The stable objectivity of its Life and world have disappeared in “a pure universal movement,” the “objective form” of its existence has dissolved. But in the course of this dissolution into absolute dread the true dimension of its essence has emerged. First through this dissolution has its self-

consciousness become actual and become the freedom of absolute negativity, pure for-itselfness.

The similarity between this characterization, and the description of the dissolution of the fixed, objective world of common understanding into the “inverted world” of philosophy, and the appearance of the “absolute” out of the “nothingness” of this experience is hard to miss. The latter exposition given in the “Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s Systems of Philosophy” and the present one in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* even bear terminological similarities. In the determination of the “absolute” given in the “Differenzschrift” the originary concept of Life has a similar function to the one it plays in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Still the dissolution that occurs in the course of “dread from the lord” is grounded in the mere “feeling of absolute power.” Because it is merely a feeling, it is first “only an implicit dissolution” and is still not one that is freely realized and that would be actual for the bondsman itself as the truth of its slavish consciousness. This actualization takes place for slave consciousness in *labor*. “Through labor . . . it comes back to itself” (PhG, 148). Earlier it was emphasized that labor could not overcome the independence of things for the bondsman. Things remained and subsisted beyond its power. The pure negation of thinghood was reserved only for the enjoyment of the lord. Now it becomes clear that, precisely *because* “for s/he who labors the object has an independence” which it preserves and which is not destroyed in enjoyment, the one who labors attains independence *in the object labored on by it* and acquires *actuality* as an independent being. In that the object becomes actuality only as labored on by the bondsman, the laboring self attains actuality through this object: “The laboring consciousness comes to see in the independent being its *own* independence” (PhG, 149; 118).

Labor attains this result insofar as it is “constructive” (*bildende*) and “formative” (*formierende*) activity. By constructing and forming things, it creates their subsistence and actuality, while the desire of the lord, by contrast, only destroys actuality and makes it disappear. The satisfaction of desire lacks “the side of objectivity and *permanence*. Labor, on the other hand, is

desire held in check, fleetingness staved off; in other words, labor *forms* and *shapes* the thing. The negative relation to the object (in labor) becomes its *form* and something *permanent*" (PhG, 148; 118). The object of labor persists and remains in the "form" which laboring consciousness has given to it. The actuality of things *is* no other than the "forming activity" of the laborer. Thus "through labor" dependent consciousness steps "outside itself into the element of permanence" (PhG, 149; 118).

Thereby it breaks through the exclusive power of the lord. The bondsman labors this power away. The things on which it has to work are first given to it as standing under the power of the lord. This is the "form" in which it overcomes them. By laboring on them, however, it sublates this "strange," "antagonistic form." It overcomes the "negative" before which it had trembled. The laborer "destroys this alien negative moment, posits *itself* as a negative in the permanent order of things, and thereby becomes for-itself" (Ibid.). The objectivity it has labored on is no longer an alien, an "other" for it but rather its own work, the actuality it has brought about. In it, it "finds" itself once more. "Through this rediscovery of itself," the *life* of the bondsman, "acquires its *own sense*, precisely in labor where it seemed to have only an *estranged meaning*" (PhG, 149; 118–119). It becomes conscious that it is not only a dependent being, merely existing-for-another, but also precisely in this dependence "in- and for-itself."

Life, as it unfolds in the relation of lordship and bondage, has attained the first, immediate form of its actuality as "universal medium" and "substance," as that wherein and through which beings attain their permanence, as what is "omnipresent" in all beings (see p. 232). It has first constituted itself as the middle between the "pure I" and pure objectivity (or "thinghood"). The things desired and labored on have become actual in "forms" of *Life* and remain actual as such Life forms. They find their true "subsistence" and "permanence," their substance in Life. Because desire and labor are the fundamental attitudes of all Life toward objective beings in general, in this manner all of confronted objectivity (thinghood) comes to be mediated with Life and comes to Life (and not only "goods" and the

like). Desire and labor are to be understood in the broadest conceptual sense as *categories* of *Life*. Only when they are so understood and in accordance with their systematic place in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* do they come to encompass not only the preceding forms of “consciousness” (sense-certainty; perception; understanding) but also come to anticipate forms of “reason” that succeed them (such as observing, law-giving, and law-testing reason).

The fundamental element common to these categories and which has a wide range of reference is the concept of “activity” (*Tun*). Activity is the living unity of knowing and acting, whereby knowledge means consciousness of self and action, the actual letting-happen of the self. Activity is essentially “*transformation*” and “*bringing forth*” (*hervorbringen*). Every activity “aims at” a transformation (PhG, 196); it changes something in the one who performs it; it turns it around in its present condition; it “turns it upside down.” This effective “inversion and transformation” (PhG, 426) is such an essential moment of Life for Hegel that he distinguishes “the nature of self-consciousness” qua Life from “mere thought” via these categories (Ibid.). Life is an ontologically appropriate “inversion and transformation,” for Life does not invert and transform any one thing but “brings” itself “forth” in this activity. Life is only as a bringing-forth-of-itself. The concept of bringing-oneself-forth further specifies that the life process is concretely a self-manifestation, self-risking, and self-assertion. At its highest stage this activity of bringing forth is only the “translation” of the individual “contents” of the self “into the objective element,” wherein it becomes actual (PhG, 482). Thus Hegel summarizes the nature of activity qua essential determination of Life with the following words: “Activity, however, is the true self” (PhG, 346).

We infer from this first that as the medium and substance of beings, Life can constitute itself only in an activity that inverts and transforms. “Labor” is the first form of this activity. The second important conclusion to be drawn from the relation of lordship and bondage is the rootedness of this activity in reciprocal “recognition” of distinct self-consciousness; this means that this activity has a concrete “we-like” nature. During

the confrontation between lord and bondsman, the first mediation among distinct *individuals* attains the unity and universality of Life simultaneously with the mediation between the “pure I” and pure objectivity. The subjects of the life process are no longer individuals who are immediately for-themselves but the unity and universality among beings who are for-each-other and to which these individuals submit themselves consciously. (We no longer need to emphasize that this mediation does not unite immediately isolated individuals but takes place on the basis of a direct and original “synthesis” between I and objectivity as well as between two I’s.)

Clearly this unity and universality of Life is still in the most rudimentary form. The character of Life as medium and substance has not been completed yet; neither its unity nor its universality are true. The objective world, although animated, remains still an objectivity and is other than self-consciousness. And the self-consciousness that actualizes itself in it, finds its essentiality still in an “objective form.” It is not truly by itself but by its objectivity; it seeks “to save and sustain itself” against this (PhG, 175), by dominating, destroying, or laboring on it. For Life as self-consciousness the first priority is its own “independence and freedom” against the world. It lives “for-itself and at the cost of the world,” toward which it retains a “negative” attitude. (Ibid.).

Thus the mediation between individual self-consciousnesses remains incomplete. In the relationship of lordship and bondage an essential “inequality” remains, because for-itselfness and being-for-another are moments which are still distributed among distinct individuals. The lord determines its being-for-another only inessentially, through “enjoyment”; the bondsman attains for-itselfness only “through objectness.” Neither the overcoming of objectification nor the unity among individuals has been fully completed at this stage.

The Historicity of the Life Process: The Actualization of Self-Consciousness as Reason

In order to clarify the future course of our analysis, it is necessary to recall the fundamental concepts and the essential context which led Hegel to characterize the Being of Life as self-consciousness. These appear in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the course of the exposition of forms of "Absolute Knowledge," and indeed they appear as the truth of "consciousness" itself, as the first truth of that cognizing relation to the world in its immediacy. Thus Life is a mode of *knowing* (of Spirit), but modes of knowing are also modes of *Being*. In accordance with the fundamental, ontological meaning of Being as a movement possessing the structural unity of self-sameness in otherness, knowledge is the highest form of such movement, and qua "thinking motility" (PhG, 227), it is also the highest form of Being. From the beginning, Hegel describes the highest "Idea" which fulfills the Being of beings as the "general form" of beings as well. This Idea possesses the character of totality. The truly unifying unity unifies *all* beings and is in *all* otherness equal to itself. For this Being, no beings exist in which it could not find itself, which would not be its own self but an object alien to it. Absolute Being is "all reality" and can only be absolute as "all reality" (cf. above chs. 1 and 6). These two defining features of absolute Being are expressed in the ontological concept of Life through the aspects of "independence" ("substance" and "soul of the world") on the one hand, and "omnipresence" (the "universal medium," "universal fluidity") on the other. Insofar as Absolute Being is intrinsically

motility and precisely an “absolute” motility that is real in all its “moments,” the Being of Life as well is characterized by a process which realizes itself in individual real “forms” but which remains the subject throughout these different forms.

We have observed and followed this Life process until it has become transformed into the relation between lord and bondsman. We have also seen that in this form Life is still not all reality and true self-equality-in-otherness. Because, however, the Life process is driven by the urge of “desire” to become essential for-itself and to bring forth Life in ontologically appropriate fashion, Life necessarily pushes beyond its own immediacy and inauthenticity toward “higher forms,” which still are further forms of *Life*. The final point in this process is reached with the actualization of Life as *Spirit*.

The movement of Life [beyond the stage of lordship and bondage — Tr.] is at first characterized by the attempt to overcome what opposes the freedom of self-consciousness in most unmediated fashion, and this is the objective world. At the stage of lordship and bondage the “relation” of the self to this world was essentially “negative.” Because the possibility of a positive mediation has not yet appeared on the scene, self-consciousness continues to seek its freedom in *opposition* to the objective world which it cannot overcome, in that it withdraws from the world into itself, “into the simple essentiality of thought” (PhG, 152). (The possibility of a positive mediation with objectivity will transform the knowledge characteristic of self-consciousness into “reason.”) Self-consciousness seeks to become free by freeing itself from the world. Hegel now discusses Stoicism, Skepticism, and the Unhappy Consciousness as forms of true self-consciousness. This does not mean that one or another factual episode is simply extracted from history; rather historical facticity is shown to be a necessary moment in the history of the Being of Life. Common to them all is the “negative relation to otherness” (PhG, 175) and that their freedom is only “abstract,” “indifferent over and against natural existence,” “without the fulfillment of Life” (PhG, 153). However, it was posited as an essential law of Life that the latter always attained its freedom and truth only in “determinate existence” and never in *opposition* to it, always *in* otherness and

never against it (cf. p. 255). For these forms of Life, therefore, their “intrinsic being or essence” remains “an other,” “beyond their own self” (PhG, 167). Indeed they can know this other, relate to it, but can never actualize it as their own reality.

The next stage of Life on the road to its actualization must thus be characterized by the transformation of the negative relation to the “world” into a positive one. This is precisely how Hegel describes the progress from Life as self-consciousness to Life as “reason”: “When self-consciousness becomes reason, its negative relation to otherness is transformed into a positive one” (PhG, 175; 139). We ask first, What does “reason” mean in this context, and which concrete form of Life does it refer to?

It was suggested that in the development of Life from immediacy to complete mediation a series of real forms was entailed. These are themselves all forms of Life but in them Life appears as subject of this process in different ways. Life is contained in all these forms until that point when it is realized as a subject itself which is in- and for-itself *all* reality, and this is Spirit. If self-consciousness constitutes the Being of Life, then “reason” is not an alien form, but this same Being, only in a higher form of actualization. Hegel expressly speaks of self-consciousness as “reason” and says that “self-consciousness is reason” (PhG, 175; 139). Life is cognizing Being and the achievement of unifying unity is essentially a “movement of thought,” led and sustained by knowledge — it is a spiritual process. The higher forms of Life are, therefore, necessarily higher forms of *knowledge*. The possibility that self-consciousness develops from the negative relation to the world into a positive one is disclosed through knowledge and finds expression as a new form of knowledge. This indicates generally the path along which reason emerges as a form of Life. If we recall for a moment the meaning that “reason” possesses within Hegel’s ontological framework (cf. ch. 1 above), then the direction of the *progression* beyond the current form of Life will become clear. The substantiality of reason depended on its ontological meaning which was to unite simultaneously subjectivity *and* objectivity. Self-consciousness, by contrast, was in essence subjectivity juxtaposed to an objectivity; it related itself to the

“world” negatively. Reason, as we will see, is *itself* the world, possesses the world positively as its own. How much Hegel still retains the guiding Idea of the full Being of Life, even in this strong orientation of the whole exposition toward the idea of knowledge, is revealed by the fact that the actualization of self-conscious reason takes place through the “activity” of concrete being-for and -against each other of different self-consciousness and not through pure knowledge alone. The concept of “work” and “the thing-itself” (*die Sache selbst*), which are further defined as the “doing of each and everyone” (*Thun Aller und Jeder*), are the central categories via which “spiritual essence” comes to be discovered as the truth of Life.¹

In the course of the development of Life from self-consciousness to reason, the aspect of “otherness” of self-consciousness, its objectivity, now gets named the “world” (PhG, 175; 139). This expresses two points: first, the “other” of Life, what exists for consciousness, possesses the character of totality. *All* being that is encountered is now viewed and appropriated as the other of Life. There is no longer a mere “in-itselfness,” which exists independently, outside of Life and its objectivity. Second, “world” no longer means a mere object of consciousness but signifies an objectivity that is thoroughly animated, desired, and labored on. In order for being to be understood and confronted as the “world,” the first animation and mediation of beings with Life, as it transpires in the relation of lordship and bondage, must already have occurred. Only the desired being that is also labored on can “carry” self-consciousness in it. Self-consciousness is *its* actuality and is reality to itself in it. Self-consciousness must now “discover” this world to be its own (PhG, 175; 140); it must reveal it for what it is, namely, the actuality of self-consciousness. Only the world which has been “discovered” and “understood” can provide the basis for the complete unification of self-consciousness with its otherness. So long as the world is still alien to self-consciousness, so long as self-consciousness claims it to be its own without mediation, desires it, and labors it, it remains in a “negative relation” to it.

We have seen that through the relation of lordship and bondage, objectivity could not have been overcome. Even in

the case of the active self-consciousness of the laborer, objectivity is not adequate to its essence for it has not been acknowledged as the actuality of self-consciousness. The self-consciousness of the laborer emerges only as a "form" appropriate to the thinghood labored on but is not seen as the "essence and intrinsic being" essential to the thing. The discovery of the world made by self-consciousness when it becomes reason means at the same time the complete deobjectification of the world. This is a process of understanding and grasping the world to be the reality of self-consciousness, to be its truth as well as its present. The Life process in the form of "reason" is preliminarily characterized by Hegel as follows: the world of self-consciousness is "its new, real world, which in its permanence holds an interest for it which previously lay only in its disappearance; for the *permanence* of the world becomes for self-consciousness its own *truth* and *presence*; it is certain of experiencing only itself therein" (PhG, 175; 140). Self-consciousness actualizes itself as the all-present substance in the discovered world of its activity (this activity is later defined through the category of "work"). The permanence of this world is only the "truth and presence" of active (*wirkende*) self-consciousness.

Even this preliminary characterization makes clear that the actualization of self-consciousness presupposes the *historical* process of Life.² This historicity, however, is not one individual mode of being among others, for *what* expires in this process is the actualization of Life as "Spirit," as "absolute being," and as the omnipresent substance of beings. It is claimed that this historical process has the character of *totality*. Along with the actualization of self-consciousness through history, the "world" emerges in its actuality. In the permanence of this world, self-consciousness discovers its truth and presence. The historical realization of Life through its mediational activity absorbs all regions of being into itself and allows *every* being to emerge in its historicity.³

If it is the case, however, that the actualization of self-consciousness is intrinsically a historical process, then the form in which Life becomes a *subject* of this process must also be historical. Indeed Hegel ends his preliminary remarks on the

actuality of rational self-consciousness with the category of a *free people*: “The concept of the realization of self-conscious reason first finds true fulfillment in the life of a people” (PhG, 265; 212); “Reason is therefore first actualized in truth through a free people” (PhG, 267; 214).

At the beginning of the section on “Reason” Hegel also indicates that historicity is the fundamental aspect of the actualization of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is in truth “all reality” because it proves and shows itself to be such by becoming all reality (PhG, 176; 140). As has been emphasized numerous times, self-displaying and self-confirmation constitute the essence of Life. Hegel emphasizes this same quality in the case of historicity as well. The *unmediated* “presence” (*Vorhandenseyn*) of the unity between self-consciousness and the world is only an “abstraction” whose “essence and intrinsic being” consist only “in the *movement of its becoming*” (PhG, 177; 141). In every mode of its “relation to otherness,” to the “world,” and therefore in every mode of its actualization, consciousness is dependent on the stage attained by the “process of coming to self-consciousness of World-Spirit.” The actualization of self-consciousness is in truth a becoming conscious of what has already been. The actuality of Spirit depends on “what it has already *become* or what it already is in-itself” (PhG, 177; 142). Although the mode of this dependence (between the actuality of Spirit and its past history — Tr.) has not been clarified yet, we know in any event that the being of World-Spirit is dependent on its becoming conscious of what it has already been.

The thesis that rational self-consciousness is actualized in the historical life of a people is anticipatory at this stage and has not yet been demonstrated. Prior to the explicit treatment of historical forms of Life in the *Phenomenology* stands the large section on “Observing Reason”; indeed, at first this appears to interrupt the course of the exposition with a completely new subject. The theme of this section is the “observation of nature and of self-consciousness.” Here one finds discussions concerning the observation of the organic and the psychic, logical and psychological laws, physiognomy and phrenology! What significance does the discussion of these themes have at this point?

Observing reason actualizes a *positive* relation between self-consciousness and the world through knowledge, for it sublates objectivity as “essence and in-itselfness.” It recognizes “things” as mere “moments of difference” within the simple unity of the law (PhG, 225; 180). The extensive differentiation that constitutes “the form of thinghood” is sustained, governed, and “comprehended” by the unity and universality of the law. Observing reason discloses that the essence of thinghood is the realization of the “concept” which is a mode of comprehending being as well as the ontological form of this being. In this process, the form of objectivity, which always immediately faced self-consciousness as its “negation,” is overcome. For the self-consciousness of observing reason “immediacy” only possesses “the form of what has been sublated,” “so that its objectivity is viewed only as a surface whose inner being and essence are constituted by self-consciousness” (PhG, 263; 211).

It is this last aspect that distinguishes observing reason from mere “consciousness,” whose truth had also been defined as the understanding of things in terms of the unity and universality of the law (cf. above). But “consciousness” had not been able to overcome objectivity as such: the latter remained for it as negativity, as otherness, and as an alien being; it could not find itself in it. In fact, only the desiring and laboring activity of Life could clear the ground for this overcoming by mediating objectivity with the concrete process of self-consciousness and by disclosing it to be *its* world.

The transcendence of objectivity aimed at by observing reason can only take place insofar as the world has been transformed into one of desire and labor. A second and basic difference between immediate “consciousness” and reason emerges: from the start observing reason has available to it “the meaning of being as its *own*” (PhG, 182; 145). It observes the world as its own which it considers intrinsically to be for-it; its observation is fully guided by the certainty that with the “discovery” of the world it only also discovers itself. Life is the *subject* of this process in a very special sense. While experiences simply “happen” to immediate “consciousness,” rational self-consciousness constructs “itself the observation and experiments”⁴ (emphasis added); it *searches* for what immediate

consciousness could only find to be a given. The knowledge acquired by observing reason is already the work of a consciousness itself instigating the self-manifestation and self-assertion of Life. Observing reason “sets to work to know the truth”; it finds in the form of a concept what was still a thing for consciousness in the form of “perceiving” and “meaning,” that is, it seeks to possess through thinghood the consciousness only of itself” (PhG, 182; 145).

I forego a more detailed examination of this section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* here, because the comprehension of “nature” insofar as it presents the realization of the “concept” has already been discussed in the first part of this work during the analysis of the relevant chapters of the *Logic*. It remains for us to specify the systematic place of this section on “observing reason” within the development of the Being of Life in general.

The “theoretical” overcoming of the thinghood of nature through the knowledge of observing reason is only a fundamental process of Life itself, for this represents a form of deobjectification (*Entgegenständlichung*) which is intrinsic to Life itself and which must take place for Life to actualize itself in and with its “world.” However, just as the sublation of thinghood via the concept is not immediately available as a possibility at the *beginning* of the self-actualization of Life but presupposes instead the mediation between self-consciousness and the world as it takes place in the relation of lordship and bondage, so too [the experience of observing reason — Tr.] does not already represent the *fulfillment* of this actualization. We already know from the *Logic* how inadequately the “concept” is realized in nature. The mode in which comprehending being exists as nature, namely, as a necessary and implicit process that is not free for the self-mediating activity of true being, points by itself back to the cognizing mode of a free self-consciousness as a form of true fulfillment. The lawfulness of organic nature does not possess “reflection-into-self,” namely, a self-referential mode of behavior, the unification in unity. Inorganic nature for its part “is only this simplicity reflected-into-itself.” It does not by itself display its differences, does not spontaneously divide itself into its individual parts in order to absorb these

once more into self-same universality. All natural processes thus lack that essential freedom which constitutes the ontological meaning of comprehension: "Observation finds this free concept . . . only among concepts existing as concepts or in self-consciousness" (PhG, 225; 180). Just as previously objective being had centered around the experience of desiring and laboring self-consciousness, through whose medium it first attained "permanence," now "nature" is centered on rational, theoretical self-consciousness as its real truth and fulfillment.

But is not this free self-consciousness itself "nature" which exists in the "form of thinghood," in the form of a "body" existing in the world of its body? The opposition between self-consciousness and the objective world, which will be mediated and united in the process of Life, reaches into the life of every single individual, and this opposition must now be mediated and reconciled for each individual self.

In the course of the exposition of the fundamental structure of Life, the unity of its infinite self-sameness with otherness had been defined more precisely as an *act* of self-consciousness. This basic structure of Life is a process of self-manifestation and self-assertion which is also one of self-motion and self-creation (see above); it is a movement which absorbs back into its self-consciousness each determinacy of its "existence" (*Da-sein*) and which lets this happen as its own act. Now both corporeality and the corporeal world of the individual are shown to be formed through such an act (PhG, 225–263; 180–211). In the first place let us recall that each self-consciousness has an "original determinate being" (PhG, 232; 185). It has its origin in an existing determinacy in which it happens to find itself, which it itself has not brought forth, and which is essentially "what it has not done" (*Ibid.*). But it constitutes precisely the Being of Life to posit this merely found and immediate origin as an actuality which is produced, mediated, and generated; only as a "result" *can* individuality be actual. In the face of this creative act, neither is individuality for-itself nor its world in-itself "actuality" but mere "abstractions." "Individuality is what *its* world is, a world that is its *own*. It is the cycle of its activity through which it manifests itself as actuality and as simply and solely the unity of the world which is *given*

(*Vorhanden*) and the world it has *made* (*gemacht*)” (PhG, 231; 185).

It is now clear in which direction self-consciousness must find its “positive” relation to the world and to what extent Life qua self-consciousness can become “all reality” on the basis of this relation. The positive relation to the world is realized when self-consciousness has brought forward and has comprehended its world as its own act. “The world as intrinsically given” and “individuality that is for-itself” are no longer separate (PhG, 231; 185). The world is the actual deed of the individual, while the individual “only is what it has done” (PhG, 232; 185). The concept of the individual as well as that of an act will undergo major transformations in this process, insofar as both will be grounded on and sublated into a higher “universality.” The individual is what it is only in the universal “medium” of a people, and this activity does not refer to each accidental deed but first and foremost to the “thing itself or the fact of the matter” (*die Sache selbst*) which likewise has the character of universality. It is not the deed (*Tun*) of the individual but of “each and every one.” Through the transparency and comprehension of its freedom and universality, this Life process which *attains* the unifying unity between self-consciousness and the world is essentially distinguished from that which *initiated* it, namely, lordship and bondage.

When the world in which self-consciousness exists as an other and which is an object in relation to this self-consciousness, has been generated and comprehended as an actual deed of self-consciousness, Life can find fulfillment as infinite self-sameness in otherness. For according to its “essence and in-itself” all otherness represents only the actuality of self-consciousness. “The object it [self-consciousness — Tr.] relates to positively is thus a self-consciousness” (PhG, 263; 211). Life thereby actualizes the highest movement of being-by-itself: “emerging into movement,” it is not “lost” but remains within its own “distinction” (PhG, 193). The determinations through which Hegel distinguishes the movement of the organic from that of the inorganic, and of free self-consciousness from the organic, are meaningful in light of this completed Life process. Because all otherness is nothing other than the activity of self-conscious-

ness which has been comprehended as such, in all doing Life always returns to itself. The “end” to which this deed returns is what was there at the beginning, namely, self-consciousness. Life is such a being as “has itself as its own end”; “the end, however, manifests this priority in that, through this transformation brought about by the deed, nothing emerges besides what was already there” (PhG, 196; 157).

At this stage in the development of Life, the mediation of the world through desire and labor, through knowledge of nature and the active self-manifestation of individuality, have been completed. With this the dimension of the possible actualization of Life as “universal medium,” as “substance” of all reality, namely, as a world which is a constituted actuality qua “the deed of each and everyone,” and in which self-consciousness faces only its own self, emerges into full light. Looking ahead, Hegel defines this “goal” “in its reality” and determines “the substance that has extended itself into existence” as “the realm of the ethical” (PhG, 264; 212). This realm is essentially *historical*. Life is the subject of this process only as the “Life of a people”; it actualizes itself via the free individuals who comprehend and generate their actuality as their deed. Their “purely individual deeds and strivings” have reality, permanence, and content only “through the universally sustaining medium, through the power of a whole people” (PhG, 265; 213). It is no coincidence that at this point, when the ontological concept of Life stands before its concrete realization, the central categories through which Hegel had characterized the Being of Life at the beginning return. These are “completed unity,” the “fluid, universal substance,” “universally sustaining medium.” The unity and universality of free self-consciousness and its deed, which are realized in the Life of a free people, represent the full self-equality of self-consciousness with itself in otherness. This is a universal fluidity which flows through all beings and which makes them into a living and effective actuality; it is the universal middle into which all being and process is absorbed and through which it is mediated with self-consciousness. This unending mediation is possible only as a conscious one and as one that renders conscious; it is an act of comprehension as well as one that is comprehended. Such is

also its result: the revealed unity of for-itselfness and in-itselfness, or self-consciousness and objectivity, is necessarily a spiritual unity. The world that has been thoroughly brought to Life is the *spiritual* world, *Spirit* itself. We will see how Hegel defines this world as the truth and actuality of the “pure category,” thereby defining its ontological place as the full realization of the concept of Being.

I follow the individual stages of this actualization only insofar as the ontological concept of Life necessarily reveals itself in them in its full historicity, thereby disclosing the original ground of the ontology unfolded in the *Logic*. Let us then next specify the crucial steps in the transformation of the concept of Life into that of Spirit.

The Historicity of the Life Process: The Actualization of Self-Consciousness in the “Doing of Each and Everyone.” The Object of “Work” and the “Thing Itself”

In the case of observing reason, self-consciousness had discovered the world “theoretically” and had discovered itself to be the world: “that it is intrinsically objective actuality is for it” (PhG, 263; 211). The *universality* of Life, as “the whole of reality,” encompassing both self-consciousness and objectivity had already become visible but had not become actuality. The references to a “free people,” discussed in the preceding chapter, remained anticipatory and pointed toward a “goal” whose reality, however, had not yet “expanded to become existence.” Self-consciousness had recognized that the world constituted only the cycle of its activity and that essentially it had to manifest and prove itself in the world. It recognized that actuality is in essence an object of “work” (*ein Werk*). Yet the self-consciousness in possession of this knowledge, in the course of manifesting and proving itself, still acted as a *single individual*. The Life process still unfolded via the interactions for and against each other of different individuals; but now, as in the case of lordship and bondage, for example, these have united with each other in a certain fashion. Yet this unity has not become the living subject of this process. It will first be so as the Life of a whole people which allows “the merely individual deed and striving of each individual” to take place on the basis of *its* own “power,” thus proving itself to be a “universal and permanent medium” in which alone every individual deed and striving gains actuality (PhG, 265; 213). Because this actuality represents the truth and fulfillment of Life, which realizes all

of Life's possibilities, Hegel can also say, however, that at its present stage self-consciousness has *not yet* realized this point. But because this actuality is also the immanent *telos* of Life which is there from the "beginning" and on whose basis alone all immediate and inauthentic forms of Life become possible, one can also very well say that individual self-consciousness "has *withdrawn* from this happy state of having found its determination" (PhG, 267; 214). Although "in-itself" self-consciousness is actual only in the universal and permanent medium of a people, it *is* truly actual once it grasps this reality "for-itself" as well.

Self-consciousness knows that "in essence and in-itself" actuality is its own. It is certain of this and, driven by the desire "to become essential" in its actuality, it tries to prove this truth. But because at first it is aware of this truth only as a single individual, it seeks to prove itself through an individual deed. "It thrusts itself unto Life" with the purpose "of becoming aware of itself as an individual in the other self-consciousness, or in order to make this other into itself" (PhG, 271; 217). Because, however, the individual is now confronted with the "universality" of Life and because its singularity displays only an individual moment of this Life and, furthermore, because for it "actuality is a living order" (PhG, 280), its self-realization always also immediately means the realization of universality. The contradiction between distinct individuals thus takes the form of a clash between the individual and the universal. This is experienced as a contradiction only because individuality still faces universality as if it were "an other actuality" [than itself — Tr.]. It has neither united with it nor has it mediated itself with it in free recognition; it has not yet placed itself *within* this medium but instead continues to assert that only *its* individuality is universal. It still views itself as the medium for all things, instead of submitting itself to the [universal — Tr.] medium. On account of this unmediated relation between them, the universal appears to the individual in various forms of immediacy. The individual conceitedly speaks of "its purely individual doings and strivings," of "the law of the heart," of "the good of humanity," of "the course of the world," of "the universal order," etc. But all these represent untrue and abstract

forms of universality which can be equally asserted by every individual, rightly or wrongly, to hold good of its activities alone.

Even these doings and strivings, however, considered from the endpoint of the full realization of Life, present an advance in comparison with the immediate opposition that characterized the interaction between lord and bondsman. In this latter episode, individuals in no way faced a universality still in need of realization but viewed actuality as the totality of objects of desire and labor. Even when, as in the case of the object of labor, the self-consciousness of the laborer became actual and attained permanence, it did so only in "the mode of objectivity." Life remained a "form" which was imposed on the object but which could not sublimate objectivity as such. It was then shown how observing reason overcame objectivity through knowledge and how this disclosed for the first time the universality of Life as well as revealing the world to be the actuality of self-consciousness. Hegel now describes the activities of individuals in this new context of the "deobjectification" of the world such as to highlight the contrast to their previous modes of immediate activity.

The activity (*Tun*) of self-consciousness which faces the world as its *own actuality* is no longer directed toward a merely given objective world in which external things limit the meaning and goal of this self-consciousness. Self-consciousness has now cast aside "all opposition and all limitations affecting its activity" (PhG, 295; 237). Whatever can and ought to be done in actuality has its beginning and end, its meaning and purpose in the activity of self-consciousness, for it *is* the only actuality. One neither can nor ought to do anything whatsoever or seek to reach any goal whatsoever; the activity of self-consciousness has to be pure self-expression and self-assertion. Its activity thus "simply translates an implicit being into manifest being" (PhG, 298; 239). The world in which activity occurs has the character of a "simple element," "in which the individual displays its form, and whose only significance is that it assumes this form. It is the *daylight* in which consciousness wants to *display* itself" (PhG, 295; 237). The world is not an intrinsic objectivity over and against a subjectivity that is for-itself. It is

only the element in which subjectivity becomes for-itself. It is not only the daylight through which the individual first comprehends and realizes itself but also that [element — Tr.] through which individuality actualizes itself, thus “allowing one to see” the actuality of all else as well. Because this actuality in essence means a process of “being seen,” Hegel defines this as the fundamental characteristic of the *content* of the activity of self-consciousness: “Action alters nothing and opposes nothing; it is the pure form of a transition from *being invisible* to *becoming visible*, and the content which is brought out into daylight and displayed, is nothing else but what this action is already in-itself” (PhG, 295; 237).

This characterization of the activity of “individuality real in-itself” emphatically reminds one of that passage from the *Early Theological Writings* where we first encountered the full ontological concept of Life. Here “Life that was comprehended” was defined as light (*phos*), and this light in turn as “truth,” and the world as the work of *anthropos photizomenos* (see p. 206). Thus we can conclude that even throughout all its transformations the actual basis of Hegelian ontology, resting on the concept of the Being of Life, remains visible.

As we have already seen (cf. p. 251), *action* is not a haphazard behavior of Life as self-consciousness but a process through which Life becomes what it is. The self-consciousness which actualizes itself in this process is not a being like any other but the “universal medium” and “substance” of beings, in whose actualization beings attain their own actuality. Because at this stage the action of self-consciousness no longer faces “opposition” or “limitation” but has become a pure self-display in the transparent “element” of the world and because “the material as well as the purpose of action consists in the act itself” (PhG, 295), in this process self-consciousness can no longer lose itself in an other. It slowly turns itself around, remains at every moment by itself, and returns throughout this entire process always back to itself. “Action has, therefore, the appearance of the movement of a circle which moves freely by-itself in a void, which unimpeded, now expands, now contracts, and is perfectly content to operate in and with its own self” (PhG, 295; 237). Certainly it is no accident that the image of a self-pro-

elling, circular motion appears here as the highest and truest form of movement and that Hegel now defines this movement of true self-consciousness as the *category*: "It is the category which has become aware of itself" (PhG, 294; 236). Hegel thereby indicates the sphere within which the Being of Life now unfolds itself. When it reaches complete equality-with-self-in-otherness, self-consciousness actualizes itself as the "pure category," as the meaning of Being generally, and indeed as the "conscious" category of this meaning. This meaning remains no longer only in-itself but, having reached its truth and fulfillment, it now becomes for-itself as well. Hegel justifies the characterization of self-consciousness as pure category in terms which recapitulate all the central characteristics of the ontological framework guiding him from the beginning. Self-consciousness "in all (moments of its movement)" holds fast "to the unity of Being and self, a unity which is its genus" (PhG, 295; 237). "Being" and self, in-itselfness and for-itselfness, objectivity and subjectivity unite themselves in the universal, out of which they spring forth and in which they are sustained as beings, insofar as this is also their "genus."

After this ontological characterization of action, Hegel proceeds to a more concrete account of its occurrence within the Life process, and a closer definition of this concept of action leads to that of "work." What individuality attains in the living world, what it displays and proves itself to be, is its "work." Through the work that it produces it makes itself *universal*; with the produced work it has placed itself "in the element of universality, in the indeterminate space of being" (PhG, 302; 242). This space is called "indeterminate" (*bestimmtheitslos*), for only through the actuality of work will it become determinate and be filled with determinacy. Hegel also emphasizes the "element of universality" in this process, because through its work the individual becomes *for all*. It has "thrust" its work "into permanence"; as such it does not subsist for one or even for several individual consciousnesses but rather for "universal consciousness." Each consciousness *for* which the work is actuality experiences it as such and such a "*determinate*" one, but this then signifies the work of a "*determinate*" consciousness. Work attains actuality only in the medium of *universal* con-

consciousness within which it was created and within which it has its history. Thus consciousness knows itself to be the “universal” for which every object of work is and exists as a special one. Consciousness knows that every object of work can objectify itself and make itself into an object for it. It knows itself to be the “absolute negativity” which can juxtapose itself to and in turn “go beyond” every object of work. In this transcendence of the object of work, consciousness also transcends every other determinate *consciousness* and moves beyond “itself qua object of work,” because every such object represents only “the reality that consciousness gives to itself” and *exists* only as the work of a specific consciousness (PhG, 302; 242). It is grounded in the “absolute negativity” of consciousness that “it does not find itself fulfilled by its work,” that it is more as well as being beyond every determinate work, indeed that it is itself “the indeterminate space” through whose universal medium the actuality of the object of work attains determination and permanence. Through the contrast between consciousness that necessarily transcends every work and work which is always necessarily “determinate,” that unity characteristic of Life emerges into action and unifies the former moment of universality with the latter moment of particularity. This process is completed with the transformation of the concept of “work” into that of the “fact or the heart of the matter” or “the thing itself” (*die Sache selbst*). I now briefly consider this transition.

Work is always the work of a specific individuality that realizes itself through it; this means, however, “that it has received into itself the whole nature of the individuality”; this nature in turn is an “originally determinate” one (PhG, 302ff; 243ff). Every individual thereby places in the “space of being” its own *determinate work*. For every other individual, however, this is “alien” and must be sublated through transformative action. It then follows that every individual must defend and prove *itself* against all others. Already through being placed in a common space the object of work should have become for *others*, but because at the same time it was only supposed to display its *own* reality, there emerges an internal tension in the nature of the object of work which eventually leads to its destruction. “The work *is*, that is, it exists for other individualities but is

merely an alien reality for them. In order to become conscious of *their* unity with actuality through *their* action, they must replace *it* with their own" (PhG, 303; 243). The work thereby becomes an object of struggle in the reciprocal opposition of individuals. In this "universal movement" every individual and its determinate work become a "vanishing moment." Other individuals interfere with it, transact with it, and transform it. The reality of the individual and of its work, which were originally determinate, prove themselves as unreal and vanishing moments. "Thus the work in general is something transitory, which can be obliterated through the counteraction of other forces and interests, and which much more displays the reality of individuality as vanishing than as achieved" (PhG, 303; 243–244). Through this "basic contradiction of the object of work" (PhG, 304), all oppositions which should have been sublated in the unity and universality of Life as self-consciousness, appear to break loose once more. The action, as well as the original content and intentions it embodies, is *opposed* to the reality in which the deed took place. It shows itself to have been "inappropriate" insofar as something other than the intended results. It is the living contrast between willing and accomplishing, ends and means, inner necessity and accidental happiness, which Hegel views as the basic contradiction of the object of work and which he thus assimilates into the very *Being* of Life itself (PhG, 304ff; 245ff).

Precisely this innermost accidentality and perishability of work constitute its truest *actuality*. The reality of self-consciousness does not consist in the determinate, individual work, as it had been originally planned, made, and displayed, but rather in "the universal movement" of transacting and transforming through which every determinate piece of work disappears. The work first *becomes* actuality in vanishing: "The vanishing is itself actual and is bound up with work and vanishes with it" (PhG, 305; 245). What happens to the work in this movement forms aspects of its history, its true reality. The substance-character of actuality is shifted thereby — and now for the last time — from the side of objectivity to the side of consciousness which is now defined as (*cognizant; wissende*) *action*. What preserves itself in the course of the vanishing of work is universal

action, and the vanishing and transitory character of work reduces none of its essentiality and necessity, for action does not occur for the sake of some objective end in some or other objective world but it occurs because it constitutes the Being of Life which generates and discloses all reality with its own act. "Action takes place, *because action in- and for-itself is the essence of actuality*" (PhG, 305; 245. Emphasis added.). And because this act is itself knowledge and is actual only as consciousness as well as a consciousness-producing deed, Hegel writes in anticipation: "Action is the becoming of Spirit as consciousness" (PhG, 298).

In the transitoriness of the object of work, the absolute negativity of consciousness shows its true essence. Through its activity consciousness sustains itself over and against the transitory object of work as "enduring being and permanence." But it no longer has the form of a (permanent) substance juxtaposed to other transitory ones; rather it is a universality which remains equal to itself throughout its particularities. For consciousness that *transcends* each object of work as if it were its own, all reality is a "vanishing moment." Yet precisely in this process of vanishing, consciousness retains *itself* as reality and as the reality of its moments. Consciousness experiences its concrete universality: the lack of fulfillment which leads it to go beyond each object of work not only sustains it throughout its action but also sustains and effectuates the reality of beings in general. Consciousness experiences that "what merely asserts itself and is experienced as permanent" is no other than the "unity of doing and being." Reality "therefore has for consciousness only the value of *being* as such, whose universality is *one* with action" (PhG, 306; 246. Emphasis added.). Neither work as distinguished from action nor the act itself alone but this unity constitutes the *true* object of work, namely, the "fact of the matter" (*die Sache selbst*).

"The fact of the matter" completes the unity between self-consciousness and objectivity as well as signalling the return to objectivity from the previous process of deobjectification. In the course of the Life process the attitude of self-consciousness toward the world changes from a relation to mere "things" to a relation to "work" and finally to "the fact of the matter." This

transformation in attitude means at the same time the increasing absorption of objectification into the Being of Life and a progressive realization of objectivity. The more the “form” of objecthood is sublated, the more “lively” the object becomes, and all the more it gains in actuality. The fact that its “in-itselfness” disappears does not reduce the essence of objectivity; quite the contrary, its essence is first revealed thereby. Through the action of self-consciousness, objectivity actually emerges as it is “in-itself.” The expression *die Sache selbst* (the fact of the matter), which for Hegel signifies the intrinsic nature of objectivity *as juxtaposed* to all cognition and activity of subjectivity, is constituted in fact only through the activity and cognition of subjectivity. The fact of the matter is the “interpenetration of individuality and objectivity which has become an objective fact” (PhG, 307), for “the fact of the matter” consists in the coming together of the following distinct “moments”: first is what ought to be done (as “purpose” which has not been realized yet and which “stands juxtaposed to reality”); second is the deed (*Tat*) itself which is realized only through and in action, and this action is always necessarily “specific”; it is “the action of individuals.” Third, as the unity of this action in process and the deed which has taken place, it is “a reality that is present for consciousness,” it is an “objective nature,” indeed a “fact” (PhG, 306ff; 246ff). (It is clear that in this sense “the fact of the matter” is almost a translation of the Greek *pragma* via which the internal relation to *praxis* is expressed.) Via the fact of the matter consciousness has become objective reality, and it knows its action to be the “substance” of actuality. At the same time, however, in this process reality is not dissolved into consciousness but remains as objective reality *for* consciousness. The fact of the matter is “an object born of self-consciousness as its *very own*, without thereby ceasing to be a free and actual object” (PhG, 307; 246).

Let us remember that from the beginning the ontological concept of Life was analyzed in terms of two essential determinations: being-for-self (independence, self-consciousness) and being-for-another (dependence, objecthood) (see pp. 239ff). On the one hand, Life is absolute negativity and freedom over and against all objectivity; on the other hand, onto-

logically Life exists “in an objective form”; it objectifies itself and its living world. For this reason the Life process is at one and the same time objectification and the permanent overcoming and absorption of this objectification. The “fact of the matter” presents objectivity as well as its sublation; it is an actual fact as well as being an act of self-consciousness. When Life has become the “fact of the matter,” it is immersed in truth and wholly by-itself. Its real content (*Sache*) not only is Life but is objectively present *qua* Life. It remains to be shown how the “fact of the matter” becomes “universal” and how as such a universality it becomes at the same time a living subject of the process, how, in other words, Life in-itself actualizes itself as the universal “substance” of beings.

At first “the fact of the matter” is composed only of the specific actions of individuals, although in a sense it has already transcended them. When the issue concerns “the fact of the matter,” the acting individuals as well as their specific ends and means represent only “moments” which have their essence in this fact and which are subordinated to it (PhG, 307; 247). “The fact of the matter” is the “universal” which remains alive through all these individual moments as their essence and which “finds” itself in them all as their unifying moment. But in this form it is at first merely “abstract,” “formal,” “simple” universality, for “it is not yet subject” (PhG, 308) which has actualized itself in this activity and which has divided itself into these moments. Rather, the acting individuals and their moments remain subjects. *They* claim to actualize the heart of the matter and treat the latter as an abstract “predicate” which can be said to hold true of every single action at any given moment.

Thereby “the fact of the matter” is all the more drawn into the interactive and transformative process in which individuals are for and against each other. These, in turn, undergo an experience which they had already made in the case of “work,” namely, the experience that “the fact of the matter” is not an abstract universality, free from the cognition and action of individuals around it and juxtaposed to them. Rather “the fact of the matter” has its truth and actuality precisely in this being for and against each other of all. If the individual is concerned solely with “the fact of the matter” and would like to establish

this through its action, then it experiences that in this process it sacrifices the heart of the matter to *others* by introducing it into the universal process of interaction and transformation. The individual sees that “others hurry along, like flies to freshly poured milk and want to busy themselves with it.” For their part others see in the universal fact of the matter only the concern of the acting *individual*, its “thing,” its interests and purposes, and they proceed to act *against* this fact of the matter (PhG, 312; 251). When the individual, driven by desire to pursue its pure being-for-self, wants to prove itself in its own truth and when it is solely concerned with the “pure act,” with pure self-display, then once more it experiences “that *all* others regard themselves as concerned and invited to participate, and instead of a mere “doing” or separate action, particular to the individual alone, something is done that is just as much *for others*, something which is a common *fact* [*Sache*] on its own account” (PhG, 313; 251). The acting individual thereby experiences that the universal and intrinsic objectivity of the pure fact of the matter is one that is drawn into the doing and striving of individuals who are for-themselves, and it experiences that the self-displaying of for-itselfness most proper to itself is a universal in-itselfness, an objective fact for all.

Yet the self-consciousness which has experienced in the transience of its own “work” its own intransient reality and in the universal process of being-for-others its most intrinsic for-itselfness no longer needs to watch helplessly as this contradiction falls apart from within. It can integrate it into its knowledge of itself and of its work and recognize it to be the truth and actuality of beings, “*the nature of the fact of the matter itself*”; consciousness recognizes

that it is neither merely something which stands opposed to action in general, nor to individual action, nor to action as opposed to permanence. . . . Rather it recognizes [that this is — Tr.] a reality [*Wesen*] whose *being* consists in the *action* of the single individual as well as of all individuals, and whose action is immediately *for others*; it is “the fact of the matter” and is such only as the *action* of *each* and *everyone*. (PhG, 313; 251–252)

Acting on the basis of this knowledge, the individual makes its own for-itselfness and its own action *universal* and in the

self-conscious “doing of each and everyone” actualizes the universal matter at hand. The fact of the matter is no longer an abstract predicate but becomes the concrete subject of doing. Yet this does occur as if the acting individuals were no longer the self-actualizing actors, but rather in such fashion that the singular individuality knowingly inserts itself into the universal movement of the “doing of each and everyone” and now acts as a “universal self” (PhG, 314). “The fact of the matter” is now

substance permeated by individuality, *subject* in which there is individuality just as much qua individual or qua this particular individual as qua all individuals; and it is the universal which has being only as the action of all and each. (PhG, 313; 252).

The fact of the matter is the substance of being which has become subject. Thus, at the end of the concrete Life process, Hegel’s ontological principle that substance is subject is completed. Actuality is the universal action of self-consciousness, and the latter has actuality only as this universal act. “The whole is self-moving, the permeation of individuality and universality” (PhG, 310), and as “self-moving,” the whole exists only as process.

In order to make explicit that this actuality of self-consciousness in process is “absolute being” and “substance” Hegel now takes the last step and defines the fact of the matter as “simple category.” “The pure fact of the matter is what was defined . . . as the *category*, being that is ‘I’ or the ‘I’ that is being” (PhG, 314; 252). The original and fundamental meaning of Being, namely, remaining-equal-to-self-in-otherness, which had been modeled on the ontological reality of Life and its characteristic unity of for-itselfness and for-otherness, is now finally actualized by the fact of the matter. Here the “moments of actual self-consciousness . . . being-for-self and being-for-another, are posited as one with the simple category itself and the category is thereby at the same time all content” (PhG, 314; 252).

The general significance that actual self-consciousness possesses as “category” has already been suggested (see p. 280). In the first paragraphs of the section on “Reason as Lawgiver” (PhG, 314; 252), Hegel provides a summary justification of

this. I briefly explicate this passage because it provides a final overview of the development considered until this point.

This passage reconsiders the beginning in retrospect, once Life has found fulfillment in Spirit. The highest and truest form of self-equality-in-otherness is represented by a knowing and conscious being, namely, by a “spiritual essence.” “In its simple being,” as it is immediately, this spiritual being is “pure consciousness.” This means that this being lives via the difference between for-itselfness and objectivity and, indeed, that it *conducts* itself within this difference. Spiritual being exists in and along its objectivity as if this were “its very other.” As pure consciousness, however, it is essentially “consciousness of *self*.” Its conduct is carried out knowingly, on the basis of knowledge of itself and of its other. Pure consciousness exists only as self-consciousness, as knowing being or as a *self*. Indeed this self has always an “original *determinate* nature”; “*this self*” is an individual. Here we reach the point in the development of the concept of Being where the process of Life comes to be viewed as the being for and against each other of distinct individual self-consciousnesses. But here Hegel refers right away to the result of this process, namely, to the unity among individuals attained through the “doing of each and everyone” in the fact of the matter. “The originally *determinate* nature of the individual has lost its positive meaning of being *in-itself* the element and purpose of its activity; it is merely a superseded moment, and the individual is a *self* in the form of a *universal self*” (PhG, 314; 252. Final emphasis added.). At the same time the objectivity which always accompanies the being of consciousness has attained the character of “the fact of the matter.” It is none other than the activity of the universal self, the “actuality and activity of self-consciousness.” Thus it is once more a “universal,” but a universal which is no longer merely juxtaposed to the single self-consciousness but one that has its “content” and “fulfillment” in it. Finally, it is a universal that has the character of “for-itselfness,” of being for consciousness, “the self of consciousness is just as much a moment” of the fact of the matter.

The unity of self-consciousness (the “I”) and objectivity (“Being”) reached at this stage can be described as follows.

1. This unity is purely “in-itself,” for it is the “universal of

pure *consciousness*” which is no longer there for an *other* being besides itself but is itself the only possible other for all beings.

2. As pure in-itselfness, this unity is at once pure “for-itselfness,” for in its in-itselfness it is there for-itself; being a *self* belongs to its in-itselfness.

The distinction between for-itselfness and in-itselfness, being-for-self and being-for-another, is wholly contained *within* this unity and will be reintegrated by it. There is no being which remains outside it and which is other than this unity. The actuality of self-consciousness, as realized in the action of each and everyone, is “absolute being.” It is purely what is intrinsically itself; it has been freed from every influence exercised by an other other than itself (an *ab-solutum*). It is the “pure self-equality of being,” and it *is* this simple, absolute, self-equality only as being that is for-itself, as “conscious being” (PhG, 314). This actuality is “Being that is ‘I’ or ‘I’ that is being”; it has the ontological character of the “category,” and as category it encompasses “all content.”

The last characterization of the absolute is provided by that of “truth.” We have already seen that the fact of the matter *exists* only for and in self-consciousness which realizes it through its action. It is necessarily object *for* a consciousness. Through its activity of knowledge, consciousness is also certain that the fact of the matter is the truth: the fact of the matter *exists* as an in- and for-itself and is *valid* in this form. “Thus what is object for consciousness has the significance of being the *Truth*; it *is* and it is *valid* in the sense that it exists and is valid in-and-for-itself. It is the *absolute* ‘heart of the matter’” (PhG, 314; 252–253). Being true is an aspect of the fact of the matter (of the *pragma*); it is intrinsically dependent on being affected by (*Betroffenheit*) a consciousness which makes certain that it is the truth and which proceeds to actualize it. “The fact of the matter” exists only as true being (*das Wahre*).

Precisely because the fact of the matter can be actualized only through the *action* of self-consciousness, because its “being” is none other than the “actuality as well as *action* of self-consciousness,” the ontological character of its truth is not one of mere knowledge but also one of action: “This fact of the matter, therefore, is *ethical* substance.” The consciousness

whose actuality it is, for its part is true not with reference to pure knowledge but rather as active being. It is an "ethical consciousness" (PhG, 314; 253). Through the fact of the matter the realm of truth is disclosed to be the "realm of ethical being." This is the "absolute" dimension in which Life fulfills its ontological being.

In order to understand how Life is fulfilled as Spirit, how the history of Spirit unfolds out of the "realm of ethical being," and how the being of Life is actualized in that dimension where Spirit exists in "truth," we must keep the following in mind: "The absolute heart of the matter" and with it the actualization of the "category" bear an inner relation to the *action* of self-consciousness; the first ontological determination of Life has been from the beginning *activity*. This fact alone suffices to indicate the distance between the fundamental ontological framework of Hegelian philosophy and every other form of logicism and rationalism as well as Kantian transcendentalism. Nowhere in Western philosophy since the Greeks have Life and its activity and the world of Life as work and *pragma* been placed at the center of ontology.

In the case of the development of "the fact of the matter" as category, the ontological principle of the identity between consciousness and Being is attained once more through an analysis of the concrete Life process as self-consciousness. In the *Logic* as well, at a crucial stage in the formulation of this principle, the concept of "the fact of the matter" emerges: "Pure science presupposes freedom from the opposition of consciousness. It contains thoughts insofar as they are just as much the thing-itself (*die Sache selbst*); or it contains the thing-itself insofar as it is just as much pure thought" (L, I, 30). It is likely that the basic framework of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* has influenced this formulation, but nonetheless the transformation as well as constriction of the original basis cannot be overlooked. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* the fact of the matter is in unity with the full being of the consciously acting self, with *Life* actualizing itself as self-consciousness. Decisive here is its character as *deed*. In the *Logic*, by contrast, it is in unity with "*thought*." And although as a determination of the "concept" thought implies *being*, the comprehending being, none-

theless the characterization of being as “comprehending” as opposed to being as self-consciousness, involves a significant reinterpretation of the original ontological idea. Even in light of the difference between the final purpose of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and that of the *Logic*, the meanings of Being presupposed in each work can be compared. Through the concept of Life as self-consciousness and even via the concept of self-consciousness as Spirit, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* insists on the full and untruncated concretization of Life, while the *Logic*, through the explication of true and fully realized substance as “comprehending being,” no longer allows the concretization of Life a constitutive role in the ontological framework.

The Transformation of the Concept of Life into the Ontological Concept of Spirit

We have seen that for self-consciousness at the stage characterized by Hegel as “the deed of each and everyone,” the important issue is “the fact of the matter.” Self-consciousness has now become ethical consciousness, and its proper concern is ethical substance. With these transformations, Life moves unto the “absolute” dimension of beings in which it fulfills its ontological meaning as well as actualizing itself as “all reality.” Hegel is explicit that the dimension now reached is final: at this stage self-consciousness neither can nor desires to “go beyond” its object, “for in it, it has found itself.” Self-consciousness can no longer go beyond this object, for “that latter is *all* being and power” (Emphasis added.). Every existent being now has become self-consciousness’s concern. And self-consciousness no longer *wants* to go beyond its object for this latter represents nothing besides its proper existence and activity; this means that the object has become “the self or the will of this self” (PhG, 315; 253). If this is the case, then why is it that a new subject of this process, Spirit, emerges precisely now? How can it be that the history of Life first begins with the development of Spirit? How Spirit is related to preceding forms of Life as subject will become clearer if we consider more closely Hegel’s own explication of the “transition” from actual self-consciousness to Spirit (PhG, 327ff; 263ff).

Hegel often characterizes “the fact of the matter” as “spiritual essentiality” or as “spiritual being” (PhG, 307, 313, 322). The extent to which “the fact of the matter” can be described

as spiritual being has been clear from the very beginning of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, at least in outline, in view of the effective orientation of the ontological concept of Life toward spiritual being (cf. p. 248). Life becomes a universal medium and an all-present substance, not in its capacity as an immediate or necessary process of organic nature but qua the free and comprehending process of self-consciousness as a “process of thought.” The mode of its *knowledge*, its specific spirituality are constitutive of its substantiality. Likewise, “the fact of the matter,” in which the Being of Life fulfills itself, must have been attained through knowledge and must be sustained through it. The “fact of the matter” must be an issue for Spirit itself.

This explanation by no means exhausts the deeper significance of the description of “the fact of the matter” as “spiritual essentiality.” The concept “essentiality” has a specific meaning in this phrase. It signifies “a still *abstract* determination.” “Essentiality” means first *only* essence and *not yet* “actuality” (PhG, 327; 262). We know the inner abstractness of the concept of essence already from the *Logic*. In order to become “actuality,” being must step out of the dimension of essence into that of “existence.” But how is such actualization once more possible if the “realm of the ethical” already depicts the actuality of Life? Nonetheless, Hegel explicitly juxtaposes the “actuality” of Spirit to its mere “essence.” “Its spiritual *essence* has already been designated as ethical *substance*; but Spirit is the *actuality* of that substance” (PhG, 328; 263).

“The fact of the matter” represents the unity of “I” and “being” (being-for-self, self-consciousness, action and being-in-itself, objective actuality). It is the unity of both “moments,” but not in the sense that they merely happen to coincide. Rather, their difference is contained within their unity (see p. 289). In action the heart of the matter exists for self-consciousness as its very own; “through knowledge” it is available to it as what is true and valid, as what must be done. This means, however, that “[self-consciousness] is still distinguished in fact from this substance as a particular individual” (PhG, 328; 263). As a particular individual, being-for-itself is still *opposed* to this (spiritual) substance, even when intrinsically it is only a moment of this substance and remains in unity with it. Thus, as the

whole unifying both moments, ethical substance is “essence that is in-and-for-itself” (PhG, 327), but as substance it is “no longer *consciousness*” of itself (PhG, 328). It is not yet the true and actual *subject* of its own actualization, but it represents the universality realized by *each individual consciousness* that knows of it and acts within it.

Because, however, this difference between self-consciousness and substance can no longer exist on the basis of their unity, because, furthermore, substance is no other than the knowing act of self-consciousness, one can no longer play one against the other. The unity between them which is already implicitly there will show itself to be the true subject of this process, when the standpoint from which the Life process is observed is no longer confined to one or the other of these moments alone — to consciousness or to “the fact of the matter” — but encompasses the processual totality of both. It *must* do this, for thereby it follows what has been already attained by this process, and this means making explicit the subject which is already implicitly there. Such a standpoint does not proceed from the knowing and acting consciousness to the matter known and acted on by it, as if this were another substance, but it considers only the unity of both which has been achieved already. The realization which thereby takes place is no longer a new actuality which goes beyond the already attained actuality but signifies the making come *true* and the becoming true of what is already actuality. This actuality is neither consciousness opposed to a matter at hand nor the matter itself as opposed to consciousness but the reality of consciousness. Such a reality is itself once more consciousness. It is the existence, action, and affair of a knowing and self-conscious being; it is a *spiritual* world, *Spirit*. In the transition from rational self-consciousness to Spirit, Spirit comes to its own full *truth* through the history of Life. Hegel describes this fact through these words at the beginning of the section which introduces “Spirit”: “Reason is Spirit when its certainty of being all reality has been raised to truth, and it is conscious of itself as its own world, and of the world as itself” (PhG, 327; 263).

The term “world” which recurs in this passage is crucial (cf. pp. 207ff.). Hegel repeatedly emphasizes that Spirit is “world,”

that its process is one of the “world,” and that its forms are forms of a “world” (PhG, 328ff; 265ff). The being and development of Spirit concerns the being and development of the entirety of beings, as they are actual in the world of actualizing self-consciousness, whereas until now it was the self-actualization of consciousness that alone actualized the whole. “Spirit is the self of actual consciousness to which it stands opposed, or more accurately, which it opposes to itself as an objective, *actual world*” (PhG, 328; 263. Emphasis added.). If we reformulate this statement from the standpoint of the ontological concept of *Life*, we see that once *Life unfolds as Spirit*, as a *spiritual world*, it has completed the unity between itself as consciousness and as objectivity, whereas this difference had been the driving factor and meaning of the entire process until now. Life has constituted itself in truth, freedom, and self-certainty as “the entire reality” and universal substance of beings. Life thereby *has become* what it *had been* ontologically from the beginning. Therefore the preceding forms of Life in the *Phenomenology* can and now must be reconceptualized from the standpoint of the actuality of Spirit, that is, as immediate, unfree, and untrue modes of the latter.

Yet the process whereby consciousness became world, the fulfillment and actualization of Life as unfolded in the *Phenomenology*, was essentially *historical*. Thus the following paradox emerges: the authentic and true substance of beings, namely Spirit, becomes actual via a historical process; the “absolute” and intrinsically ahistorical being thus emerges in and *out of* history! We must hold unto this paradox. Whether and how it can be solved will be dealt with at a later point.

Life which actualized itself as world became the subject of this process in the form (*Gestalt*) of a free people (see p. 269). The latter represents a universally present “medium” which concerns the “doing of each and everyone” as well as the action of individuals aiming at the heart of the matter. First, in the actuality of a free people do these actions attain permanence and actuality. As a work and an act, the existent is the work and act of a people, and this “world,” as the unity of self-consciousness and beings, action and the fact of the matter, is the world of a people. The people is the concrete universal

through which the specific self-consciousness of acting individuals becomes universal consciousness, and their concern a universal concern. It is simply a concrete universal, for it does not stand above or outside the individuals but exists only *through* their activity and *through* their deed. If, however, the prominent historical form of a people is the one through which Life actualizes itself truly and freely as all reality, then this is also necessarily the “first” form of actualized *Spirit*. It is rightfully emphasized that *Spirit* becomes actual as *historical*. Indeed Hegel writes: “Spirit is the ethical Life of a *people* insofar as it is the immediate truth; it is an individual that is a world” (PhG, 330; 265). As the first form of actual Spirit, the people is distinguished from the last form of self-actualizing Life as follows: the former exists in the freedom and transparency of knowing activity, “as conscious ethical knowledge that is *for-itself* in its truth” and acts as the true *subject* of this process, whereas the latter is only *implicitly* “the fluid, universal substance,” the “universal medium,” in which this process is contained (PhG, 332).

As Life, Spirit is intrinsically *motility*; when Life becomes actual as a “world,” the history of Life becomes the history of Spirit, and Spirit exists only within this history. The question then arises as to how the history of Spirit distinguishes itself from the history of Life. Furthermore, in what does the process of Spirit consist if Spirit is complete actuality in which all that had to be externalized is already “out” there?

So far as this last question is concerned, we need to first recall that the actuality of Life was a process in the special sense of objectification (*Vergegenständlichung*) and deobjectification (*Entgegenständlichung*), falling into otherness and reabsorption back into being-for-self, a process of externalization (*Entäusserung*) and unification (pp. 233ff). This process was concretely defined as *activity*, namely, as the exhibiting and producing of itself through conscious activity which is necessarily a “transaction with and transformation of” beings. The actualizing process of Spirit also consists in such activity. It is essentially the “movement of self-knowing activity” (PhG, 333), that is, of activity that returns back to itself and to the fact of the matter

from (historical) knowledge and which is sustained in this knowledge.

If, however, objectification and its overcoming already form the basic process of Life and if the “movement of self-conscious activity” defines the ontological behavior of Life in this process, then the displaying and producing of Life must be *intrinsically* one of objectification and deobjectification. Externalization and bifurcation must already be there in pure activity. This process must have been completed already when Spirit, which is no other than the actuality of Life, had itself become actual. Thus, with the simple existence of Spirit, which as we saw is simple *action (Handeln)*, this “separation” is posited. The movement of Spirit needs no external push and goal. Already “in its simple truth” Spirit is movement, the process of separation and unification. Hegel introduces the history of Spirit as follows: “*Action* divides it into substance and consciousness of this substance; and divides the substance as well as consciousness” (PhG, 331; 266). This principle establishes the internal connection between the History of Spirit and the History of Life. The difference between consciousness (doing) and substance (the fact of the matter) is only the last and most essential concretization of the difference between being-for-self (deobjectifying being, “absolute negativity”) and the objectivity that forms the Being of Life. The history of Spirit consists in externalization, which is always already posited with action, that is, the objectification and alienation (*Veräusserlichung*) of the truth and essence of Life, the recurrent attempt at their overcoming, and the subsequent return to truth and essentiality. Hegel repeatedly emphasizes this innermost transience (*Verfallenheit*) of the act itself as “the falling of all things and their being into otherness” (PhG, 425), and he names objectification the proper “guilt” of Life. Self-consciousness, “just because it is a self to itself and proceeds to action, raises itself out of the simple immediacy and posits itself into the process of *bifurcation (Entzweiung)*. Through this deed (*Tat*) it foresakes the determinateness of the ethical, of being the simple certainty of immediate truth, and actively posits the separation itself from the reality opposing it and which it views as negative. Through the deed itself, therefore, it becomes *guilty*” (PhG, 350; 282). This

guilt is not related to the deed as if it were something “external and accidental,” which could have been avoided,

but the deed is itself the sundering apart, this explicit self-affirmation and the positing over and against itself of an alien, external reality. That there is such a reality, this stems and results from the action itself. Only the action of a stone, therefore, can be innocent, but not even that of a child. (PhG, 350; 282)

All action presupposes a reality “alien” to the doer which must be interacted with and transformed, in order for self-consciousness to exhibit and fulfill itself. But this reality is in fact no other than “the work of self-consciousness”; in this reality it is concerned only with itself and its own affair (*Sache*). In order to be able to act, however, self-consciousness *must misconstrue* (*verkennen*) this ultimate truth. It must assume that the world is an “alien reality which is immediately given,” and “which has a proper being in which it [self-consciousness] cannot recognize itself” (PhG, 365). Life as self-consciousness is necessarily action; action necessarily treats the world as an immediately available, self-contained “existent” (*Dasein*) “from which the fact that it is brought forth by its *action* has disappeared” (PhG, 373). Actuality is no longer understood and acted on as if it were the “work” of self-consciousness but is viewed instead as a self-sufficient existent driven around by things. One no longer knows that this actuality “proceeds from its action” and that a living self-consciousness displays and ought to manifest itself in it.

It is this “alienation” (*Entfremdung*), this “proper externalization and inessentiality (*Entwesung*) of self-consciousness” (PhG, 365), which Hegel treats as the proper history of Spirit, and far from being ahistorical this is a profoundly historical process. The self-alienation of consciousness and its actuality, the disappearance of what it originates from, its imprisonment in the objectified world, the “desire” to sublimate and to take back this alienation — these are precisely the categories through which the specific historicity of human Life is treated in post-Hegelian discussions on the subject of “history.”

I cannot elaborate this theme here. Because these relations are taken up in a later investigation, one remark ought to suffice here:

the basis on which Hegel rests the historicity of Spirit also justifies its *ahistoricity*. The alienation of objectifying action will always be reabsorbed into the history of Spirit, and will be developed always further in this objectified sphere until “absolute knowledge” is reached. At this point, Spirit indeed may still externalize itself, but it can no longer get caught in and be forgotten in externalization. The act of Absolute Spirit is the complete one of being-by-oneself-in-otherness. And insofar as *all* reality, all the becoming of Spirit is presently retained in absolute knowledge, the entire historical process of Spirit, the process of its phenomenology until it reaches its final form, will be rendered ahistorical. This means that it will be viewed as the conscious externalization of a Spirit possessed of absolute knowledge. Absolute knowledge, as the free and complete being of Spirit and as that on which all its other modes of being depend and by which they are made possible, is the beginning, middle, and end of the history of Spirit. Only this one Being *appears* throughout the manifold forms of its history. A new concept of history, which then comes to dominate Hegel’s later philosophy as well, thereby becomes decisive for the understanding of Spirit. This is the concept of history as one “aspect” of appearing Spirit alongside the other dimension, namely, “nature.” I return to this issue later.

After this general characterization of the history of Spirit and of its internal relation to the history of Life as self-consciousness, it becomes clear how the individual stages and shapes of the former are to be distinguished from the latter. Hegel summarizes the essential difference between the two with the statement that the shapes of Spirit are “distinguished from the previous ones in that they are *real* Spirits, true *actualities*; and instead of being merely shapes of consciousness, are forms of a *world*” (PhG, 330; 265. Emphasis added.). The essential difference rests then on the (hitherto briefly discussed) character of Spirit as “actuality” and as “world.” The history of Spirit is the history of an actual world; the process of falling asunder (*Entzweiung*) and objectification exhibits itself “as a world articulated into its (separate) spheres” (PhG, 331; 266). Its alienation as well as the process of reabsorption back into self (*Verinnerlichung*) represent real worlds. Real worlds clash with each other, dissolve themselves, follow each other, transact with and transform each other. The history of Spirit is the history of the world in the true sense of the word. As soon as the totality of beings have been actualized by Life as

self-consciousness and have been completed by it, they take place in a world and pass from one shape to another. In the history of *self-consciousness* up to this point, this had not been the case: even if the world was first to become actual and to unite itself with consciousness in this process, Life as self-consciousness had not yet become a *world*. For example, the process of Life at the stage of lordship and bondage did not present a process occurring in the actual world. Rather, through this process Life sought to mediate the world for itself which it still faced as its "negativity." The middle, through which this mediation was attained, was still the individual, unfree, and unknowing self-consciousness; accordingly, this mediation was incomplete, singular, and untrue (pp. 263ff.). This "infinite middle," through which all encountered being is reabsorbed into the unity of consciousness and actualized, is no longer an individuality or a plurality of individuals but the *universal* consciousness, which is "absolute negativity" over and against all beings and in which individual self-consciousnesses and their concerns first attain subsistence and actuality. Universal consciousness has made the *totality* of beings, and with it *all* reality actual as its "work," and has brought the "world" about as its very own. *Life* was a form of consciousness either against, in, or with the world, but *Spirit* is consciousness qua world. The world subsists and is real only through the knowing and acting self-consciousness whose "work" it is. We have thereby stated that Spirit is consciousness: "Spirit is, in its simple truth, consciousness" (PhG, 331; 266). But this statement can no longer be misunderstood to mean that the actuality of the world is to be dissolved and sublated in a universal consciousness.

When now the history of Spirit progresses from one shape of the actual world to another, this process in some sense is necessarily temporal. The movement of Spirit "is in time, and the shapes which are the shapes of Spirit as a whole, display themselves successively" (PhG, 513; 413). The difficult relation between Spirit and *time*, which is suggested by this sentence, cannot be fully explicated here. This relation is essentially interdependent with all other crucial features of Hegelian ontology and leads to a larger set of issues than can be dealt with in the present work. Only those aspects of the issue which are

crucial for the question of historicity are singled out here. Only the *whole* of Spirit is “in time.” The individual “moments” of Spirit, which appear in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as “consciousness,” “self-consciousness,” “reason,” and “Spirit,” do not stand in a temporal relation to each other. That is to say, Life or Spirit is not first consciousness, then self-consciousness, then reason, then Spirit, etc.; rather Life or Spirit *exist* only as the unity and totality of all these moments. Only on the basis of the whole underlying them all can these emerge as individual shapes. They are modes of being of the one universal Spirit and unfold themselves contemporaneously within the totalizing structure of Spirit. However, the individual *shapes* of these moments, in which Life becomes subject, are distinct from each other in time. At one moment Life is actual in the specific form of lordship and bondage, at another, in the form of single, rational individuals, and yet at another point in the form of the “citizens” of a free people. Thus the moments of Spirit (consciousness, self-consciousness, reason, and Spirit) have no “separate existence,” their “process” is “not to be represented in time”; rather the individual and actual shapes assumed by these moments “separate from each other in time and belong to a special whole” (PhG, 513; 413).

Hegel justifies this thesis in the very same place. Being-in-time belongs only to what is “truly actual.” But only Spirit as a *whole* and each determinate shape in which this whole is realized have actuality, but this is not true of the moments of the whole such as consciousness, self-consciousness, etc., for the latter are not actual for-themselves but only represent the “middle” through which the whole (Spirit) actualizes itself in different shapes. They are modes through which Life as the *medium* of actuality becomes effective.

Let us ask first, why is the quality of being-in-time ascribed only to what is actual? What is the internal relation between time and true actuality? How is time identified in this context?

As Hegel himself explicates in this same passage, time is an expression of the “form of pure freedom in the face of the other” (PhG, 513; 413); it is free equality-with-self-in-otherness. In the case of the first general determination of the ontological concept of Life as well, time had been introduced

in this fashion (PhG, 134; cf. p. 233). Time was defined as the “simple, universal medium,” in which as “independence par excellence” all “distinctive moments of movement are dissolved.” In the case of the medium of temporality, these different aspects of movement are past, present, and future. These are not to be viewed as formal determinations, but rather as fulfilled shapes of time within which the totality of beings moves. Time is what sustains itself as the same while flowing through all differences. Time exists only as past, present, and future, but it is not consumed by any one of these distinctions. On the contrary, it absorbs them and sublates them all in its unity, sustains itself as the universal in them, and thus comes to pass. In its pure “form” time thus fulfills the true meaning of actuality, which is permanent, fully and freely attained equality-with-self-in-otherness, for in this self-moving unity of past, present, and future it is not any one being that comes to pass but the *totality* of beings which is then united into this “simple, universal medium.” Not only does time possess the same formal structure as “actuality,” that is, the freely self-moving equality-with-self-in-otherness, but also its character as medium gives it the necessary breadth by which to absorb the totality of the actual into itself. But in its true actuality the totality of beings signifies Spirit, and therefore only Spirit can be “in time” and “appear” in time.

The relation between time and true actuality becomes thereby clearer. What is truly actual, *exists* in such fashion that it brings itself forth, thereby manifesting itself; indeed it manifests itself as free action carried out with knowledge, as free self-consciousness. Every self-consciousness, however, is an “originally determinate nature.” It exists as an other, as being-for-another, and as otherness. The process of bringing itself forth and of self-manifestation is one through which the specific determinacy of otherness is constantly mediated. The self that exists through this process does not simply fall from one condition of movement into another but sustains itself in them as an independent self, by mediating every new situation with the previous one, by sublating the preceding, and by carrying it into the future. This was exactly the essential determination of Life as well: its free and conscious certainty “depends” on

rendering conscious its own process of having-become as well as that of its "world" (see pp. 254, 269). Its action proceeds from this knowledge and is sustained by it. It is thus a characteristic of the truly actual to act in such fashion that time becomes the "form" of its actuality, and that it fulfills its actuality "in time," by making past, present, and future its *very own* "distinctions" through which it manifests and sustains its sameness. Thus, existing in time, time becomes the "expression" of the free equality-with-self of actuality. It shows itself as "a process of succession," but the shapes of its actuality which succeed one another in time do not destroy its unity and integrity. This movement rather first *fulfills* its independence in that — and this is crucial to temporality — "the succeeding form (*Gestalt*) contains the preceding within it" (PhG, 513; 413).

For the stone, for example, time is not the "expression" of the "pure freedom against the other" through which it retains itself as itself and acts on this basis. The stone *falls subject to* the always changing, and successive shapes of its process of existence. It cannot reabsorb them into its unity and "dissolve" them; it cannot mediate the latter forms with the earlier. Time is in no way the form and expression of the stone, for the latter cannot shape and express itself in time. At most, it is time that shapes the *stone* and stamps itself on it. The stone is not *for-itself* in time. The "form" of temporality is wholly reserved to the conscious activity of "true actuality," because only this can sustain and relate to itself throughout the dimensions of time as free and equal self, thus making past, present, and future its *very own* distinctions.

This preliminary interpretation of the relation between Spirit and time should not lead us to overemphasize the role of time in Hegel's ontological framework. Above all, we must keep in mind that time is only the "expression" of a determinate "form" through which Spirit "appears." It is one form of its appearance alongside the other, represented by space. Furthermore, as we will see, it is only one form of externality, one form of the simple "existence" of Spirit; thus it is not the truth of Spirit in- and for-itself. For time is only a simple "universal medium" *for* the manifestation of the truth of Spirit. It is a "universal, fluid substance" but it is neither itself subject nor

actual as subject. Therefore Hegel writes that time “is the destiny and necessity of Spirit that is *not yet complete within itself*” (PhG, 605; 485. Emphasis added.). So long as Spirit still appears in time, through the real distinctions of past, present, and future, it is still *on its way* to reaching its true self and its true end. It has not yet completely displayed and brought itself forth. What it has been and what it will become are not yet a fully realized present. So long as it is still in time, it must still “enrich” itself, for there is always something more which “it must realize and manifest,” and which is “at first only inward,” and which has not been brought forth and displayed (PhG, 605; 487). Therein lies the condition that, if Spirit wants to be wholly by itself in its truth, it must “stop” time. Because, however, according to the fundamental meaning of Being, the process of motility (*Bewegtheit*) itself cannot be stopped, a non-temporal form of motility is required, and this can be only the motility of “Absolute Knowledge,” for all past, present, and future is always present to the Spirit of Absolute Knowledge as its own actuality and truth. The “thought process” of Life, namely, self-consciousness, reason, or Spirit themselves are not atemporal but only the motility of *Absolute* Knowledge in which all of Spirit sublates the other moments, has this quality. I cannot fully elaborate this point here; because, however, one can already note that these characterizations suppress the historical view of Spirit, they are taken up later. (Here I wanted to draw attention only to a misunderstanding that lies close.)

**The Transformation of the
Process of Knowing into the
Process of Absolute
Knowledge. The Fundamental
Determinations of “History”
in the Conclusion to the
*Phenomenology of Spirit***

This chapter does not expound the individual stages that make up the actual history of Spirit, for they do not belong to the foundations of the theory of historicity but rather to its concrete explication. Here I concentrate only on the conclusion to be drawn from this already developed framework. We can characterize this as the transformation of the process through which Life qua self-consciousness engages in knowing and cognizing activity into the process of Absolute Knowledge, into “science” as the last stage of Spirit. Only on this basis can we understand the essential determinations of history as provided in the conclusion to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which finally brings together all the features of history that have been already discussed.

In the course of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* the ontological concept of “Life” was described as a form of knowledge, that is, as consciousness. The process of the actualization of Life as the universal medium and omnipresent substance of existents was essentially a process of development of the knowing I, of “self-consciousness.” Only through the act of knowing, through the knowledge of itself and of its “world” could Life manifest and actualize itself as the unifying synthesis of “self-consciousness and being,” I, and the world (pp. 293ff.). The true actuality of Life was defined as “Spirit” and the world as the “spiritual world,” only in relation to this ontologically appropriate actuality of knowing and being known. The self-actualization of Life was explained in light of its unfolding in

otherness and as being-for-another. This, however, meant treating Life in its historicity. As self-consciousness Life took place via a “self-systematizing process of development.” Each of its individual “shapes” were “mediated.” Between the individual and the universal Being of Life lies the whole “system of shapes of consciousness,” insofar as these have unfolded and actualized themselves and are now objectively present as “world-history” (PhG, 223; pp. 254ff.).

The history of Life fulfills itself in the history of Spirit, which is the completed actuality of Life and in which the universal substance of beings exists as *subject*. Spirit has once more *developed* from within: it moves itself repeatedly through the poles of self-externalization and self-interiorization, objectification, and its overcoming. Precisely in the *repetition* of this process does it become clear that Life as Spirit moves only within its own dimension which it can no longer transcend. Exactly this repetition constitutes the historicity of history. As we will see, the coming-to-truth of Spirit signifies necessarily a repetition and a repeated extension of what it had already been. Repetition is the fundamental character of the historical process.

Even the *being-in-truth* of Spirit cannot eliminate the distinction between externalization and re-collection (*Erinnerung*), for this indeed constitutes the essence of Spirit. Difference must exist but only such that it is not real; it must be the kind of difference only through which Spirit displays and produces the complete unity with itself. Such unity and freedom in difference is possible, however, only as a distinctive form of *knowledge*. Because Spirit knows externalization to be its *own* and knowingly posits it, it does not alienate itself from itself and is not caught by it but remains by itself. It also remains by itself insofar as it no longer needs to turn back inward and *away* from this externalization because it becomes for-itself in it. In this fashion Spirit comes to know itself as objectivity, as objective existence. It exists as object of pure self-consciousness. Yet at the same time this represents knowledge of itself, of its pure in-itselfness, of its objectivity (and objective existence), for the self-consciousness of Spirit

the negative of the object . . . has a positive meaning . . . , that is, self-consciousness *knows* the nothingness of the object, on the one hand, because it externalizes its own self, because in this externalization it posits *itself* as object, or the object as itself, in virtue of the indivisible unity of being-for-itself. On the other hand, this positing at the same time contains the other moment, namely that self-consciousness has equally superseded this externalization and objectivity too, and taken it back into itself so that it is *by* itself in *its* otherness as such. (PhG, 594; 479)

Hegel adds immediately: "This is the movement *consciousness*, and in that movement consciousness is the totality of its moments" (Ibid.).

The transformation of the process of knowledge into the movement of Absolute Knowledge is articulated in this paragraph. This transformation does not involve a break with the preceding and occurs through the conceptual necessity imposed by the central idea of Life as self-consciousness. In the passage quoted "consciousness" does not mean a "moment" of Spirit (as in the first section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*), nor does consciousness signify the central characteristics of the knowing being which encompasses all the various ways in which Life exists. As the phrase "in that . . . consciousness is the totality of its moments" indicates, "consciousness" here means *fulfilled* and *true* consciousness in contrast to all the as yet unfulfilled and untrue modes of knowing being, in contrast that is to "Absolute Knowledge." *Only* "Absolute Knowledge" represents and *is* the absolute actuality of Spirit, the complete and true unity of self-consciousness and objectivity. This unity is not contained *in* Absolute Knowledge [as if it were distinct from it — Tr.]; rather it is Absolute Knowledge and nothing further. The "world," which presented the concrete totality of objective beings and which signified the "negativity" of consciousness in the history of Life, no longer has the same meaning; the world also is no longer that "element" of Life which displays and brings itself forth as had been the case with the history of Spirit (see p. 294). The world has been sublated into knowledge and has become knowledge that knows itself. Consciousness must now "manifest" itself in such knowledge. Con-

ceptual knowledge (*begreifendes Wissen*), the “concept,” will now be characterized as an “element” of Spirit in the same sense which this term possessed before. The concept has “become the element of existence” (PhG, 602; 486); through the concept Spirit has gained “the pure element of its existence” (PhG, 609; 490). The decisive characteristics of the “world” are now transferred to the “concept.” These are the objectivity known to self-consciousness and which together with self-consciousness constitutes a totality, actuality, or “all reality.” Absolute Knowledge is not a mode of being within or beyond the world, but is the being of the world as manifested and developing in its full truth. (For a more detailed account of Absolute Knowledge, the reader should refer to my discussion of the last sections of the *Logic* in the first half of this work.)

When Hegel now describes the “shape” through which Spirit as Absolute Knowledge becomes actual as “science” (PhG, 603; 486), science here means the truth and actuality of the totality of beings. This truth and actuality in turn is essentially one of knowing and being known. For Hegel there is necessarily only one science, namely philosophy. Hegel further assumes that as the totality of beings exists for philosophy, namely via the unity of knowing and the known, so it is also in truth and actuality. First, in philosophy and only through philosophy does the totality of beings manifest and actualize its truth and actuality. In the course of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the ontological concept of Life and its process of cognition had been at the center of this totality in all concreteness and fullness. Now, however, they are sublated into the Absolute Knowledge of science, and on this basis it becomes possible to bring the historicity of Life to a standstill in the most curious fashion. Without going into the conception of philosophy underlying Hegel’s concept of Absolute Spirit, let me discuss briefly the specific relation between Absolute Spirit and its history.

Already the development of the concept of Absolute Spirit out of the history of Life and Spirit should have made clear that ontologically Absolute Spirit is “dependent” on its history. Insofar as Absolute Spirit is “all reality,” in this form true “appearance” and “existence” are essential for it, but insofar as it can be an existing actuality only for a consciousness which

itself is there, Absolute Spirit *is* what it is only when it has become *conscious* of itself and is known as it is in truth. "But as regards the existence of this concept, science does not appear in time and in the actual world before Spirit has attained this consciousness of itself" (PhG, 603; 486). Such knowledge, however, can be first attained through the *history* of Life and Spirit:

As Spirit that knows what it is, it does not exist before, and nowhere at all, till after the completion of its work of compelling its imperfect shape to procure for its consciousness the shape of its essence, and in this way to equate its self-consciousness with its consciousness. (PhG, 603; 486)

The internal process of movement intrinsic to the ontological concept of Life is crucial for this last shape of Spirit as well. Spirit never is as it exists immediately but becomes what it is only at the *end*. For Absolute Spirit the process of becoming is essential; indeed Absolute Spirit *is* no other than this process. "This substance . . . which is Spirit is the process of its *becoming* what it is *in-itself*" (PhG, 605; 487). In the same sentence Hegel again refers to the specifically *historical* character of this becoming, for he defines this process as "a becoming that is reflected-into-itself." This is a process of becoming which sustains itself through knowledge of what has become, while at the same time relating itself to it, a process of becoming which returns from each individual shape of existence back to the unified subject of this movement which sustains them all, and which comprehendingly "mediates" each form with the preceding one.

Because it is dependent on this becoming, Absolute Spirit must contain *time* within itself (we define more closely this mode of "containment" later). What it is "in-itself" must be manifested through time. Absolute Spirit is distinguished "into time and the content or into the *in-itself*" (PhG, 605; 488). In the ensuing discussion concerning this distinction between time and the in-itself, however, Hegel no longer returns to the concept of time and instead ascribes the role which had previously fallen on time to the "subject": "Substance as subject is charged with the at first only inward necessity of setting forth within itself what it is *in-itself*, of exhibiting itself as Spirit" (PhG, 605; 488). This means that only substance as *subject* is

distinguished into time and in-itselfness, and *insofar* as it is subject, it is itself in time. Hegel thereby rearticulates the internal connection between time and “true actuality” (p. 303). The “form” of time as an experience of “pure freedom against the other” can be appropriated only by a reality which manifests itself as free equality-with-self in all otherness and which thus sustains itself throughout the varieties of its movement, thereby relating back to itself. Only the actual, which in truth always only brings itself forth, and which is the true *subject* of its process can have the “form” of time.

Even if this intrinsic historicity of Spirit is preserved in the final shape it assumes, Absolute Spirit, by contrast, if it is to be the Absolute in truth, cannot be *surrendered* to such historicity, in the sense that what it is *in-itself* would first *become* in history. Precisely, if history belongs to the Being of Spirit, there can be no point in history at which it is not already *in-itself*. However, it is not the in-itselfness of history which takes place in time but its for-itselfness, namely, its becoming what it had always already been. History is *its* own story in a distinguished sense; history is the process in which it manifests and displays itself, a pure process of showing itself. Spirit lets *itself* happen as history; it is and remains the *subject* of history. It always lies at the foundation of history, and it takes place in history as this foundation. It retains this process in its power and relates itself to it. I have emphasized numerous times that the various “shapes” in which Life actualizes itself in history were to be understood only as “moments” of an already present unity and of a general structural whole, on the basis of which alone the variety of shapes could develop. “Only the whole possesses true actuality” (PhG, 513; 413). The whole, namely Spirit, becomes truly a whole and thereby truly actual only as Absolute Spirit and via Absolute Knowledge. Thus the true “subject” of history is not only Spirit as such but also Absolute Spirit; as the last *it* is also the first. The entire history of Spirit thereby comes to possess the same character of movement which Hegel had earlier ascribed to the “organic” process:

Necessity is concealed in what occurs and first shows itself at the *end*, in such a way, however, that this end shows that it had been

also the *first*. The end shows its priority in that at the end of the transformation which is effected by action nothing emerges besides what had already been there. (PhG, 196)

This type of movement is true of the history of Spirit in a special sense, for it is only the totality of beings which can occur through such a process, and because, as we will see shortly, this “necessity” is only a form of Absolute Knowledge which “conceals” itself qua necessity.

Historicity is brought to a *standstill* on the basis of historicity itself, insofar as only the absolute which is always in-itself manifests itself in history and is the first and last [subject — Tr.] of this process. Viewed from the standpoint of Absolute Knowledge, the concealed necessity of history is no other than the transparent *freedom* of Spirit. Spirit knows that nothing can happen to it in history such as to endanger its being-by-itself. Thus it *lets itself* go into history: “This release of itself from the form of selfhood is the supreme freedom and appearance of itself, namely, knowledge” (PhG, 610; 491). Precisely because Spirit which occurs in history does *not* have “the form of itself” but is continuously present in *otherness*, it reveals and protects its freedom and *is* thus first freely what it is intrinsically. History is at once the externalization and interiorization of Spirit, as self-externalizing letting-go of what it actually is. And it is through this letting-go that it displays and brings about its power and freedom.

“History” thus possesses an unusual double meaning [in Hegel’s work — Tr.]: on the one hand, as the self-manifesting and self-producing of “substance,” it is the “*actuality, truth and certainty*” of Spirit; on the other hand, as the manifestation of Spirit “in the form of its free and contingent happening” (PhG, 610; 492), it is the *externalization and existing externality* of Spirit. This double meaning is given its sharpest formulation through those fundamental determinations (*Wesensbestimmung*) of history which close the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Here one finds that the two tendencies, one of which emerges out of the Idea of Absolute Knowledge and leads to the standstill of historicity and the other which emerges from the ontological concept of Life and leads to the continuation of historicity, are forced

together. The concept of history which has evolved along this internal dualism remains influential throughout the entire system of Hegelian philosophy; indeed it proceeds to influence the post-Hegelian discussion on the problem of historicity and is still alive in Dilthey's work. Let me give a brief interpretation of this concept of history.

The course of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* can be divided into the history of Life on the one hand and the history of Spirit on the other. Both in turn build a unity in motion. In the course of the history of Life, on reaching the stage of self-consciousness, Life actualizes itself as the "universal medium" and the "all-present substance" of beings. It thereby also constitutes beings as its "world." The "spiritual world" is the actuality which comes about in this process and which unifies "self and being," action and the fact of the matter, consciousness and objectivity. As the actuality of Life, the former is also a process unfolding between for-itselfness and being-for-another; the history of self-consciousness in turn unfolds along the dichotomies of objectification and its overcoming, externalization, and interiorization (*Erinnerung*).¹ In this process Spirit emerges out of its immediate existence into complete truth and certainty. It reaches this stage because it becomes "all reality" and fulfills itself as Absolute Knowledge in all reality. Insofar as the being of Life is also a spiritual one, the subject and substance of this process remain the same from beginning to end. The *entire* history of Spirit is only its process "of becoming what it is *in-itself*"; as a becoming which is "reflected-into-self," this is also truly historical (PhG, 605). Spirit as a *whole* will first become what it is only as *history*, namely, the totality and reality of Absolute Knowledge. "The movement of carrying forward the form of its self-knowledge is the labor which it accomplishes as *actual history*" (PhG, 606; 488). In this sense the totality of beings qua Spirit, constitutes history.

Insofar as "actual history" is the process of the totality of beings, being as immediate objectivity for a consciousness or as being-for-another which is being in the broadest sense of the word, namely being as extended in space, is also drawn into this process. Such being is "nature." Already in the "System Fragment" of the Frankfurt period, "nature" was defined as a

“moment” of Life (cf. p. 215), and as a reality that by itself “distinguishes” itself from the being of Life, subsequently confronting it as an ontologically appropriate Life form. It had been the achievement of “observing reason” to overcome this aspect of nature as a mere thing and to recognize and comprehend it as a form of Life.

Nature, however, is not itself a stage or a “shape” *within* history; rather, as an ontologically appropriate “moment” of Life, it is a “presupposition” of Life and history. Life, when it is in movement, is always also “nature.” It can take place only with, against, and within nature. Thus, alongside the actual history through which substance becomes self-consciousness, one must also ascribe to nature its *own* process of becoming in which substance is set into process in the form of being-for-another, as determinate “being.”² Yet this cannot mean that the unified totality of beings is thereby divided into two independent modes of being, because the ontological concepts of Life and Spirit, as processes of movement, both encompass for-itselfness and being-for-others, self-consciousness and “being.” At first, the two essential moments of the concept of being seem distributed according to the traditionally defined spheres of being: *being-for-another*, which is *implicit being*, has the character of *nature*, as “immediate being that is alive,” as “determinate being” in space, whereas the *self(-consciousness)* which is *for-itself* develops through a process “reflection-into-self” of *self-consciousness*, of the “pure self” in time (PhG, 610; 492). Yet both modes of being and movement are *united* in the totality and unity of the substance existing as subject. This is Spirit which is actual and manifest, which is nature as well as self-consciousness, and which through its own history transforms an intrinsically ahistorical nature into unity with history. This is accomplished in that Spirit recognizes and comprehends nature as a form of its existence and lets it become its “world.” In truth, therefore, nature is the sublation and dissolution of its own immediacy, of its own thinglike quality. Nature is the “eternal externalization of its continued existence and the movement which reinstates the *subject*” (PhG, 610; 492).

It becomes clear that it is by no means Hegel’s intention to place nature besides history as a distinctive mode of being and

motility. The issue is far more complicated. To begin with let us distinguish two concepts of history. On the one hand, history refers to the process of the totality of beings as Spirit; as such it is the unity in process of “living immediacy” *and* of becoming what is “reflected-into-self.” Nature is drawn into history and becomes historicized from within. On the other hand, history signifies only the becoming of self-consciousness that is “reflected-into-itself,” and in this case nature is always the given for a self-consciousness which in the course of its movement distinguishes itself from it. This double meaning of history, which on the one hand refers only to *one* process of movement alongside the other, and on the other, to the two processes as whole, is *the* true problem of historicity as it develops after Hegel, namely, how to present history as *one* of the two modes of becoming which at the same time *encompasses* both modes. This issue becomes the central problem of the theory of historicity with Dilthey. But this implies that the epistemological separation of the sciences into the natural and the human (*Geisteswissenschaften*) from which Dilthey himself proceeds is to be questioned.

Hegel offers a solution to this problem insofar as for him the “living and immediate becoming” is *sublated* into the “process of becoming which is reflected-into-itself” in the course of the history of Spirit as a whole. Both modes of becoming are forms of the externalization of Spirit as a *whole*, but in the course of the history of Spirit the externality of nature is simultaneously taken back and led over into the “form” of self-consciousness. However, viewed as the history of Spirit in its entirety, this “becoming-reflected-into-self” is still a form of externalization, a mode of becoming in otherness; this process is also a coming-to-itself of Absolute Spirit, its own recollection of itself. In conclusion, Hegel once more puts forward this inner dualism of Spirit, namely, of being-in-itself on the one hand and *externalization* and recollection on the other, essentially and estrangement.

Viewed from the standpoint of Absolute Knowledge, which is the true actuality of Spirit, its own history appears as the “process of its becoming reflected-into-itself,” as “sacrifice” and as “externalization.” Indeed this is a process of letting oneself

go freely into otherness, into objective existence and the course of events, for actual history is nothing but a "succession" of actual forms of the "world." They all exist "in the form of true and contingent happening," of an external and objective existence, extending itself as "space" (PhG, 610; 492). None of these forms, none but the last one, which concludes and sublates them all, is in the "form" of Absolute Knowledge and manifests the pure "form of itself." Insofar as this *succession* of the various actual shapes of Spirit presents the essential *negation* of the omnipresent and absolute self-equality of Spirit, *time* is the real dimension in which history is externalized: "History is a conscious, self-mediating process — Spirit emptied into Time" (PhG, 610ff; 492ff). So long as Spirit is in the form of successive and real shapes, and is thereby divided into past, present, and future, at one and the same time it is *no more* and *not yet*. It is thus never wholly itself and yet is always by-itself. On account of this "nothingness" based on the "form" of time, for Absolute Spirit time is necessarily *negative*. In the same passage Hegel names it "the negative" or "negativity" (PhG, 610; 492).

However, the becoming as well as the *sublation* of Spirit takes place via this negativity and externalization and only through it. The process of "externalization is thus the externalization of itself; the negative is the negative of itself" (PhG, 611; 492). It has often been emphasized that the fundamental nature of the history of Spirit is formed through the interdependence of externalization and recollection, objectification and its overcoming (pp. 310ff.). The specifically historical relation between these moments can now be defined more precisely: "As its fulfillment 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" (PhG, 611; 492). The fulfillment of Spirit implies the *abandonment* of its "existence" to the *perishing* of every objective form of its being, to the "*disappearance*" of each actual "realm of the world," for every such realm is intrinsically one of externalization and objectification. The endpoint of its withdrawal into self, the dimension of "re-collection" is at first only the pure inwardness of "consciousness," of what it is still as

“the absolute negation” of all objective being, namely a pure for-itselfness, the “right of its self-consciousness” (PhG, 611; 492). As the (negative) dimension of mere inwardness, this right is at the same time the (positive) dimension of inwardizing (*Verinnerlichung*), the realm of true “recollection” (*Erinnerung*). Hegel now analyzes the double meaning of the concept of *Erinnerung* so essential to historicity.

The “existence which has disappeared,” the “realm of the world” which has perished, are not lost in the “night of self-consciousness” but rather are preserved and sublated by it. The power of time as “pure freedom against otherness” becomes effective thereby: Spirit which exists in time, precisely because time is the “form” of its actuality, cannot let go of the past shapes but retains and preserves them in itself and mediates its present with them in full knowledge (p. 302). The very character of time which makes it an element of externalization at the same time contains the possibility of recollection as interiorization and the overcoming of externalization. When Spirit returns from the perishing realm of its world to the “night of self-consciousness,” it finds there the recollected form of its external, perished form. *Only* and first now does this existence become accessible to the true *knowledge* of self-consciousness; only and first now can it know and grasp it in its truth, “first now” because each externalized existence in this form constitutes the essential limit which cannot be overcome by the form of knowledge implicit in this externalization. Only the perished but recollected shape of existence can serve as the basis for the interiorized, recollected shapes of Spirit. This is then the true *knowledge* of its having been once, it is an “existence,” “reborn of knowledge” (PhG, 611; 492). So long as Spirit exists in a realm of the world that is simply there, it *exists* in externalization. Its self-knowledge is also caught in this externality and *cannot* reach its essence and truth. Only through the *perishing* of this external form will this knowledge be set *free* and the form of objectification finally overcome. Only the recollected Spirit is free by-itself and for-itself and can give birth to a new existence out of its true self-knowledge. Thus recollection becomes a real process of interiorization and “in fact the higher form of substance” (PhG, 611; 492).

This claim provides the ultimate justification for the context of relations noted throughout the *Phenomenology*. In the course of the history of Spirit, each successive shape always necessarily emerges out of the perishing and recollection of the preceding one; the succeeding “world” is always necessarily based on the recollection, knowledge, and truth of the previous one. The discovery of recollection as an ontological feature of Spirit is the final proof of the ontological history of Spirit. After Hegel, this concept of recollection as it is internally linked to the motif of transient worlds becomes a leading theme of the theory of historicity. It assumes a central place in Dilthey’s work as one of the central categories of Life.

So far, only the relation of recollection to the externalization preceding it has been defined. We must now discuss its relation to the form of existence succeeding it as well. The recollected Spirit, which in the inwardness of its consciousness knows the truth of its having-been, must bring forth a new form of objective existence out of this knowledge, for it can exist only via the “manifestation” of itself, via *outward* disclosure, via externalization (p. 279). All that exists as simple inwardness is merely “essence” but not yet actuality. Spirit, however, is “true actuality.” The recollected memory is like a short stretch of “night” between the “days” of Spirit, caught between a world that is perishing and one that is being born. A new existence will emerge out of this sublated form: “A new world and shape of Spirit” (PhG, 611; 492). Precisely this new shape, however, once more will be subject to the essential law of historicity which is that of being merely an instance of immediate externalization. In it “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 previous Spirits” (PhG, 611; 492). “But recollection has preserved it”; thus Spirit proceeds from one shape to another throughout its history, always enriching and fulfilling itself more adequately. Recollecting itself, it always absorbs more of itself from externality until it reaches complete perfection in the true and pervasive presence of the memory of Absolute Knowledge. “The realm of Spirit which is formed in this way in external existence constitutes a succession in which one Spirit relieved the other of its charge and each took

over the empire of the world from its predecessor” (PhG, 611; 492). This succession, however, does not fall into chaos in time; rather it is preserved in time such that existing in time it can “obliterate” time itself.

We can now understand that sentence with which Hegel concludes his characterization of history: “Their goal is the revelation of the depth of Spirit and this is the *absolute concept*” (PhG, 611; 492). The goal is to reveal the truth of the totality of beings via the concept of comprehending Spirit and to show the existence of this truth to be such a concept and such comprehension. The revelation, however, of what beings are in their “depth” can *occur* only through their *externalization*; this means that the “sublation [not only] of their depth but also of their *extension*,” of their form of existence in “negativity” and in the expansion of living space as objectification, is required; but this externalization as well must be sublated through time that recollects and that is recollected. “That this externalization exteriorizes its own self, and just as it is in its extension so it is equally in its depth, in the Self” (PhG, 612; 493) that Spirit can recollect itself only as externalized and can become *time* only in space — these are the conditions of possibility of revealing its depth, of its reaching communion with itself (*Beisichselbstsein*). *History*, as a process that essentially recollects itself in its externalization, is the condition of the possibility of the existence of Absolute Spirit, “the actuality, truth and certainty of its throne” (PhG, 612; 493). And history here does not mean the mere succession of the various shapes of the spiritual world “in the contingent form of appearing existence” but signifies history that recollects and has been recollected, history which knows itself and which is known, in short “history as comprehended” (*begriffene Geschichte*) (Ibid.).

Conclusion: Hegel's Fundamental Definition of Historicity as Presented in Dilthey's "The Construction of the Historical World in the Human Sciences"

With the foregoing analysis we have clarified the context of relations through which Hegel discovered and developed the dimension of historicity. This analysis should at least allow one to recognize that this context constitutes the presupposition of the current philosophical theory of historicity. The interpretation presented should have justified the claim made at the beginning of this work that the question of the ontological character of historicity requires a critical evaluation of Hegelian ontology.

The ontological concept of Life is the central one around which the problem of historicity unfolds in Hegel's work. This concept does not just circumscribe a specific mode of being or a specific region of beings; rather it orients the very meaning of Being in a certain direction which then remains decisive in the development of post-Hegelian theories of historicity.

For Dilthey, as a "fundamental fact," "Life" is a category behind which we cannot regress; it is "not only the beginning point of the human sciences but of *philosophy* as well."¹ As the "universal medium" and as the "all-present substance" of beings, Life in its historicity becomes a problem. In the history of Life, actuality itself — and this means "nature" as well as the "timeless" truths and laws of Spirit — is realized. As this actualizing totality and substantiality, historical Life becomes the "beginning point" of philosophy and the "medium" (*die Mitte*) of beings. From the start the philosophical investigation of historicity, thus defined, is not a philosophical "discipline,"

a “philosophy of history,” or a “philosophy of Life” (*Lebensphilosophie*), but rather a foundational framework for philosophy itself. Thus, in the deepest meaning of Hegelian ontology, Dilthey discovers the ultimate goal of his own investigations. Hegel “has introduced into the actual self the conceptual universal and even the entire lawfulness of Life itself. This is the point where he goes against the whole previous history of human thought.”² In Hegel’s philosophy “the *abstract* concept of humanity and the natural system of the human sciences were fully dissolved into the *historical process*.”³

Yet the crucial point is not just the fact that the ontological concept of Life in its historicity becomes for Dilthey as well as for Hegel the beginning point of philosophy; rather it is the way in which this takes place. In order to clarify how this applies to Dilthey, let me formulate some crucial aspects of Dilthey’s concept of historicity. I believe that the justification for these formulations and selective citations has been already provided.⁴

1. Historical being is the being of *Life*. The analysis of historicity must lead back to an analysis of historical *Life*: “The context of history is that of Life itself.” The concept of history is “dependent” upon that of Life (VII, 261ff).

2. “Historical Life” is only “a part of Life in general” (VII, 131). It is *human* Life; it is “a context encompassing the human species” (Ibid.).

3. The *being* of human Life is historical; historicity is the *essence* of human beings. “The single individual who exists as individuality resting upon itself is a historical being” (VII, 135). The “categories of Life” are the “categories of history” (Ibid., 362).

4. As an ontological determination of human Life, historicity defines itself as a specific kind of *process*. “The I, the soul are atemporality which have been added on. We know, however, none but as process” (VII, 334).

5. Historicity as process is characterized by the “overcoming (*Aufhebung*) which goes beyond the transcendence of subjectivity and objectivity” (Ibid., 333ff). Historical being occurs as the *unity of I and world*, self(-consciousness) and objectivity. The “external world” is only “a relation contained in Life itself”;

its “reality consists only in this relation to Life” (Ibid., 332). The world can exist as actuality only as the “externalization” (a “manifestation”) of Life. Historical Life is the universal medium through which all being is encountered as “actual” and through which it attains its “meaning and significance” (Ibid., 291). History is a context “encompassing” both Nature and Spirit.

6. As a process, historicity is characterized through a specific kind of “temporality.” The togetherness and unity of Life “is determined through time” (VII, 229). The world of historical Life exists and is actual in each case only as the world of a past historical form of Life. The future of every historical present is based on the past which sustains itself as actuality.

7. Historicity as process is defined through the specific mode in which Life *behaves* within and toward this temporality, thus *relating itself to it* (VII, 238). Closely observed, this self-relating-to is an *act* “which extends itself to its realization” (VII, 231). Historical Life presents the process of reabsorbing into itself and holding unto the past as “recollection.” This is the “turn inward from the given historical world of an earlier stage” (Ibid., 271) and at the same time the sublation of the past through “constant transformation” (Ibid., 244). Interiorization and externalization are basic characteristics of the historical process (Ibid., 217ff).

8. Throughout these characterizations, historical being is understood as *spiritual* being, the historical process as a spiritual process, and the historical world as a “spiritual” one.

The Hegel interpretation presented in this work should have made clear the degree to which the basic historical categories of Life in Dilthey’s “philosophy of Life” point back to Hegel’s ontology. In the definition of historical Life as “spiritual activity” and of historical reality as a “spiritual world,” all these categories come together. Viewed from within the Diltheyian problematic, this claims appears to make sense at first even without reference back to Hegel’s essential characterization of historicity. For Dilthey, who began with the attempt to delimit the foundations of the human sciences in opposition to the natural ones, Life and its ontological character have become

problems precisely in contrast to nature and to natural science. Thus, for Dilthey, questions pertaining to the problem of Life are necessarily translated into questions about the essence of Spirit and of the human sciences.

Nonetheless, this aspect of the issue alone does not do justice to the problem. It is well known that Dilthey, in the course of his investigations, was forced to overcome the original distinction between the natural and the human sciences. History no longer remained a process confined to one region of being alone, juxtaposed to nature as the other, but nature itself was drawn into the historical process of Life itself. Indeed, for Dilthey the final problem was "the unity of both worlds." Historicity thereby ceased to mean one mode of the being of Life among others, just as historical being ceased to signify only one mode among many others, and came to stand for that mode of being which first realized actuality as such. In referring to this full ontological concept of Life, however, Dilthey, without any questioning, continued to use the category of "Spirit." "Spirit" was no longer juxtaposed to "nature" as another mode of being; it came to encompass both nature and history in the narrow sense. This encompassing being, however, meant precisely the being of historical Life. But then the question arose: What were the characteristics on the basis of which one could define the *full* being of Life as *Spirit*?

This question, which would have necessarily led to a confrontation with Hegel's basic understanding of historicity, was not explicitly posed by Dilthey. When Dilthey contrasted his basic concept of Spirit to that of Hegel's (VII, 146ff), he did not take his bearings from the original and fully developed concept of Spirit in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Instead of orienting himself toward Hegel's original and basic understanding of historicity, he turned instead to the concepts of Spirit and nature, themselves suppressed and made derivative by Hegel, as found in the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* and the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. Dilthey argued that the dichotomy intrinsic to history for Hegel, which meant at once interiorization and externalization, actuality and truth, as well as the appearance of the "objective existence" of Spirit, led to

two concepts of history (see p. 314). It is unfortunate that the entire post-Hegelian discussion of historicity has primarily oriented itself toward this secondary and derivative concept of history in Hegel's work, because this no longer presents the process of movement of Spirit as a whole but one of its aspect alone, which was later described by Hegel himself as "world history." As Hegel clearly states in his introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, "This history is only the appearance of reason, one of the special shapes in which it manifest itself, a *copy* [Abbild] of the original image [Urbild] which presents itself in [the medium of] a *special* element, namely as peoples."⁵ Only the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and in a different way the *Logic* provide the subject which appears in this process of appearing, the original image of this copy. This subject is none other than the inner historicity of Spirit or the "eternal" occurrence of the "concept" as true history.

When Dilthey defines the full being of historical Life as "Spirit" and its complete process of development as a spiritual one, this signifies the thorough orientation of historical Life and of the historical world toward the Being of *Spirit*. But this interpretive tendency has its ontological justification in Hegel's work and there alone.

This treatment of historical being as spiritual being, however, for its part presupposes that *historicity* is adequately conceptualized and preserved by the concept of Spirit. Originally, for Hegel "Spirit" referred to a specific form of motility, namely, to that in-and-for-itselfness of cognizing being, of "self-consciousness." Hegel defines historicity as that exceptional mode of the self-relation of self-consciousness to its own motility. In expounding the fundamental character of historicity, Dilthey also has in view this self-relating form of Life which represents at the same time a form of cognition. "Interiorization" and "externalization," the preservation and overcoming of the past, the "development" of the future "on the basis" of the past, the "self-containment" of possibilities — all are modes through which self-consciousness relates to itself in *knowledge and cognition*. Precisely in and through historicity, does the internal unity and wholeness of Life become a unity and wholeness of

knowledge alone. Such knowledge determines the activity of historical Life. Life becomes *Spirit* through its historicity and insofar as it is historical. Thus Dilthey formulates the principle which most closely ties him with Hegel's views: "Spirit, however, is a historical being" (VII, 277).

Introduction

1. Marcuse cites Wilhelm Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, B. Gröthuisen, ed. (Leipzig and Berlin: B. G. Teubner Verlag, 1927), vol. 7, 131. All future references to Dilthey in the text are to this edition. The Roman numeral following the citation indicates the volume number, and the Arabic the page (emphasis added).

2. By Hegelian "ontology" we mean Hegel's thesis on the meaning of Being in general and his systematic exposition and explication of this through the unfolding of various modalities of being.

3. Among the older Hegel interpreters, J. E. Erdmann most consistently pursues this original ontological problematic (see especially *Grundriss der Logik und Metaphysik*, 1841). Trendelenburg recognizes the central significance of *movement* (*Bewegung*) and places its analysis at the head of the treatment of the individual categories of the *Logic* (*Logische Untersuchungen*, 2nd edition, 1862, I S., 141ff). For him "movement is the activity of mediation which is common to thought and being" (*Logische Untersuchungen*, I, 140). Movement is "the act" which "in virtue of being fundamental penetrates all thought and being in the same manner" (*Ibid.*, 152). But Trendelenburg gives no definition of movement as a form of being, and actually he cannot do so because he understands movement as a simple "fact" "which belongs to" and "which is connected with" thought and being. Trendelenburg maintains that an adequate definition of movement is impossible because movement is "simple in-itself"; "therefore it can only be intuited or identified but not determined or explained" (*Ibid.*, 150). But precisely Hegel's *Logic* decisively refutes this assertion. The more recent Hegelian interpretations, insofar as they concern our problem here, are referred to at relevant points in the text. At this point only Ernst Mannheim's *Zur Logik des konkreten Begriffs* (1930) should be mentioned, a work that in our opinion has been too little appreciated. Mannheim attempts to include the concrete activity of the comprehending human being within the concept of the "concept," and to unfold the categories of the *Logic* as modes of comprehending activity. "Thought is a modality of being in the verbal sense, and thereby of activity." "The concept, in its proper sense, is that relation to an object, be it in appropriate or inappropriate manner, which is constituted as imagination, or consciousness, etc." (*Zur Logik des konkreten Begriffs*, 3) But what makes the construction of this "concrete logic," once embarked on, so ineffective is twofold: first, Mannheim presupposes an ordering and significance of the categories of Hegelian logic different from the Hegelian one — a point not discussed by him. Second, problems of traditional logic, and particularly

the doctrine of judgment, cannot be forced on this other dimension, which has a completely different ground and on which Mannheim wants to base the *Logic*.

Chapter 1

1. In this context, “being” (*das Sein*) for Hegel always means being as determinate (*bestimmtes*), as being there (*da-seiendes*), being here and now. When referred to in this sense, it is always placed in quotes in the text. That is to say, it does *not* mean being purely as being (*als Seiendes; òn ei òn*). This concept and the difference between it and Hegel’s own understanding of being as what is (*das Seiende als Seiendes*) can be explicated only at a later point in this work.

2. F. W. J. von Schelling, “*System des transzendentalen Idealismus*,” *Sämtliche Werke*, K. F. A. Schelling, ed. (Stuttgart and Augsburg: Y. G. Kotta’scher Verlag, 1858), 339. Marcuse abbreviates future references to this edition of Schelling’s works as WW in the text. The Roman numeral following designates the division of the collected works, and the second number following “*Abt.*” refers to the volume. Marcuse’s citation format is awkward and departs from the collected works itself where the reference proceeds as follows: In this case, “*System des transzendentalen Idealismus*,” in *Sämtliche Werke*, Erste Abteilung, Dritter Band.

Chapter 2

1. Richard Kroner formulates Hegel’s claim as follows: “The problem of knowledge deepens and extends itself . . . into the problem of lived experience (*Erleben*)” (*Von Kant bis Hegel*, vol. 2, 1924, 374). Hegel discovers not only that knowledge and ethical willing “belong to transcendental consciousness, but that all lived experience, the innermost concept of “actual life” belong to it as well” (*Ibid.*).

2. We come back to this point in the context of the determinations of the concept (chs. 11 and 15).

3. The transformation of the transcendental unity of apperception into a “principle” of Being was repeatedly emphasized by Schelling to be the turning point of post-Kantian philosophy:

Precisely thereby subject and object would be truly thought of as pure principles, would be emancipated as true *archais*. Since this meant the rediscovery of the immediate *principles of being*, it was for the first time possible for philosophy to abandon the empty subjective concept, through which it had hitherto attempted to mediate everything, and to assimilate once more the actual world into itself. Surely, this is the biggest transformation to occur in philosophy since Descartes. (WW 2, Abtlg. 2, 245. Emphasis added.)

Schelling is here discussing the “philosophy of nature” in contrast to Fichte’s *Doctrine of Science*. In the more recent Hegelian literature, the relationship of Hegel’s concept of “absolute synthesis” to Kant’s “transcendental synthesis” all too often is discussed from the standpoint of the epistemological and formal-logical problematic alone. Hegel’s intention to attain a new concept of Being is thereby obscured (see Siegfried Marck, *Kant und Hegel*, 1917, 34ff). Adolph Phalen’s book, *Das Erkenntnisproblem in Hegel’s Philosophie* (Uppsala, 1912) shows to what point of emptiness Hegel’s ontology can be formalized through a purely epistemological interpretation.

Chapter 3

1. Nicolai Hartmann's article "Aristoteles und Hegel" gives a general outline of the problem (*Beiträge zur Philosophie des deutschen Idealismus*, vol. 3, No. 1, 1923). See also the special investigation by Purpus *Zur Dialektik des Bewusstseins nach Hegel*, Berlin, 1908; and E. Frank, "Das Problem des Lebens bei Hegel und Aristoteles" (*Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literatur und Geistesgeschichte*, Vol. 4, 1927).

2. In *Die Grundriss zur Logik und Metaphysik* (1841), J. E. Erdmann establishes the relationship between absolute difference and the fundamental determination of being as motility (para. 16). But the addition of temporal determinations like "first" and "afterward" (being "first" is something else than what it actually is "afterward") can obscure the ontological character of absolute difference. Correcting his former usage, Erdmann subsequently speaks of the "eternal movement" of being as distinguished from its temporal genesis.

R. Kroner presents absolute difference and its motility as the "archphenomenon" of Hegelian metaphysics. Because the absolute I

finds itself . . . in what is set over and against it, it appropriates the other and produces itself as the wholeness of itself. This movement is the absolute "archphenomenon". . . . This activity which returns to itself is not only the activity through which the I distinguishes itself from all others, but it is just as much the activity through which all that is other distinguishes itself from within — through which all becomes what is, namely being itself. (*Von Kant bis Hegel*, 2, 1924, 279)

It is thereby established that the fundamental determination of Being is motility. "Being is itself only through this movement whereby it posits itself, juxtaposes itself to itself and then puts itself together again" (Ibid., 318). Kroner clearly explicates that this specific characterization of motility is rooted in the problem of "synthesis."

In her book, *System und Methode in Hegels Philosophie*, Betty Heimann presents a "development of the concept as movement" and of "movement as concept" (45ff). She arrives at the concept of movement through a construction of the process of experience as "mediation" and "transition" between two stages of thought, one of which is the pure "inwardness of feeling," the other "the realized concept," which has taken back into itself the infinite manifoldness of the content of experience. Movement itself is then defined through ever new "dialectical" syntheses as the "unity of the external and internal aspects of temporal limits" (*System und Methode*, 46), as the coming together and separation of beginning and end (Ibid., 47), as "the unity of reality and unreality," "of space and time," "of extension and non-extension" etc. I have not been able to comprehend the relationship of her constructions to those of Hegel's.

3. The page numbers in parentheses until chapter 6, unless otherwise specified, refer to the first volume of the *Lasson* edition of the *Logic*

Chapter 4

1. "In this manner every being-there (*Dasein*) determines itself to be equally another being-there (also from the standpoint of representation), such that there is no being-there which would remain only itself and which would not become an other" (L, I, 105). The other is not "one that we merely happen to find, and it is not as if something could also be thought of without it. Rather, something is in-itself the other of itself, and its limit will become objective for something in its other" (E, I, 182, §92, Addition).

Chapter 5

1. Erdmann formulates this particular sense of the category of “for-itselfness” as “a polemical withdrawal into self” (*Grundriss der Logik und Metaphysik*, §50, note 2).

Chapter 7

1. According to Hegel, the complete identity of essence with its *movement* accounts for the genuine difficulty in the exposition of this dimension.

Essence as such is one with its reflection, and not distinct from its own movement. . . . This circumstance makes the exposition of reflection on the whole difficult. For one cannot actually say *essence* returns back to self, *essence* shines in itself, because essence is neither *prior* to nor *within* this movement, and the latter, in turn, has no foundation upon which it flows. (L, II, 67)

2. The origin of these categories in the ontological concept of “Life” are demonstrated in the second part of this work.

Chapter 8

1. We can attempt to clarify the concept of “world” only in the second part of this work.

Chapter 11

1. According to the interpretation of this passage given by G. H. Haring, the universality of the concept is an “abstraction” from the “immediately given” self-consciousness of humans (Michelet and Haring, *Historisch-kritische Darstellung der dialektischen Methode Hegels*, 1888, 128ff).

2. What Hegel understands by “objectivity” and “objective” becomes clear in a passage of the *Encyclopaedia* in which he also gives an interpretation of transcendental apperception: “Objectivity” means the “in-itselfness” of things and of objects in general; “objective” determinations are determinations of the “matter itself” in contrast to what is “merely thought by us” (E, I, 89, §41, Addition 2).

Chapter 12

1. Our interpretation of the “concept” in light of its character as principle agrees with N. Hartmann’s exposition which views the concept primarily as “the activation of an inner, proper tendency, pure activity, self-unfolding, self-realization” (*Hegel*, 1929, 259).

2. Erdmann as well defines “individuation” on the basis of the character of the concept as species: “The true specific difference is not posited by the observer. This lies in the concept of the universal itself. It is intrinsic to the concept of ‘animal’ that it separates itself into certain distinct kinds” (J. E. Erdmann, *Grundriss der Logik und Metaphysik*, 1841, 150, Note 3)

3. “The syllogistic laws of thought” are “ontological laws of dependence.” “With Hegel syllogism once more acquires the meaning once given to it by Aristotle: the universal framework (*Gerüst*) of the relations of Being” (Hartmann, *Hegel*, 264).

Chapter 13

1. Objectivity, therefore, cannot be ascribed to the being of some individual, but necessarily requires the *totality* of a self-enclosed “dimension” of beings, for no individual being exists “without limitation and opposition.” “Objectivity is only . . . as totality, as system. A totality having the character of immediacy is, however, a *world* of objects, and the closer determinations of objectivity . . . will expose the various relations underlying every world” (Erdmann, *Grundriss der Logik und Metaphysik*, 191). N. Hartmann as well emphasizes that categories of objectivity are “world-categories” (*Hegel*, 269).

Chapter 14

1. On the character of the “Idea” as movement and the definition of the immediate Idea as “Life,” see H. Glockner, “Der Begriff in Hegels Philosophie,” 1924, 60ff. [*Heidelberger Abhandlungen zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, E. Hoffman and H. Rickert, eds. (Tübingen). — Tr.]

2. Further clarification of nonnatural temporality is given in chapter 24.

Chapter 15

1. The sphere within which the exposition of the concept of Life unfolds in the *Logic* already makes it impossible to interpret this in terms of transcendental philosophy. Here “cognition” is not an aspect of the discussion at all. The development of the originary and ontologically adequate relation between subjectivity and objectivity (Life and world) precedes all epistemological investigation. [This passage appears in the original in small print. It is made into a footnote such as not to interrupt the course of Marcuse’s analysis. — Tr]

2. E. Frank, “Das Problem des Lebens bei Hegel und Aristoteles,” 614ff.

3. Erdmann, op. cit., §16.

4. That these claims hold only of truly “conceptual” “speculative” knowledge, that is, of philosophy, becomes apparent through Hegel’s exclusion of untrue modes of cognition from this discussion (mathematical knowledge for example) (L, II, 442ff).

5. In the *Phenomenology of Mind* Hegel introduces the formula that the concrete existence of beings is an “immediately logical existence”: “The concrete form, moving itself, makes itself simple determinateness, thereby elevating it to a logical form, and attaining essentiality. Its concrete existence is only this movement, and this is at the same time its immediately logical being” (PhG, 45).

6. Erdmann develops the nature of this “unity” precisely:

Objective rationality is driven by itself to become subjective, just as the subjective is driven to absorb the objective into itself. To the drive for knowledge on the part of

the subject corresponds, therefore, the drive for self-manifestation of objective rationality, and truth comes about only through this correspondence. (op. cit., §221)

7. The unity of the theoretical and practical Idea, action which is also knowing, is the crucial determination which enables the transition in the *Phenomenology of Mind* from the Being of Life to that of absolute Spirit, and through which the Idea of Life is transformed into that of Spirit. This concept of activity that is also knowing is discussed in greater detail in the second half of this work.

Chapter 16

1. In this sense Erdmann names the Absolute Idea “the totality of categories” or “simply the category” (op. cit., §227).

Chapter 18

1. After Dilthey, R. Kroner was the first among the more recent Hegelian scholars to place this original framework of Hegel’s philosophy once more at the center of attention:

Life is the totality, the highest object of philosophy, what Hegel later names Spirit. . . . From the beginning Hegel’s concept of the Absolute, which will be exposed in the system, is conceptualized more richly than in the case of Schelling: *historical life*, the life of Spirit constitutes its most prominent content. (*Von Kant bis Hegel*, vol. 2, 145)

Kroner also calls attention to the dimension of historicity preserved in Hegel’s concept of Life: “In the concept of Life the subjectivity of reason is united with the objectivity of its activity; the ideality of thought is united with the reality of *historical being*” (Ibid., 147).

2. W. Dilthey, *Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels und andere Abhandlungen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Idealismus*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4 (Leipzig and Berlin: B. G. Teubner Verlag, 1921), 138ff, 141ff.

3. T. Haering, *Hegel. Sein Wollen und sein Werk*, 1929, 539ff.

4. Haering, Ibid., 539.

5. See Haering’s comment on this passage (Ibid., 541).

Chapter 20

1. All references to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in this and the following chapters are to the edition contained in the *Werke* (Berlin, 1832). It is abbreviated in the text as PhG. The pagination of this edition of Hegel’s works is preserved in the *Jubiläumsausgabe in 20 Bänden*, H. Glockner, ed. vol. 2, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Stuttgart: Frommanns Verlag, 1932). I have consulted both the Baillie and Miller translations of the PhG but have provided references only to the Miller translation. The first number following PhG refers to the German edition, and the second, when provided, refers to the Miller translation. See *Phenomenology of Spirit*, A. V. Miller, trans. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); and *The Phenomenology of Mind*, J. B. Baillie, trans. (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1967).

2. “Inorganic nature” means the entity that has not yet been absorbed and appropriated by the “organization” of individuality. The opposite of “inorganic nature” is “organizing nature,” that is, “individuality.” It follows that inorganic nature is the totality of beings, juxtaposed to their individuality (already in the “Frankfurt System-Fragment,” “nature,” as opposed to “organization” meant “all that remained,” remained, that is, over and against human individuality; see chapter 18).

3. See E. Frank, “Das Problem des Lebens bei Hegel und Aristoteles,” op. cit., 614ff.

4. Marcuse is playing on the various meanings of “*voraussetzen*,” “*entgegen-setzen*,” etc. Self-consciousness sets before itself (*voraus-setzt*; presupposes) what is opposed to it (*entgegen-gesetzt*). Opposition is also a presupposition; when desire is transformed into work, what is presupposed will be transformed by self-consciousness to satisfy its own needs, and thus will be repositied. For further details, see Hegel’s discussion of purpose and teleology in the *Logic*, as explicated by Marcuse in chapter 13 — Tr.

5. This reference to Dilthey is not correct because the old edition of the *Gesammelte Schriften*, B. Gröthuisen, ed. (Berlin, 1927–) and used by Marcuse throughout includes only twelve volumes. A volume 18 of Dilthey’s *Gesammelte Schriften* was published in 1977 with the title *Die Wissenschaften von Menschen, der Gesellschaft und die Geschichte*. (H. Jokach and F. Rodi, eds. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977)), but it is hardly possible that this is the edition meant by Marcuse. We have to assume that there may be a printing error in this reference and that perhaps instead of volume 18 Marcuse meant volume 8 of the *Gesammelte Schriften*, which is entitled, *Abhandlungen zur Philosophie der Philosophie* (B. Gröthuisen, ed., 1931). — Tr.

Chapter 22

1. In his book, *Hegel*, N. Hartmann writes that with this step the investigation moves from “an epistemological analysis” to a different “level,” because self-consciousness is “from the beginning practical and active” (105). Yet this must not be interpreted as if the “praxis” of self-consciousness coexisted alongside its “theory.” Rather, as we will show, the praxis of self-consciousness is in-itself always also “theory.” In the unity and totality of the *ontological* concept of Life theoretical and practical being are one.

2. Richard Kroner emphasizes that the conceptual necessity which leads Hegel to the historicity of Life begins at that point when the ontological concept of Life replaces that of pure apperception of transcendental self-consciousness at the center of Hegel’s framework.

At that point when the I, the subject of experience, was no longer viewed abstractly as had been the case with Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, but the concrete content of the experience of this self was made the object of philosophical knowledge, the question arose as to what the relation of this content, experienced by the individual, was to that of humanity, i.e. to *historical* content. (*Von Kant bis Hegel*, vol. 2, 37. Emphasis added.)

The most profound contrast between the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is articulated here.

3. The totality, as an ontological feature of historicity, becomes a fundamental aspect of the historical process first with Hegel and remains unchallenged subsequently. Within the ontological space of history, this totality acquires the title of “world” and is placed at the head of all real comprehension of the ontological process of history. It

is referred to as the “ethical world” by Ranke and Droysen and as the “spiritual world” by Dilthey among others. [This passage appears in small print in the original, but in order not to interrupt the flow of the text, it has been made into a footnote — Tr.]

4. The word *Erfahrung* in German, like *expérience* in French, has the connotation of both experience and experiment. The scientific attitude toward the world which *experiments* with it is also a certain mode of *experiencing* the world through experiments. — Tr.

Chapter 25

1. Throughout this chapter Marcuse, following Hegel, utilizes the double meaning of the word *Erinnerung*, which when divided into its prefix “*Er-*” and its root “*-innerung*” means an intensified process of inwardization or interiorization. In this sense recollection or remembrance is a process of absorbing back into the self, interiorizing again what one has let go off. The terms recollection, and remembrance in English also suggest a process of gathering together, putting into unity what has been dispersed. — Tr.

2. When Marcuse is drawing attention to Hegel’s own identification of the term “being” with “determinate being,” with being “here and now,” he places it in quotation marks. See chapter 1, note 1. — Tr.

Chapter 26

1 Dilthey, “Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 7, 131; 261. Emphasis added.

2. Dilthey, “Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4, 249.

3. Dilthey, “Abhandlungen zur Philosophie der Philosophie,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 8, 126. Emphasis added.

4. The following citations [unless otherwise indicated — Tr.] all refer to “Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 7, and highlight only some of the most prominent points of the text.

5. G. W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, G. Lasson, ed., vol. 8, 6.

Glossary

There is as yet no standardized English rendition of Hegelian and Heideggerian terminology. In preparing this glossary I have consulted the most frequently used Heidegger and Hegel translations but have modified them (particularly in the case of Hegel) and have developed new terms as I saw fit to capture the essence of Marcuse's reading of Hegel and Heidegger. I have consulted the French translation of the present work by G. Raulet and H. A. Baatsch, which appeared as *L'Ontologie de Hegel et la Théorie de l'Historicité* (Paris: les Éditions de Minuit, 1972) and the glossary provided therein.

Anderssein	Otherness.
Ansichsein	Being-in-itself; sometimes implicit or potential being. See Marcuse's explanation of this term in chapter 4.
an und für sich	Properly; considered in- and for-itself.
An-und Fürsichsein	Being-in-and-for-itself.
Anwesenheit	Presence.
auffassen	To grasp; to comprehend. Marcuse plays on the etymological connotations of <i>fassen</i> , which means both to get hold of a thing and to seize hold of a point, an idea. The same is true of the English term "grasping," which means both seizing something and comprehending a point. See also <i>begreifen</i> , <i>erfassen</i> , and <i>ergreifen</i> , to which the English word "grasp" is related.

aufschliessen	To disclose, to reveal, to open up (usually a reflexive verb). Marcuse frequently plays on the various meanings of the term <i>schliessen</i> (to close, to shut, to finish) and the various derivations formed from it through prefixes like “auf-,” “aus-,” “ent-,” “be-.” See <i>ausschliessen</i> , <i>entschliessen</i> , and <i>Schluss</i> .
ausschliessen	To exclude. See <i>entschliessen</i> .
Aussersichsein	Being-outside-oneself; being exterior to oneself.
begegnen	To encounter.
begegnetes Sein	Encountered being; beings one is immediately faced or confronted with.
begreifen	To grasp; to comprehend; to conceive. Marcuse frequently explores the link between grasping something conceptually and grasping it physically. Both <i>begreifen</i> and <i>ergreifen</i> (comprehending; seeing the point) are related to <i>Griff</i> , and “grasp” or “grip” in English probably derive from the same Anglo-Germanic root.
Bei-sich-selbst-sein	To be by oneself; to be in communion with oneself (rarely).
Bei-sich-selbt-sein-im-Anderssein	Being-by-oneself-in-otherness.
Beschaffenheit	Constitution; character.
Bestand	Content; subsistence.
bestehen	To consist of; to remain; to persist; to subsist.
Bestimmtheit	Determinacy or determinateness. Miller renders both <i>Bestimmtheit</i> and <i>Bestimmung</i> as determination, but this is confusing. <i>Bestimmung</i> refers to the active process of determining, whereas <i>Bestimmtheit</i> is the passive state or condition of being determined. Marcuse explicates this distinction in a passage in chapter 19.

Bestimmtheiten	Determinacies.
Bestimmung	Determination (usually in a Hegelian context); definition or characterization (in a general context).
Bewegtheit	One of the crucial terms of the present work. Its literal rendition would be the disposition or propensity for being in movement; the capacity of being in movement. Given the cumbersomeness of these locations, however, I have rendered this term throughout as motility, and sometimes as movement or as process of movement. The “motility” of beings and of Being refers to the general process through which these become what they are; and as Marcuse never tires of pointing out, for Hegel the motility of Being and of beings signifies a conceptual and a real process at once. Such movement is both an epistemic event and an aspect of reality. The identity of thought and being is implied by the term <i>Bewegtheit</i> throughout.
Bewegung	Rendered as motion to distinguish it from <i>Bewegtheit</i> .
Beziehung	Relation; relatedness; connection. See <i>Verhältnis</i> , which signifies the creation of a relation between two beings as a result of their actively relating to each other; <i>Beziehung</i> has the more passive connotation of being drawn or brought together into a relation (<i>be-ziehen</i> : to pull or bring together different things). Although Marcuse himself does not clearly distinguish between these two terms in chapters 4 and 5, the contrast between them becomes most pronounced in chapter 8.
Dasein	Rendered throughout as being-there. In the present work Marcuse uses <i>Dasein</i> in its Hegelian rather than Heideggerian sense. For Hegel <i>Dasein</i> means a being that is immediately determined and which exists simply here and now. Miller translates <i>Dasein</i> as

	“determinate being,” but this is misleading because the crucial aspect of <i>Dasein</i> is not its determinate quality but that its various properties and characterizations exist immediately without being actively defined or altered by the existing being itself. <i>Dasein</i> is literally a form of existing here and now, a form of finding oneself thrust into space and time. See <i>Existenz</i> .
Einzelheit	Singularity.
das Einzelne	The individual.
das Entgegen- stehenlassen	Letting-something-stand-in-opposition-to.
enthüllen	To reveal; to unveil.
entschliessen	To resolve; every resolution closes off (<i>aus-schliesst</i>) a set of possibilities; thus revealing (<i>auf-schliessen</i>) the who-ness of the one who resolves, who chooses among various options by excluding others. See <i>Schluss</i> .
entspringen	To spring forth; to arise; to leap from; “ <i>entspringen lassen</i> ,” to allow to come forth and to emerge.
Entzweiung	Literally this term means to render into two halves; it is particularly important in the context of Hegel’s early diagnosis of modernity and civil society as conditions of division, separation, and alienation. Translated as bifurcation, sundering, and dividing.
Ereignis	Event.
erfassen	To grasp; see <i>auffassen</i> .
Erfüllung	Fulfillment; culmination; satiation.
Erinnerung	Recollection, remembrance. Following Hegel, Marcuse utilizes the double meaning of the word, which when divided into its prefix “Er-” and its root “-innerung” means an intensified process of inwardization or interiorization. In this sense recollection is viewed as a process of absorbing back into the self, or interiorizing what one has let go

off. The terms recollection and remembrance in English also suggest a process of gathering together, putting into unity what has been dispersed.

- Erscheinung Appearance as opposed to apparent or seeming being, namely *Schein*. The reader should keep in mind that for Hegel appearance always means the manifestation of something which thereby displays and discloses itself. Appearance is not an illusion or a delusion, but the manifestation of essence, for essence must appear, must reveal its actuality in the world. Hegel's critique of a two-world ontology which strictly distinguishes the realm of appearance from that of essence is contained in the very logic of this term. See also *Schein*.
- Existenz A mode of being that effectively realizes a force or is held together by an active force coming from within, which exteriorizes this force.
- Faktizität Facticity.
- Fürsichsein Being-for-self; being-for-itself.
- Gegend Region, realm.
- Gegenstand Object of knowledge or activity as it faces one immediately, as it stands over and against the knower or the actor (*gegenstehen*: to stand opposite to, or over and against the subject as knower and actor). See *Objekt*.
- Geschehen Translated as happening, event, process, and at times as process of happening.
- Geschichtlichkeit Historicity. The translators of *Being and Time* reserve this term for "*Historizität*," while rendering "*Geschichtlichkeit*" as "historicality." Marcuse, however, nowhere uses the term *Historizität* in the present work. Because this contrast plays no systematic role in his analysis, I have chosen the more natural English term as the proper rendition. For Marcuse the essential point is the link

	between <i>geschehen</i> (to happen, to take place) as a process, <i>das Geschehen</i> as the event or state of happening, and <i>Geschichte</i> as the account which records this happening. The etymological play on these terms is frequently used by Marcuse, but they are lost in the English translation. The reader is advised to keep this etymological context in mind throughout.
gleichgültig	Indifferent (adj.)
gleich-gültig	Equally valid in a deficient sense, that is, in the sense of being indifferent toward two options.
Gleichgültigkeit	Indifference; an important concept in the context of Hegelian ontology. It frequently signifies a deficient mode of being where the being in question does not actively relate itself to what is done to it or what happens to it in the world. Not to be “indifferent” toward the determinations of one’s being means to generate them, to fashion them, to shape them oneself actively.
gleichursprünglich	Equiprimordial.
Grund	Ground; basis; foundation.
herstellen	To generate; to produce.
Identität	Identity; to be distinguished from <i>Selbstgleichheit</i> , which denotes a more passive mode of self-sameness or self-equality. <i>Identität</i> is a more reflexive term, implying that the condition of sameness with self is attained through consciousness and activity.
Indifferenz	Indifference, meaning thereby a condition of noninvolvement with the world around one. It designates a more complicated state of being than <i>Gleichgültigkeit</i> , for <i>Indifferenz</i> is the attitude of a more sovereign and self-defining being toward the world which it chooses to let be in an attitude of detachment.

-massig (keit)	A most frequently used suffix (as in <i>Sensmässigkeit</i>) which means in accordance with, as appropriate to, as consonant with. The translators of <i>Being and Time</i> suggest “after the measure of.”
nebeneinander	Side by side or next to each other.
Nebeneinandersein	The condition of being side by side or adjacent to each other in space.
Objekt	Object of knowledge. A more reflexive term than <i>Gegenstand</i> implying the cognizing subject’s awareness of the content it is confronted with.
Region	Realm; domain; sphere.
Sache	Thing; matter; affair.
die Sache selbst	Things-themselves; the heart of the matter; the fact of the matter. This term has both a Hegelian and a Husserlian meaning. For Husserl, <i>zu den Sachen selbst</i> means “to the things — the phenomena — themselves,” whereas in Hegel’s use of this term in the <i>Phenomenology</i> the epistemological connotations are less prominent, and the term emerges first in the context of moral and social action. As Marcuse himself explains, for Hegel, <i>die Sache selbst</i> refers to a socially constituted and intersubjectively recognized reality (see chapter 23). Although I have used the Husserlian locution for this term, in the context of Marcuse’s Hegel interpretation and particularly in the second half of this work, I have preferred “the heart of the matter” or “the fact of the matter.”
sachlich	Objective.
Sachverhalt	The state of affairs; things as they are. Marcuse frequently stresses the literal meaning of this term, which signifies the conduct or the behavior of things themselves, to stress that what constitutes an objective state of affairs is how beings relate to themselves and to others in displaying their ontologically

- appropriate mode of activity. Objectivity is what is constituted by the conduct (*das Verhalten*) of the thing itself (*die Sache*). See chapter 2.
- Schein Apparent or seeming being; semblance and dissemblance. I have departed from Miller's rendition of this term as "illusory being" for the use of the term illusion seems to place the burden on the subject's own manner of perceiving and comprehending. But *Schein* need be neither illusory nor delusory; it is a form of semblance, a form of seeming to be so and so and turning out to be such and such. It is not so much the illusory quality of the appearances but rather their natural deceptiveness which is at stake. See chapter 7.
- Schluss Conclusion and syllogism. A syllogism is an argumentation structure that brings a thought process to a conclusion, to a closure. See also *ausschliessen*, *aufschliessen*, and *entschliessen*.
- seiend The present participle of the verb "to be," which must be distinguished from the substantive *das Seiende*. It has been translated as "being" but also frequently as "which is" and rarely as "existing."
- das Seiende Beings (plural and not capitalized); that which is; something that is. I have departed from Macquarrie and Robinson's translation of this term as "entity" and "entities" and Ralph Mannheim's translation of it as "essent" and "essents." The first set of terms evoke substantialistic connotations of things and material objects, while the second pair is misleadingly close to the term "essence" which is one of the least desired connotations to invoke when referring to beings as they are. Often Heidegger's translators are confronted with the choice between elegance and accuracy and frequently opt for the former, thereby misleading the non-German-speaking reader into believing that

Heideggerian terminology is more elegant, precise, and clear in German than in English. The distinction between *Sein* und *die Seienden* or *das Seiende* is no less counterintuitive and forced in German than it is in English; furthermore, it is not always obvious in the German original which of the two meanings is intended or would be most appropriate in a given context. Preferring accuracy over elegance and wanting to give the reader a sense for some of the tortured quality of the German original, I have not invented a new term for *das Seiende* or for *die Seienden*, but have frequently resorted to the plural case and used “beings” even when the original term was in the singular. Often the German equivalents have been given in parentheses to guide the reader.

Sein	Being; capitalized when used by Marcuse in its emphatic Heideggerian sense; here I have followed Macquarrie and Robinson’s translation of <i>Being and Time</i> . When referring to Hegel’s own concept of being, Marcuse claims to put this in quotation marks such as to distinguish it from his own Heideggerian use of the concept, but I have not found Marcuse to be consistent in this regard.
Sein-für-anderes	Being-for-another.
Seinssinn	The ontological meaning of; or the meaning of the Being (of Life for example).
Seinsbegriff	Ontological concept of; concept of Being of.
Seinsmässigkeit	Ontological adequacy or appropriateness; in accordance with its Being, as required by its Being.
selbstständig	Self-subsistent; independent; existing for itself (adj.).
Selbst-ständigkeit	Self-constancy, sameness over time. This term refers to the process through which a being remains itself and remains indepen-

	dent, without being dissolved by another or absorbed by another.
setzen	To posit; to set; to place before. Particularly in explicating Hegel's concept of essence, Marcuse follows the clue provided by Hegel himself of stressing that the activity of essence consists in repositing the given conditions, thereby mediating their immediacy. See <i>Voraussetzung</i> .
Sichselbstgleichheit	Sameness with self; equality-with-self.
sich verhalten	To conduct oneself; to act or behave as. This term and its various etymological derivations play a crucial role in Marcuse's Hegel interpretation. Marcuse is particularly concerned with disclosing the connections between <i>Verhältnis</i> , which means a relation between beings, and the coming into existence of this relation through a mode of conduct or behavior proper to the entities themselves (<i>sich verhalten</i>). In relating itself to itself, a being relates itself to another, and all relations to the other are also modes of self-relation. The various etymological options presented by this term are used by Hegel and by Marcuse to explicate the idea that an atomistic ontology is untenable and that relationality is fundamental to the way beings are in the world.
das Sichverhalten	Self-relationality; self-relation.
das Sich-verhalten	The process of self-activity; self-generated conduct; self-related activity; self-relating.
das Sich-Verhalten	Conduct; comportment.
sich ver-halten	To maintain, to sustain oneself; to remain; literally a heightened state of sustaining and holding unto oneself.
Substanz	Substance.
Ursprünglich	Primordial; originary.
Urteil	Judgment; occasionally rendered as an originary dividing. Throughout, following He-

gel, Marcuse also emphasizes that the word for judgment in German implies a fundamental dividing, partitioning (*Ur-arhaic*: ordinary, fundamental; *teilen*: to divide, to separate) as well as connecting. In the act of judgment what has been separated is once more brought together. Marcuse emphasizes, however, that according to Hegel the cognitive act of judgment is not one that the mind imposes on the world but that beings, as they exist in the world, contain within themselves an original split or division such that they are forced to change or to transform themselves. This is interpreted as the disparity, characteristic of all being between its proper or implicit being (its *Ansichsein*) and its for-itselfness (*Fürsichsein*). Judgment reflects this originary split within beings by distinguishing between substance and attribute, subject and predicate, and by reuniting them through the copula "is."

- Vereinzlung Individuation; singularization.
- Verhalten Conduct; mode of self-relating. See *sich verhalten*.
- Verhältnis Relation to. See *sich verhalten* and *Beziehung*.
- Voraussetzung Again following Hegel, Marcuse frequently utilizes the etymological root of this term which is composed of the verb "to posit," "*setzen*," and the preposition *voraus* (in front of, ahead of, etc.) to explore the relation between positing and presupposing. Only when a being has been able to reposit all that was posited before it (or was presupposed by it) has it reached the dimension of essence. The immediate characteristics, properties, attributes of a being, as well as the relations in which it exists, constitute the presuppositions, the givens, of its existence. In its process of becoming, every being relates itself to its own existence as well as to the relations it has to others in a certain fashion; in this process of becoming, which Marcuse shows to be a process of activity in

	<p>the second half of this work, a being overcomes the givenness of its immediate existence by mediating its characteristics, properties, relations and attributes through its proper form of activity. What is presupposed (<i>vor-aus-gesetzt</i>: posited in front of one) thereby is repositied (<i>gesetzt</i>); its immediacy and givenness is overcome; it has become something else. This process of presupposing and repositing belongs to the history of beings; their essence is what they have become in this history.</p>
Vorhanden	Present-at-hand (adj.).
Vorhandenheit	Presence-at-hand.
das Werk	The object of work.
Wesen	Essence. In using this term, Marcuse resorts to the etymological connection clarified by Hegel himself. In German the concept of essence is derived from the past participle of the verb to be, " <i>gewesen</i> ." Hegel and Marcuse both emphasize that in this sense essence is a historical concept which contains the dimension of the past, of the having become of a being within itself.
Wesensmässigkeit	Being in accordance with its essence; appropriateness with essence.
Wirklichkeit	Actuality. Marcuse explores the root of this concept which is the verb " <i>wirken</i> ," to effect, to eventuate, to bring something about. Actuality is a form of being which has the power to eventuate itself, to bring itself about. Life is the first form of actuality, and living beings are the first actual beings. Marcuse also draws attention throughout to Hegel's Aristotelianism in defining this term. For Aristotle, actuality (<i>energeia</i>) is also a being that is at work, effectively engaged with its <i>ergon</i> .
Zufall	Accident.
zu-fallen	To happen to; to befall. An accident (<i>Zufall</i>) befalls (<i>zu-fällt</i>) someone or something.

zufällig	Accidental; accidentally.
Zu-grunde-gehen	Destruction; dissolution, but also literally to fall or reach the ground. In their process of destruction things reach their ground in that they perish. See chapter 7.
Zuhandenheit	Readiness-to-hand.

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