Hegel on Consciousness
The Opening Chapters of
A Spirit of Trust: A Semantic Reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology*
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Hegel on Consciousness

Part One:

Knowing and Representing:

Reading (between the lines of) Hegel's Introduction to the Phenomenology

Chapter One

Conceptual Realism and the Semantic Possibility of Knowledge

I.   Classical Representational Epistemology

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

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

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

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[1] [73]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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[2] [M73]
[3] [M73]

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

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

presupposes notions *about knowledge* as an instrument and a medium, and also the notion that there is a *difference between ourselves and this knowledge;* but above all, it presupposes that the absolute *stands on one side* and that *knowledge,* though it is *on the other side,* for itself and separated from the absolute, is nevertheless something real. Hence it assumes that knowledge may be true despite its presupposition that knowledge is outside the absolute and therewith outside the truth as well. By taking this position, what calls itself the fear of error reveals itself as a fear of the truth.[4]

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

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

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[4] [74]

To be sure, it does seem that an acquaintance with the way the instrument functions might help overcome this difficulty. For then it would seem possible to get the truth in its purity simply by subtracting from the result the instrument's part in that representation of the absolute which we have gained through it. In fact, however, this correction would only lead us back to our point of departure. For [i], if we remove from a thing which has been shaped by an instrument the contribution of that instrument to it, then the thing (in this case the absolute) is for us exactly as it was before this now obviously superfluous effort. Or [ii], were the absolute only to be brought a bit *closer* to us by an instrument, perhaps as a bird is trapped by a lime-twig, without being changed at all, it would surely laugh at this ruse if it were not, in and for itself, already close to us of its own accord. For in this case knowledge itself would be a ruse, pretending through its multifarious effort to do something other than merely bring forth a relation which is immediate and thus effortless. Or [iii], if the examination of knowledge, which we now represent as a medium, makes us acquainted with the law of light- refraction in the medium, it is likewise useless to subtract this factor from the result; for knowledge, through which the truth touches us, is the ray of light itself rather than its refraction; and if this be subtracted, we would be left with no more than an indication of pure direction or empty place.[5]

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

 I think we can see in these passages the general shape of an argument. But it is hazy, and it is hard to discern both the exact outlines of the class of views it targets and just how the criticism of them is supposed to work. (The haziness of the argument is due

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[5] [73]

partly to the compression of its exposition, and partly to the metaphorical terms in which it is conducted.) To fill in the details, one would have to specify what criteria of adequacy for epistemological theories Hegel is insisting on, what class of theories he claims cannot satisfy those criteria, what features of those theories are responsible for that failure, and how, exactly, the argument for that conclusion works. In the rest of this chapter, I offer one way of sharpening along these four dimensions the argument Hegel is putting on the table here, and an initial characterization of the shape of the alternative model that Hegel proposes to replace the instrument-or-medium model.

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

The rise of modern science made this picture unsustainable. Copernicus discovered that the reality behind the appearance of a stationary Earth and a revolving Sun was a stationary Sun and a rotating Earth. No resemblance, no shared properties there. The relationship between reality and its appearance here has to be understood in a much more complicated way. Galileo produces a massively productive and effective way of conceiving physical reality in which periods of time appear as the lengths of lines and

accelerations as the areas of triangles.   The model of resemblance is of no help in understanding *this* crucial form of appearance. The notion of <u>shared property</u> that would apply would have to be understood in terms of the relations between this sort of mathematized (geometrized) theoretical appearance and the reality it is an appearance of. There is no antecedently available concept of <u>property</u> in terms of which that relationship could be understood.[6]

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

In order to understand how strings of algebraic symbols could be useful, veridical, tractable appearances of geometrical realities (as well as the Copernican and Galilean antecedents of his discoveries), Descartes needed a new way of conceiving the relations between appearance and reality. His philosophical response to the scientific and

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[6]   The idea of couching this story as the transition from a model of *resemblance* to one of *representation* is from the first chapter of my long-time colleague John Haugeland's *Artificial Intelligence*: *The Very Idea* [MIT—Bradford Press, 1989].

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

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

error (*mis*representation), never mind knowledge, is to be possible, then there must be something about which error is *not* possible—something we know about *not* by representing it, so that error in the sense of misrepresentation is not possible. If we can know (or be wrong about) anything representationally, by means of the mediation of representings of it, there must be some representings that we grasp, understand, or know about *immediately*, simply by *having* them.

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

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

representings of them) and how we know at least some representings (immediately, at least, not by being related to representings of them). The result was a two-stage model in which we are immediately related to representings, and in virtue of their relation to representeds stand in a mediated cognitive relation to those represented things. The representings must be understood as intrinsically and immediately intelligible, and the representeds as only intelligible in a derivative, compositional sense: as the result of the product of our immediate relations to representings and their relations to representeds.

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

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

the representational relations and what the cognitive faculties do with and to representings. The latter for Kant yields what the represented things are "for consciousness," in Hegel's terminology: contentful representings.

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

So Kant shares with Descartes the two-stage representational structure, but does not take over the idea that our relation to our own representings is one of immediate awareness.[7] His view still falls within the range of Hegel's criticisms, however, because he maintains the differential intelligibility of representings and representeds. Representings are as

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

such intelligible, and what is represented is, as such, not. I will call this commitment to a "*strong* differential intelligibility of appearance and reality: the claim that the one is the right sort of thing to be intelligible, and the other is not. Kant has a new model of intelligibility: to be intelligible is to have a content articulated by *concepts*. It is the concepts applied in an act of awareness (apperception) that determine what would count as successfully integrating that judgment into a whole exhibiting the distinctive synthetic unity of apperception. But the conceptual articulation of judgments is a form contributed by the cognitive faculty of the understanding. It is not something we can know or assume to characterize what is represented by those conceptual representings, when the representeds are considered apart from their relation to such representings: as they are in themselves. On Hegel's reading, Kant is committed to a gulf of intelligibility separating our representings from what they are representings of, in the form of the view that the representings are in conceptual shape, and what is represented is not.

Just to remind ourselves how much is at stake in Hegel's criticism of two-stage representational theories of the relations between appearance and reality that are committed to the differential intelligibility of the relata, it is worth thinking in this connection also about Frege. For Frege, discursive symbols *express* a sense [*Sinn*] and thereby *designate* a referent [*Bedeutung*]. Senses are what is grasped when one understands the expression, and referents are what is thereby represented: what expressing that sense is talking or thinking *about*. A sense is a representing in that it is a "mode of presentation" [*Art des Gegebenseins*] of a referent. No more than Kant does Frege construe grasp of a sense as immediate in a Cartesian sense—according to which the mere occurrence of something with that sense counts as the mind's knowing or understanding something). Grasping a judgeable content requires mastering the inferential and substitutional relations it stands in to other such contents. But like Descartes and Kant, Frege thinks that grasping senses, understanding representations as representations, does not require representing them in turn, and that representings in the

sense of senses are graspable in a sense in which what they represent is not (apart from the special case of indirect discourse, where what is represented is senses). So if, as I have claimed, Hegel's argument is intended to be directed at two-stage representational models committed to treating representings as intelligible in a sense in which representeds are in general not, then it seems Fregean sense-reference theories, as well as the Kantian and Cartesian versions, will be among the targets.

II.   Genuine Knowledge and Rational Constraint

4.   In order to see whether there is an argument of the sort Hegel is after that tells against theories of this kind—two-stage representational theories committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representings and representeds—we must next think about what criteria of adequacy for such theories Hegel is appealing to.   In general, we know that what Hegel thinks is wrong with them is that they lead to skepticism. Further, he tells us that what he means by this is that such theories preclude knowing things as they are "in themselves." I think what is going on here is that Hegel learned from Kant that the soft underbelly of *epistemological* theories is the *semantics* they implicitly incorporate and depend upon. And he thinks that two-stage representational theories committed to the strong differential intelligibility of representings and what they represent *semantically* preclude genuine knowledge of those representeds. I will call the criterion of adequacy on epistemological theories that Hegel is invoking here the "Genuine Knowledge Condition" (GKC). Obviously, a lot turns on what counts as *genuine* knowledge. But it is clear in any case that this requirement demands that an epistemological theory not be committed to a semantics—in particular, a theory of representation—that when looked at closely turns out to rules out as unintelligible the very possibility of knowing how things really are ("genuine" knowledge).   This is what I take Hegel to mean when he says that epistemological theories of this kind show themselves as surreptitiously expressing a "fear of the truth." I do not take it that the very

existence of a contrast between how we know what is represented and how we know representings by itself demonstrates such a failure. His specific claim is that when that difference is construed as one of intelligibility in the strong sense—representings are intrinsically intelligible and representeds are not—then skepticism about genuine knowledge is a consequence. And he takes from Kant the idea that intelligibility is a matter of *conceptual* articulation: to be intelligible is to be in conceptual shape. If this reading is correct, then Hegel's argument must show that to satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition, an epistemological theory must treat not only appearance (how things subjectively are, for consciousness), but also reality (how things objectively are, in themselves) as conceptually articulated. Again, what could count as a good argument for this claim obviously turns on what is required to satisfy that requirement.

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

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

epistemological theory that does not make both of these intelligible is not adequate to the phenomenon of our efforts to know and understand how things really are.

  Approaching epistemology from this semantic direction suggests that behind these epistemological constraints are deeper semantic ones. I think that is in fact the case here. We cannot read these off of Hegel's extremely telegraphic remarks in the text of the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction*, but must infer them from the solution he ultimately proposes to the challenges he sets out there.   First is what we could (looking over our shoulders at Frege) call the Mode of Presentation Condition (MPC). This is the requirement that appearances (senses, representings) must be essentially, and not just accidentally, appearances *of* some purported realities. One does not count as having grasped an appearing unless one grasps it *as* the appearance of something. When all goes well, grasping the appearance must count as a way of knowing about what it is an appearance of. Appearances must make some reality semantically visible (or otherwise accessible). The claim is not that one ought not to reify appearances, think of them as things, but rather, for instance, adverbially: in terms of being-appeared-to-*p*-ly. That is not a silly thought, but it is not the present point. It is that if the epistemological Genuine Knowledge Condition is to be satisfied by a two-stage, representational model, representings must be semantic presentations of representeds in a robust sense in which what one has grasped is not a representation unless it is grasped as a representation of some represented. Further along we'll see how Hegel, following Kant, understands this requirement: taking or treating something in practice as a representing is taking or treating it as subject to *normative* assessment as to its *correctness*, in a way in which what thereby counts as represented serves as a *standard*.

A second semantic constraint on epistemological theories that I take to be implicitly in play in Hegel's understanding of the epistemological GKC is that if the representational

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

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

reason for or against it. This is the only kind of content they acknowledge. The German Idealists are rationalists about norms, in that norms (rules) are contentful exclusively in the sense of conceptually contentful.

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

5.   Supposing that these four conditions represent the relevant criteria of adequacy for epistemological theories (and their implicit semantics), what is the argument against two-stage representational theories that are committed to a strong difference of intelligibility between representings and representeds (appearance and reality)? Why can't theories of this form satisfy the criteria of adequacy? It is characteristic of two-stage theories, not just Descartes's but also those of Kant and Frege, that they incorporate a distinction between two ways of knowing or understanding things. Some things are known (only) representationally: by being represented. Other things—at least some representings, according to the regress argument—are known nonrepresentationally: in some way other than by being represented. If we are interested in investigating cognitive faculties in the context of theories like this, we are interested in the representation relation. For cognitive faculties are the instrument or medium that

produces representings of the real. But then we must ask: is the representational relation, the relation between representings and what they represent, itself something that is known representationally, or nonrepresentationally? If it is itself something that is knowable or intelligible only by being represented, it seems that we are embarked on a vicious Bradleyan regress. The epistemological enterprise is not intelligible unless we can make sense of the relation between representations of representational relations and that representational relation, and then representations of *that* relation, and so on. Until we have grasped all of that infinite chain of representings of representings of representings…we are not in a position to understand the representational relation, and hence not the "instrument or medium" of representation. Semantic skepticism—skepticism about what it is so much as to *purport* to represent something—must then be the result. This argument is essentially the Cartesian regress-of-representation argument for nonrepresentational knowledge of representings, applied now not just to the representings, but to the relation they stand in to what they represent.

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

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

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

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

III.   A Non-Psychological Conception of the Conceptual

6.   I have been working to find structure beneath what appears on the telegraphic surface of the text of the opening couple of paragraphs of Hegel's *Introduction*.   I claim so far only to have sketched a potentially colorable argument.   Further exploration is required of the reasons for accepting the RCC, which this exposition reveals as the principle load-bearing premise. A key component of that enterprise would be clarifying the concepts of conceptual articulation and conceptual content—what the RCC says must characterize both representing and represented, which commitment to a representational theory with a strong difference of intelligibility denies. It will help to begin on this latter task by looking at what sorts of theories might be thought to be available, once the strong difference of intelligibility of appearance and reality has been denied—that is, once one is

committed to not excavating a gulf of intelligibility between representings and what they represent.

One place to begin is with Frege's proposed definition in "The Thought": "a fact is a thought that is true."[8] Thoughts for Frege are the senses of declarative sentences. They are claims, in the sense of claimable contents, rather than claimings. A fact, he is saying, is not something that *corresponds* to or is *represented* by such a sense. It just *is* such a sense; one that is true. Facts are a subset of claimables, senses, representings, cognitive appearings. Of course, Frege retains the two-stage representational model for the relation between senses and their referents—for thoughts, truth-values. And this matters for what he thinks senses *are*: modes of presentation of referents. But as far as the relations between thoughts and *facts* are concerned, he does not appeal to that model. Again, Wittgenstein says: "When we say, and mean, that such-and-such is the case, we—and our meaning—do not stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: this—is—so."[9] In these cases, the content of what we say, our meaning, *is* the fact. Such an approach is sometimes talked about under the title of an "identity theory of truth."[10] It is sometimes attributed, under that rubric, to John McDowell.[11]

On such an approach, there is no principled gulf of intelligibility between appearance and reality (mind and world), because when all goes well the appearances inherit their content from the realities they are appearances of. Thoughts (in the sense of thinkings) can share

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[8] Gottlob Frege "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry" [*Mind*, New Series, Vol. 65, No. 259. (Jul., 1956), pp. 289-311.]

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

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

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

their content with the true thoughts (in the sense of thinkables) that are the facts they represent. (As indicated above, this is not the way Frege would put things. For him, facts are a kind of representing, not in the first instance of representeds.) Representings are distinct from representeds, so the two-stage representational model is still endorsed. But they are understood as two forms in which one content can be manifested.

What is most striking about views of this stripe is that they are committed to the claim, as McDowell puts it in *Mind and World*, that "the conceptual has no outer boundary." What is thinkable is identified with what is conceptually contentful. But the objective facts, no less than the subjective thinkings and claiming about them, are understood as themselves already in conceptual shape. The early Wittgentein, no less than the later, thought of things this way. "The world is everything that is the case, the totality of facts…." And what is the case can be *said* of it. Facts are essentially, and not just accidentally, things that can be *stated*.[12] Views with these consequences provide a very friendly environment in which to satisfy the Rational Constraint Condition and so (in the context of a suitable Kantian normative understanding of aboutness) the Mode of Presentation Condition on understandings of the relations between cognitive appearances and the realities of which they are appearances.

The defensibility and plausibility of this sort of approach depend principally on the details of the understanding of the (meta-)concept of the <u>conceptual</u> (<u>conceptual contentfulness</u>, <u>conceptual articulation</u>) in terms of which it is explicated.[13] For on some such conceptions, it is extremely implausible and indefensible. For instance, if one's understanding of concepts is ultimately *psychological*, then the idea that thoughts (thinkings, believings) and facts might have the same conceptual content, would seem to

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[12] Ludwig Wittgenstein *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* Proposition 1 ff.
[13] One of the grounds on which McDowell has, with some justice, been criticized is his unwillingness to supply such details for the conception of the <u>conceptual</u> in play in *Mind and World*.

have undesireable consequences. If one thinks that what is in the first instance conceptually contentful is beliefs and thoughts, and that other things, such as visual and auditory sign designs (marks and noises) can count as conceptually contentful only at one remove, by being expressions of beliefs and thoughts, then the claim that the facts those beliefs and thoughts (and derivatively, marks and noises) express (when all goes well) are themselves conceptually contentful threatens to make the existence of those facts (including ones that will never be expressed or represented) objectionably dependent on the existence of thinkings and believings.[14] The same unfortunate sort of implication results from conjoining the RCC version of the MPC with Davidson's claim that "Only a belief can justify a belief." Berkeley claims that the only things we can intelligibly be understood to represent by our thoughts are other thoughts (the thoughts of God). Some of the British Idealists thought that the reality that appeared to us in thought and belief consisted of the thought of the Absolute—and thought they had learned that lesson from Hegel. More recently, Derrida (using de Saussure's conceptually pre-Kantian and pre-Fregean terminology) offers a picture of a world consisting only of signifiers, with the only things available to be signified being further signifiers. At this point, things have clearly gone badly wrong. If Hegel's opening argument has to be filled-in in a way that has *this* sort of idealism as its consequence, we ought to exploit it by *modus tollens*, not *modus ponens*.

7.　　In fact, though, Hegel's idea is that the criteria of adequacy for accounts of the relations between appearance and reality that underlie his argument can be satisfied without untoward consequences in the context of quite a different, wholly *non*psychological conception of <u>conceptual contentfulness</u>. The kind of idealism that requires a "world-thinker" on the objective side, no less than a finite thinker on the subjective side is indeed a *reduction*. But what it should lead us to reject is not the claim that two-stage representational theories must avoid making strong distinctions of

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

intelligibility between representings and representeds (because they cannot then satisfy the RCC and MPC, and so not the GKC and IEC either) but the conception of <u>conceptual articulation</u> (and hence intelligibility) with which they have been conjoined.

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

Synthesizing a normative subject, which must exhibit the synthetic unity distinctive of apperception, is a *rational* process because if one judgment is materially incompatible with another, it serves as a *reason* against endorsing the other, and if one judgment has another as a material inferential consequence, it serves as a reason for endorsing the other. Understanding the activity of judging in terms of synthesis-by-integration into a rational unity of apperception requires that judgeable

contents stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility and consequence. For it is such relations that normatively constrain the apperceptive process of synthesis, determining what counts as a proper or successful fulfilling of the judging subject's integrative task-responsibility or commitment. Concepts, as functions of judgment, determine what counts as a reason for or against their applicability, and what their applicability counts as a reason for or against. Since this is true of *all* concepts, not just formal or logical ones, the incompatibility and inferential consequence relations the concepts determine must in general be understood as *material* (that is having to do with non-logical *content* of the concepts), not just *logical* (having to do with their logical *form*).[15]

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

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

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

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

conceptual content, quite independently of whether any subjective processes of thinking had gone on, were going on, or ever would go on (in this, or any other possible world).

As I am using the term, a "psychological" theory of the conceptual understands concepts as something like mental particulars, or aspects of mental particulars: as essentially features of psychological or intentional states, paradigmatically thinkings and believings. Hegel's non-psychological understanding of the conceptual, as a matter of standing in relations of non-logical incompatibility and consequence allows for psychological and intentional states and episodes to count as conceptually contentful, but does not restrict the applicability of conceptual predicates to such states and episodes. It is important to keep this point firmly in mind when considering his conceptual realism. For the result of conjoining conceptual realism about the objective world with a psychological understanding of the conceptual is a kind of Berkeleyan idealism, according to which objective facts require a world-thinker whose thinkings they are. This is emphatically *not* Hegel's thought (nor is it Frege's, Wittgenstein's, or McDowell's)—although his use of the term 'Weltgeist' (which appears three times in the *Phenomenology*) has misled some (including some of his admirers, such as Royce, and even Bradley) on this point. I say something below about how else we might understand his remarks in the *Preface* about the necessity of "construing Substance also as Subject."

9.   Hegel thinks that underlying this point about the conceptual character of objective reality is a deeper one. For he thinks that the idea of <u>determinateness</u> itself is to be understood in terms of standing in relations of incompatibility and consequence to other things that are determinate in the same sense. He endorses Spinoza's principle "Omnis determinatio est negatio." For something to be determinate is for it to be one way *rather than* another. This thought is incorporated in the twentieth-century concept of

information (due to Shannon[16]), which understands it in terms of the partition each bit establishes between how things are (according to the information) and how they are not. Everyone would I agree, I take it, that if a property does not *contrast* with any properties, if it is not even *different* from any of them, then it is *in*determinate. To know that an object had *such* a property would be to know *nothing* about it. Beginning already in the *Perception* chapter of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel argues that determinateness requires more than mere difference from other things. It requires he calls "exclusive" [ausschließend] difference, and not mere or "indifferent" [gleichgültig] difference. **Square** and **circular** are exclusively different properties, since possession by a plane figure of the one excludes, rules out, or is materially incompatible with possession of the other. **Square** and **green** are merely or indifferently different, in that though they are distinct properties, possession of the one does not preclude possession of the other. An essential part of the determinate content of a property—what makes it the property it is, and not some other one—is the relations of material (non-logical) *modally robust* incompatibility it stands in to other determinate properties (for instance, shapes to other shapes, and colors to other colors). We can make sense of the idea of merely different properties, such as **square** and **green** only in a context in which they come in families of shapes and colors whose members are exclusively different from one another.

An important argument for understanding determinateness Hegel's way, in terms of exclusive difference or material incompatibility (one pursued in the *Perception* chapter), is that it is required to underwrite an essential aspect of the structural difference between the fundamental ontological categories of *object* and *property* (particular and universal). Aristotle had already pointed out a structural asymmetry between these categories. It makes sense to think of each property as coming with a *converse*, in the sense of a property that is exhibited by all and only the objects that do *not* exhibit the index property. **Has a mass greater than 5 grams** is a property that has a converse in

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

this sense. But it does *not* make sense to think of *objects* as coming with converses, in the analogous sense of an object that exhibits all and only the properties that are *not* exhibited by the index object. This is precisely because some of those properties will be incompatible with one another, and so *cannot* be exhibited by a single object.   The number 9 has the properties of being a number, not being prime, being odd, and not being divisible by 5. If it had a converse, that object would have to have the properties of not being a number, being prime, being even, and being divisible by 5. But nothing can have all of *those* properties.

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

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

metaphysics is already enough.) This conception of the <u>conceptual</u> is non-psychological in a very strong sense.

IV.   Alethic Modal and Deontic Normative Material Incompatibility

10.   In this sense, there is no problem seeing both sides of the appearance/reality distinction as conceptually structured.[17] So we are not on that account obliged to excavate a gulf of intelligibility between them. For the same reason, the principal obstacle to satisfying the Rational Constraint Condition, and therefore the Mode of Presentation Condition, is removed. (Though I haven't said anything positive about how they might be satisfied, either.) That means in turn that the *semantic* presuppositions that I have been reading Hegel as taking to make it impossible to satisfy the *epistemological* criteria of adequacy expressed by the Genuine Knowledge Condition and the Intelligibility of Error Condition can also be avoided. Access to all of these desirable consequences is to be opened up by the non-psychological structural understanding of the conceptual in terms of relations of material incompatibility and (so) consequence.

Hegel's term for what I have been calling "material incompatibility" is "determinate negation" [bestimmte Negation].[18] His term for what I have been calling "material consequence" is "mediation" [Vermittlung]—after the role of the middle term in classical syllogistic inference.[19] The first is the more fundamental concept for

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[17]   Already something thought, the **content** is the property of substance; existence [Dasein] has no more to be changed into the form of what is in-itself and implicit [Ansichseins], but only the **implicit**—no longer merely something primitive, nor lying hidden within existence, but already present as a recollection—into the form of what is **explicit,** of what is objective to self [Fursichseins]. [M29]

[18]   For instance, in [M79] of the *Introduction*.
[19]   For instance, in [M91].

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

But are subjective commitments conceptually contentful in the *same sense* that objective facts are—even given Hegel's definition? When we say that **being pure copper** and **being an electrical insulator** are materially incompatible we mean that it is (physically, not logically) *impossible* that one and the same object, at one and the same time, has both properties. But when we say that the *commitments* to a's being pure copper and a's being an electrical insulator are materially incompatible, we do *not* mean that it is *impossible* for one and the same subject, at one and the same time, to undertake both commitments. We mean rather that one *ought* not to do so. That 'ought' has the practical significance that violating it means that one is subject to adverse normative assessment, that any subject with two commitments that are materially incompatible in this sense is obliged to *do* something, to relinquish (or modify) at least one of them, so as to repair the inappropriate situation. But it is entirely *possible* for a subject to find itself

in this inappropriate normative situation. There is a similar disparity on the side of consequences. That **conducting electricity** is objectively a consequence of **being pure copper** then it is *necessary* that any object that has the one property (at a time) has the other (at that time). But if one acknowledges a commitment to some object's being pure copper, it is still *possible* that one not acknowledge commitment to that object's conducting electricity. It is just that one *ought* to.

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

11.   One of the metacommitments for which I claimed Kant's authority is that to be *intelligible* (in a successor-sense to Descartes's) is to be conceptually structured or—what on this broadly structuralist-functionalist account of content amounts to the same

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

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

incompatibility-and-consequence among commitments and alethic modal relations of incompatibility-and-consequence among states of affairs determines how one takes things objectively to be. Practically acquiring and altering one's commitments in accordance with a certain set of deontic norms of incompatibility-and-consequence is taking the objective alethic modal relations articulating the conceptual content of states of affairs to be the isomorphic ones.[20]

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

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

and Q (something expressible explicitly by the use of alethic modal vocabulary).[21] And similarly for consequential relations among commitments.

The Genuine Knowledge Condition is satisfied on this model in the sense that it is not *semantically* precluded by the model that the epistemic commitment to isomorphism of the subjective norms of incompatibility-and-consequence and the objective modal facts which is implicit in the semantic relation between them (according to the model's construal of representation) should hold objectively—at least locally and temporarily.[22] The model also makes sense of the possibility of *error* (it satisfies the Intelligibility of Error Condition). For, following Kant, it construes the representation relation in *normative* terms. In manipulating (acquiring and rejecting) commitments according to a definite set of conceptual norms (deontic relations of incompatibility-and-consequence) one is *committing* oneself to the objective modal facts (alethic relations of incompatibility-and-consequence) being a certain way—as well as to the gound-level empirical determinate facts they articulate being as one takes them to be—the model also says what must be the case for that isomorphism (or homomorphism) relation to fail to hold in fact. Then one has gotten the facts wrong—perhaps including the facts about what concepts articulate the objective world.

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

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[21]   I suppress temporal references here. Note that "simultaneously" is not a sufficient qualification. Rather, the predicates-properties themselves should be thought of as including temporal specifications. For having property P at time t can be incompatible with having property Q at time t': it's raining now is incompatible with the streets being dry in 2 minutes.

[22]   That it can*not* in principle hold globally and permanently is a deep feature of Hegel's understanding of sensuous and matter-of-factual *immediacy*. This point is discussed in Chapters Five and Seven. The *Vernunft* conception of genuine knowledge is not that of *Verstand*.

- To demarcate explicitly the exact range of epistemological theories, epitomized by those of Descartes and Kant, that fall within the target-area of Hegel's criticism;

- To set out clearly the objection that he is making to theories of that kind, in a way that does not make it obviously miss its mark;

- To formulate Hegel's criteria of adequacy for a theory that would not be subject to that objection he is implicitly putting in play;

- To lay out the non-psychological conception of the conceptual that will form the backbone of Hegel's response (even though it is not officially introduced in the *Introduction* itself, but must wait for the opening chapters of *Consciousness*);

- To sketch the general outlines of an epistemological and semantic approach based on that conception of the conceptual;

- To indicate how such an approach might satisfy the criteria of adequacy for a theory that is not subject to Hegel's objection.

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

Hegel on Consciousness

Chapter Two

Representation and the Experience of Error:

A Functionalist Approach to the Distinction between Appearance and Reality

Part One: Strategy

I.   **Introduction**

1.   I began my previous chapter by formulating a central criterion of adequacy for theories of conceptual content that Hegel sees as put in place by the crucial role they play in theories of knowledge. He opens his *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* by insisting that our *semantic* theory must not already doom us to *epistemological* skepticism. Our understanding of discursive contentfulness must at least leave open the possibility that by undertaking conceptually contentful commitments we can (in some cases, when all goes well) come to know how things really are.[23] He then argues that that condition cannot be met by any account that opens up a gulf of intelligibility separating how things subjectively appear to us (how they are "for consciousness") from how they objectively are ("in themselves").

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

Modern epistemological theories since Descartes's have understood knowledge as the product of two factors: the knower's grasp of subjective thoughts, and those thoughts' representational relations to objective things. Knowers' cognitive relations to those represented things are accordingly mediated by representings of them. On pain of an infinite regress, the relations between the knowers and their representings cannot then in general be understood as themselves mediated and representational. At least some of the representings must be grasped immediately, in the sense of nonrepresentationally.

I do not think that Hegel rejects as in principle broken-backed all epistemological theories exhibiting this two-stage representational structure (though some of his rhetoric invites us to think otherwise). Rejecting theories of this form is *not* an essential element—and certainly not *the* essential element—in the metaconceptual revolution from thinking in terms of categories with the structure of *Verstand* to thinking in terms of categories with the structure of *Vernunft*, which he is recommending. Rather, Hegel begins the *Phenomenology* proper with the claim that the two-stage representational epistemological explanatory strategy leads inexorably to skeptical conclusions *if* it is combined with a particular auxiliary hypothesis concerning the difference between representings and representeds—one that is tempting and in many ways natural.[24] This is the idea that only representings (appearances, phenomena) are in conceptual shape, while what is represented by them (reality, noumena) is not. On such a view, cognitive processes must transform or map nonconceptual reality into or onto conceptual presentations, since the representational relations those processes institute relate nonconceptual representeds to conceptual representings. Getting this picture in view is, I take it, the point of Hegel's metaphors of knowing as an "instrument" or a "medium" in the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction*. The culprit, the semantic assumption that threatens to enforce epistemological skepticism by excavating a gulf of intelligibility

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

between thought and the world thought about, is the idea that only what we think, and not the world we think about, is conceptually articulated.

2.   The constructive suggestion Hegel offers as an alternative to this assumption is a radically new, nonpsychological conception of the conceptual. According to this conception, to be conceptually contentful is to stand in relations of material incompatibility ("determinate negation") and material consequence ("mediation") to other such contentful items. I call this a "nonpsychological" conception of the conceptual because it can be detached from consideration of the processes or practices of applying concepts in judgment and intentional action. Objective states of affairs and properties, too, stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, and are accordingly intelligible as already in conceptual shape, quite apart from any relations they might stand in to the cognitive and practical activities of knowing and acting subjects. Indeed, if objective states of affairs and properties did not stand to one another in such relations, they would not be intelligible as so much as *determinate*. We could not then make sense of the idea that there is some definite way the world actually is. For that idea essentially involves the contrast with other ways the world might be (other properties objects might have). And the contrasts in virtue of which states of affairs and properties are determinate must involve modally exclusive differences ("It is impossible for a piece of pure copper to remain solid at temperatures above 1085° C.") as well as mere differences. (**Red** and **square** are different, but compatible properties.)

This nonpsychological conception of the conceptual is not elaborated in the *Introduction* itself. Rather, it is the principal topic of the succeeding chapters on *Consciousness*. I nonetheless discussed it in the previous chapter, because it is important to understand how Hegel proposes to avoid the danger of excavating a gulf of intelligibility separating subjective conceptual representings from objective nonconceptual representeds. It is the

danger of excavating such a gulf in the semantic theory of representation that he sees as potentially fatal to the epistemological enterprise. If the process of knowing must span such a gap, then, Hegel thinks, the possibility of genuine knowledge—knowledge of how things are in themselves, not just how they are "for consciousness"—will be ruled out in principle as unintelligible. Conceptual realism about the objective world, understood in terms of the new, nonpsychological conception of the conceptual, is Hegel's alternative response.

As I read it, the job of the last two-thirds of the *Introduction* is to sketch a way of thinking about representation, once the two-stage representational semantic model has been shorn of the objectionable collateral commitment to understanding representation as relating conceptual representings to nonconceptual representeds. This means showing how to satisfy two of the key criteria of adequacy identified in the previous chapter. The Mode of Presentation Condition (MPC) requires an account of what it is to be, or even to purport to be, a representing *of* some represented: an appearance *of* something. Satisfying this condition is explaining what representation is. Laying out the structure and rationale of Hegel's account of representational purport and success will also shed light on the second *desideratum*. The Rational Constraint Condition (RCC) requires that we explain how what knowing subjects ("consciousness") is talking or thinking *about* (what is represented) can provide *reasons* for what they say or think about it.[25] Explaining the account of representation Hegel sketches in the *Introduction*, and how it proposes to satisfy these conditions, is the task of this chapter.

II.   **Two Dimensions of Intentionality and Two Orders of Explanation**

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

3.   Our ordinary, presystematic, nontheoretical thought and talk about thinking and talking distinguishes between what we are thinking or saying, on the one hand, and what we are thinking or talking *about*, on the other. We may accordingly say that intentionality, the contentfulness of thought and talk, has two dimensions: what we express when we say or think something, and what we represent in doing so.[26] We can say both "Kant came to believe *that* Lampl was betraying him," and "Kant believed *of* his faithful servant that he was betraying Kant." In the first, the declarative sentence that follows the 'that' expresses the content of the belief, and in the second, the noun-phrase within the scope of the 'of' says what the belief is about.

What I have called "Hegel's nonpsychological conception of the conceptual," which construes conceptual contentfulness as consisting in standing in relations of material incompatibility and consequence, is a model of what one says or thinks: the first dimension of intentionality or contentfulness ('that'-intentionality). For that reason, I will call this the "conceptual dimension" of intentional contentfulness.[27] The question on the table now is how he understands the other, representational dimension ('of'-intentionality).

The empiricists pursued an order of explanation that begins with representational contentfulness and seeks, in effect, to understand and explain conceptual contentfulness more generally in terms of it. One potential advantage of such an approach is that

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

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

representation shows up as a genus, of which *conceptual* representation is only one species. As I understand him, Hegel pursues a complementary order of explanation. The project he outlines in the *Introduction* is to explain the notion of <u>representation</u> in terms of his nonpsychological concept of <u>conceptual contentfulness.</u> In what follows, I want to explain how I understand his strategy for pursuing this *conceptualist* order of explanation. For one of the principal lessons I think we ought to learn from Hegel concerns his working out of an alternative to the *representationalist* order of explanation of the two dimensions of intentionality, which has dominated the philosophical semantics of the philosophical tradition of the past century that we inherit, as much as it did the (somewhat shorter) philosophical tradition he inherited.[28]

III.   **Two Kantian Ideas**

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

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

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

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

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

- One's *critical* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to reject commitments that are materially *incompatible* with other commitments one has acknowledged.

- One's *ampliative* integrative-synthetic task responsibility is to acknowledge commitments that are material consequences of other commitments one has acknowledged.

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

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

III.   Hegel's Functionalist Idea

5.   Hegel sees that this account of the *activity* of judging has immediate consequences for the understanding of the *contents* judged: for what one has taken responsibility for, committed oneself to, in judging that *p*. The *rational* articulation of the normative synthetic-integrative task-responsibility Kant identifies as the kind of

endorsement distinctive of judging means that we can understand judgeable contents in terms of what we are *doing* in judging. For those contents must determine the rational relations such judgeable contents stand in to one another: what is a reason for and against what. The critical integrative-synthetic task-responsibility requires that judgeable contents stand to one another in relations of material *incompatibility*. The ampliative and justificatory integrative-synthetic task responsibilities require that judgeable contents stand to one another in relations of material *consequence*. And that is to say that judgeable contents must have *conceptual* content, in just the sense Hegel himself endorses. That concept of the conceptual is already implicit in Kant's account of judging.

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

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

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

In Kant's terms, the objective form of judgment is the "object=X" which every judgment as such is responsible to (for its correctness). (The subjective form of judgment, the "I think" which can accompany every judging, marks the knower who is responsible for the judgment—that is, responsible for integrating it with the others for which that knower takes the same kind of responsibility.) In the form in which this thought appears in Hegel's *Introduction*, represented objects are what serves as a normative *standard* [Maβstab] for assessments of commitments that count as representing those objects just in virtue of that constellation of authority and responsibility. Hegel's idea is to apply the functionalist explanatory strategy, which looked to normative role in the synthetic-integrative activity of judging for understanding the conceptual dimension of judgeable contents, also to the understanding of the representational dimension of content. That is, he will look to what knowing subjects need to *do* in order thereby to

count as acknowledging the authority of something to serve as a standard for assessing the correctness of a judgment, in order to understand representational relations. If he can exhibit that kind of doing as an aspect of the synthetic-integrative activity in terms of which the conceptual dimension of content is explained, he will have carried out the conceptualist explanatory strategy of understanding the representational dimension of intentionality in terms of the expressive-conceptual dimension ('of'-intentionality in terms of 'that'-intentionality).

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

1. The starting-point is Kant's *normative* conception of judgment, which sees judging as endorsing, committing oneself to, taking responsibility for some judgeable content.

2. This idea is made more definite by the Kantian account of judging as integrating a new commitment into a constellation of prior commitments, so as to maintain the rational normative unity distinctive of apperception.

3. That idea in turn is filled in by understanding the synthetic-integrative activity as having the tripartite substructure of satisfying critical, ampliative, and justificatory task-responsibilities.

4. To this idea is conjoined the *functionalist* strategy of understanding judgeable contents as articulated by the relations they must stand in in order to play their role in that activity, as what one is endorsing, committing oneself to, or taking responsibility for.

5. In light of the tripartite substructure of synthesizing a constellation of commitments exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception (intentionality), this thought yields a conception of judgeable contents as articulated by rational relations of material incompatibility (appealed to by the critical task-responsibility) and material consequence (appealed to by the ampliative and justificatory task-responsibilities). The result is Hegel's conception of conceptual contentfulness in terms of determinate negation and mediation (which he will develop and motivate in more detail in the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*).

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

6. Alongside Kant's normative conception of judgment, a normative conception of representation is discerned. A judgment counts as representing some represented object insofar as it is responsible to that object for its correctness, insofar as that object exercises authority over or serves as a standard for assessments of its correctness.

7. The strategy is then to apply the functionalist idea again, to understand representational content in terms of what is required to serve as a normative standard for assessments of the correctness of judgments, as an aspect of the synthetic process of integrating those commitments into constellations of antecedent commitments exhibiting the rational unity distinctive of apperception.

Part Two: Implementation

IV.   **The Mode of Presentation Condition**

7.   The task of making sense of the representational dimension of intentionality according to the conceptualist strategy is explaining what it is for some judgeable conceptual content, articulated by its relations of material incompatibility and consequence to other such contents, to function as representing some worldly state of affairs. Saying what role in the synthetic-integrative process of judging a judgeable content must play in order to count as purporting to represent something is then satisfying what in the previous chapter I called the "mode of presentation" condition (MPC). For it is saying what it is to be or purport to be a mode of presentation of something else: a representing of that represented. Hegel's preferred way of talking about what I have called "representings" is "what things are *for* consciousness." What things are for consciousness purports to be the appearance of a reality: what things are *in* themselves. Satisfying the MPC is saying what it is for something to show up as an appearance *of* something. We can also talk about the representing/represented, appearance/reality, what things are *for* consciousness/what things are *in* themselves distinction in terms of the Kantian phenomena/noumena distinction.

The question Hegel is asking is: What is it for something to be something *for* consciousness? This is asking the deepest and most important question about the

representational dimension of intentionality. Hegel is not at all presupposing the notion of things being something *for* consciousness. It is not one of his primitives. Rather, he offers a functionalist account of representational purport and representational content that is modeled on, embedded in, and a development of the functionalist account of propositional content in terms of the activity of judging that he sees as implicit in Kant's way of proceeding. There Hegel answers the question that would later be put as that of specifying the distinctive "unity of the proposition" holistically, in terms of standing to other such judgeable contents in relations of material incompatibility and material consequence. Those relations show up as *rational* relations because they articulate what judgments serve as reasons for and against what others. That "unity of the proposition" is understood functionally, in terms of the synthetic unity of a constellation of commitments that is characteristic of apperception: the dynamic unity that is created and sustained by integrating new commitments with old ones subject to the triadic systematic critical, ampliative, and justificatory task-responsibilities. That the unity of propositional *content* can be so understood in terms of the unity that defines the rational norms that must govern what one *does* in order for such doings to count as judgings having contents exhibiting the unity characteristic of the propositional is what it means to say that, in the end "there is only one unity": ultimately, the synthetic unity of apperception.[29]

We have seen that the first piece of the puzzle is the idea that for something to be something *for* consciousness is to be understood in normative terms of the distinctive kind of *authority* it exercises over assessments of the *correctness* of the judgments consciousness consists in. Judgments must be *responsible to* what is represented, for their correctness, for them to be intelligible as representing it, being about it, being an appearance of it. As Hegel puts the point, what is represented must serve as a normative *standard* for judgings. The next question is how this thought can be operationalized in a

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[29] "The same function which gives unity to the various representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of representations in an intuition." [A79, B104].

functionalist spirit—that is, understood in terms of what one must *do* to count as acknowledging that authority, the responsibility of what things are *for* consciousness, which is to say judgments, to what things are *in* themselves. Consciousness itself must take its judgments to be representations *of* some reality—that is, to point beyond themselves to something that they answer to for their correctness. Otherwise it would not be taking it that in judging a consciousness is taking a stand on how things are in themselves. Its judgments would not be how things really are *for* consciousness.

What we must understand, then, is the sense in which, as Hegel says, which "consciousness provides itself with its own standard," how "in what consciousness within its own self designates as the *in-itself* or the true, we have the standard by which consciousness itself proposes to measure its knowledge."[30] How is it that: "the difference between the in-itself and the for-itself is already present in the very fact that consciousness knows an object at all. Something is *to it* the in-itself, but the knowledge or the being of the object for consciousness is *to it* still another moment."[31] The distinction between what things are *in* themselves and what they are *for* consciousness must itself be something *to* consciousness. This passage marks an absolutely crucial (if seldom acknowledged) distinction: between things being something *for* consciousness and things being something *to* consciousness. It is easy to miss this distinction, because unlike the phrases "*for* consciousness" ("für Bewußtsein") "*in* themselves" ("an sich"), "*to* consciousness" is expressed without an explicit preposition, in the dative (and anaphoric) construction "ihm."[32]

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

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[30]   M§84.

[31]   M§85.

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

something is *for* consciousness is the content of a judgment: something that is *explicit*. Judgeable contents are explicit in the sense of being thinkable and statable in declarative sentences (or 'that'-clauses). They are *propositional* contents. As we have seen, Hegel understands such contents in terms of the relations of material incompatibility and (hence) material consequence they stand in to one another. And he understands those relations in turn in terms of the role judgeable contents play in the rational synthetic process of integration and rectification of commitments so as to maintain the unity characteristic of apperception. By contrast, what things are *to* consciousness is a functional matter of how they are *implicitly* taken or practically treated by consciousness. In what it *does*, consciousness practically distinguishes between what things are *for* it and what they are *in* themselves: between appearance and reality. Consciousness, he says, *is* their comparison.[33] We must understand how what consciousness *does* that is essential to its being intelligible *as* consciousness can be understood as practically acknowledging this distinction. This will be understanding how "consciousness is, on the one hand, consciousness of the object, and on the other, consciousness of itself; consciousness of what to it is the True, and consciousness of its knowledge of the truth."[34] What consciousness as such *does* is judge: engage in the synthetic-integrative activity that creates and maintains the synthetic unity of apperception. So the distinction between appearance and reality, what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves, representings and representeds, must be intelligible in terms of functional roles with respect to that activity. What Hegel calls "natural consciousness" itself does not need to have these metaconceptual concepts, does not need to be able to apply them explicitly in judgments.[35] But we who are thinking about its activity must be able to attribute to it a grasp of what these concepts make explicit, a grasp that is implicit in what consciousness does.

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[33] M§85.
[34] M§85.
[35] In M§77-78.

The normative construal of representation teaches us that the role something must play in practice in order to be functioning as a reality that is represented by or appearing in a judgment is that of a normative *standard* for the assessment of its correctness.[36] What in the previous chapter I called the "rational constraint condition" tells us that what serves as a *standard of assessment* of judgeable contents must be able to serve as a *reason* for the assessment. This is to say that it must, at least in principle, be available *to* consciousness *as* a reason. To be serviceable as a reason, what plays the role of a standard of assessment must be in conceptual shape; it must stand to representings and representables in relations of material incompatibility and consequence. That is what is required for it to be able to serve as a reason for or against judgments, a standard with respect to which they can be assessed as correct or incorrect.

V.   **The Experience of Error**

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

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[36] The assessment in question is Hegel's 'Prüfung', in M§85.

Consider an example. A naïve subject looks at a stick half-submerged in the water of a pond and perceptually acquires a belief that the stick is bent. Upon pulling it out, she acquires the belief that it is straight. Throughout she has believed that it is rigid, and that removing it from the water won't change its shape. These judgments are jointly incompatible. Acknowledging that is acknowledging that a mistake has been made. Those acknowledgements are acknowledgements of the practical responsibility to restore compatibility to one's commitments (the critical task-responsibility). What one must do is reject or modify at least one of the commitments in the offending constellation. Suppose our subject gives up the belief that the stick is bent, keeping the belief that it is straight (as well as the other collateral commitments). Our subject might have made the choice she did concerning what to retain and what to reject in the light of her belief that she is much more experienced and reliable at visually judging shapes looked at through air or water than through both.

Notice first that in treating the two shape-commitments as materially incompatible (in the context of the collateral commitments to rigidity and shape-constancy), the subject is implicitly treating them as having a common subject: as being *about* one and the same object. For commitments to stick A being bent and to stick B being straight are *not* incompatible. It is only if it is the *same* stick to which one is attributing those incompatible properties that the resulting judgeable contents are incompatible with one another. (Hegel discusses this issue at some length in the *Perception* chapter of the *Phenomenology*.) Taking two commitments to be incompatible (by acknowledging in practice the obligation to revise at least one of them) is treating them as being about one object, and to be attributing incompatible properties to *it*. In other words, it is treating them as representings of a common represented. Practically acknowledging the incompatibility of two commitments involves a kind of representational *triangulation*. It is implicitly treating them as sharing a topic, as being about the same thing. To say that

this acknowledgment of common representational purport is *implicit* is to say that the representational purport is acknowledged in what the subject *does*, rather than explicitly, as the propositional content of a judgment—a judgment to the effect that these different senses (conceptual contents, articulated by their relations of material incompatibility and consequence) pick out the same referent. That is, it is a matter of what these commitments are *to* consciousness, not what they are *for* consciousness. (The stick is both bent and straight *for* consciousness, but the incompatibility of those commitments is in this simplest case only something *to* consciousness.)

10.   This is a point about the first stage of the process that is the experience of error: *acknowledgment* of the material incompatibility of some commitments the subject has made. At this stage, the incompatible commitments are all on a level. No invidious assessments of their relative authority (credibility) have yet been made. What I have said so far is that even at this stage, we can understand an acknowledgment of the joint representational purport of two commitments as being implicit in the practical acknowledgment of their material incompatibility.[37] This purely formal dimension of practical representational purport is complemented by another, richer dimension that emerges only at the next stage of the experience of error. For acknowledgment of incompatibility (that is, of the presence of some error or other among the commitments being taken to be mutually incompatible) is to be followed by revising at least some of those commitments. The second, *rectification*, stage of the experience of error consists in doing what at the first stage one acknowledged one's practical obligation to do: repair the acknowledged incompatibility by revising or rejecting some of the offending commitments.

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

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

Furthermore, the triangulation point ensures that the rejected bent-stick judgment is practically construed not just as an appearance, but as an appearance *of* the reality presented by the retained commitment: What appeared as bent (the stick) has been revealed as really straight. In the experience of error, both the straight-stick and the bent-stick commitments are practically taken or treated as *modes of presentation* of a reality (the stick), one veridical and one misrepresenting it. Both of these stages of the process that is the experience of error, the acknowledgment of incompatibility and its rectification, contribute to the satisfaction of the mode of presentation condition on a construal of intentional content. For the way judgments function, the roles they play, in these phases of the experience of error show what it is one must *do* in order thereby to count as acknowledging in practice the representational dimension of conceptual content: what it is to take or treat judgments as representings or appearances of how some represented thing really is.

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

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

In proceeding this way, the subject in practice takes or treats the bent-stick belief as expressing just what things are for consciousness, and the straight-stick belief as expressing what things are in themselves. These statuses, in turn, are what the beliefs are *to* consciousness, or implicitly. For the subject of the experience of error need not explicitly deploy concepts of <u>reality</u> and <u>appearance</u>, <u>represented</u> and <u>representing</u>, <u>what things are *in* themselves</u> and <u>what things are *for* consciousness</u>, <u>noumena</u> and <u>phenomena</u>, in order for what it does in retaining one of the (contextually) materially incompatible dyad of commitments and rejecting the other to be intelligible as practically taking or treating one as presenting how things really are and the other as presenting a mere appearance. One is *to* consciousness what the stick is in itself (straight), and the other is *to* consciousness what the stick is (was) merely *for* consciousness.[38] This is what Hegel means when he says that "consciousness provides itself with its own standard," how "in what consciousness within its own self designates as the *in-itself* or the true, we have the standard by which consciousness itself proposes to measure its knowledge."[39]

VI.   **The Two Sides of Conceptual Content are Representationally Related**

11.   On Hegel's model the conceptual content shared by representing and represented, appearance and reality, phenomenon and noumenon, commitment and fact is abstracted from the two different forms that relations of material incompatibility and consequence can take: the subjective form made explicit by deontic normative vocabulary and the objective form made explicit by alethic modal vocabulary. Conceptual content is

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

essentially, and not just accidentally, what can take these two forms. The central

metaphysical concept that incorporates and expresses this point is <u>determinate negation</u>.

It articulates the sense in which anything (thoughts, facts, properties, conceptual contents)

can be *determinate*: by strongly contrasting with, precluding, excluding, other

determinates (Spinoza: "Omnis determinatio est negatio."). On the objective side, that

means that how things are is essentially also a matter of the structure of its alethic modal

relations to what it makes impossible and what it makes necessary. On the subjective

side, it means that commitments can be understood as determinate only in the context of

the functional role they play in the *process* of acquiring and revising commitments. For it

is that process that is governed by the deontic normative relations of incompatibility and

consequence that articulate the conceptual content of those commitments. One of the

things that has always been hard to understand about Hegel's conception of (determinate)

negation, and (so) his conception of concepts and their contents, is his connection of

these traditional logical notions with *dynamic* categories, of movement, process, and

restlessness.[40] What lies behind it is this connection between incompatibility in the

normative sense and the process of commitment acquisition and revision.

Hegel regards the subjective articulation of the conceptual content of

commitments by deontic normative relations of material

incompatibility-and-consequence and the objective articulation of the conceptual content

of commitments by alethic modal relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence

as two sides of one coin, two aspects of one conception. His substantive claim is that his

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[40] In the *Phenomenology*, this is a theme emphasized in the *Preface*, in partial explanation of why
"everything hangs on apprehending and expressing the truth not merely as *substance* but also equally as
subject." [M17] Subjects are the ones who must respond to the normative demands implicit in applying a
concept whose content is articulated by the relations of determinate negation (material incompatibility) and
mediation (inferential consequence) it stands in to other such contents. That they must respond by *doing*
something, *changing* their further commitments (rejecting some and accepting others) is the context in which
we must understand his talk of the "movement of the Begriff" [M34]. This is what he is talking about when
he refers to "…the self-moving concept which takes its determinations back into itself. Within this movement,
the motionless subject itself breaks down; it enters into the distinctions and the content and constitutes the
determinateness, which is to say, the distinguished content as well as the content's movement, instead of
continuing simply to confront that movement. [M60] It is why: "Determinate thoughts have the 'I', the power
of the negative, or pure actuality, for the substance and element of their existence…" [M33]

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

12.   How are we to understand the conception of conceptual content (articulated by relations of determinate negation and mediation) as *amphibious* between its two forms: subjective-normative and objective-modal? I think it should be understood in terms of two claims. First, deontic normative vocabulary is a *pragmatic metavocabulary* for alethic modal vocabulary. Second, as a consequence, there is a kind of *sense-dependence* relation between these vocabularies. On the first point, deontic normative vocabulary lets one *say* what one must *do* in order thereby to be *saying* what alethic modal vocabulary let's one say.[41] For what one must do in order to count as grasping the contents expressed by alethic modal vocabulary—by the claims that it is *impossible* that both *p* and *q*, that if *p* then *necessarily r* (which Hegel claims have the expressive function of making explicit the relations in virtue of which *p*, *q*, and *r* have the conceptual contents they do)—is in practice take or treat *commitments* to *p* and *q* as *normatively* incompatible (so one cannot be *entitled* to both) and commitment to *p* as normatively *entailing* commitment to *r* (so if one is committed to the first, one counts as thereby committed to

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

the second). It is only by knowing how to accord with the norms expressed in the deontic vocabulary that one can count as able to understand and apply modal vocabulary. Treating one's commitments as standing in these normative relations to one another *is* understanding them as commitments concerning what is objectively impossible and necessary—that is, as appearances *of* a reality articulated by such alethic modal relations. As we have seen, engaging in the experience of error, governed by practical norms that respect deontic relations of incompatibility, is what taking or treating one's commitments as appearances (representings) of some (represented) reality consists in.

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

That distinction can be made clear by an example that has nothing to do with normativity or modality. Regardless of whether or not this would be a good way to think about the concept of beauty, we can define a *response-dependent* concept beauty* by stipulating

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

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

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

The sort of model that Hegel constructs to contrast with two-stage representational models committed to a strong difference of intelligibility between representings and representeds depends on an account of conceptual contentfulness committed to the amphibiousness of conceptual content between a subjective form articulated by deontic normative relations of incompatibility-and-consequence and an objective form articulated by alethic modal relations of incompatibility-and-consequence. The relation of correspondence between them is that of a pragmatic metavocabulary inducing a kind of practical sense-dependence. According to this approach, modal realism entails conceptual realism, which entails objective idealism. In his *Introduction*, Hegel is introducing us not just to his book, but also to the metaconceptual categorical framework he elsewhere calls "Vernunft," by contrast to the traditional modern metaconceptual categorical framework that reached its most explicit and revealing form in Kant, which he calls "Verstand." Thinking in the *Vernunft* way involves saying things that are strange indeed from the standpoint of the traditional framework of *Verstand*. These are such claims as that since there is some determinate way the world objectively is, it, no less than thought about it, comes in conceptual (hence intelligible) form, and would do even if there never had been concept-applying subjects. Accordingly, thought and being, representing and represented (subject and substance, in the idiom of the *Preface*) are essentially paired forms that conceptual content can take. The concept of <u>negation</u>

(incompatibility) in terms of which we should understand determinateness (whether of subjective thought or of objective fact) essentially involves a principle of *motion*, of *change,* of active, practical *doing*—as odd as this seems from the point of view of the logical tradition indigenous to *Verstand*. Subjective practices and processes specifiable in deontic normative vocabulary and objective relations and facts specifiable in alethic modal vocabulary are two complementary aspects or dimensions of whatever is determinate, and hence intelligible. (We are now in a position to see these as claims about practical sense-dependence relations, consequent upon the pragmatic metavocabulary relation between normative and modal vocabularies.) Hegel's aim in the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* is to convince us that if the epistemological possibility of genuine knowledge and so much as the intelligibility of error are not be semantically ruled out of court at the outset, we must broaden the range of models of the possible relations between appearance and reality so as to encompass not only the familiar *Verstand* semantic paradigm, but also the new, unfamiliar *Vernunft* one—in spite of the initially strange and unpalatable consequences it embraces.

VII.   **Conclusion**

13.   I ended Chapter One with a discussion of the two forms conceptual content can be seen to take, once we adopt Hegel's non-psychological conception of it (as articulated by relations of material incompatibility and consequence): subjective and objective. It is this conception that is to make it possible for us to avoid excavating a gulf of intelligibility between knower and known, appearance and reality, in our semantics, which then must lead to skepticism in our epistemology. We are now in a position to understand the relation between propositional commitments (judgments, beliefs) articulated by normative deontic relations of incompatibility, on the subjective side of certainty, what things are for consciousness, and facts and possible states of affairs, articulated by alethic

modal relations of incompatibility, on the objective side of truth, what things are in themselves, as itself a *representational* one: a matter of representings and representeds. We can see how our commitments are intelligible as *appearances of* an objective reality. That intelligibility is *functionalist*, and *pragmatist*. Now we know what we must *do* in order thereby implicitly to be practically taking or treating our commitments *as* appearances *of* a reality—so that the distinction between what things are *for* consciousness and what they are *in* themselves is something *to* consciousness.

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

What in Chapter One I called the "Rational Constraint" condition is the requirement that what is represented be intelligible as providing *reasons* for assessments of the *correctness*

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

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

Hegel on Consciousness

Chapter Three

Following the Path of Despair to a Bacchanalian Revel:

The Emergence of the Second, True, Object

    I.   **Introduction**

1.   Hegel opens the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* by considering an epistemological picture according to which our cognitive faculties are regarded as "the instrument with which one takes hold of the absolute or as the medium through which one discovers it."[42] Philosophers otherwise as diverse as Descartes, Locke, and Kant can be seen to work with versions of such a picture. It seems clear that Hegel thinks we need to break out of the confines of this "natural" way of thinking about knowledge. In Chapter One, I tried to say why, and to indicate in general terms the shape of the new picture he will recommend to succeed this traditional one.

The broadest form of his objection is that theories of the kind he is complaining about make us patsies for skepticism. More specifically, he thinks traditional modern

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[42] [M73]

epistemology is conducted within the scope of semantic assumptions that make it impossible in the end to satisfy what I called the "Genuine Knowledge Condition." This is the requirement that an epistemological theory not make it unintelligible that, at least when all goes well, how things *appear* to us is how they *really* are—in his terms, that how things are *for consciousness* can be how they are *in themselves*. I argued that the crucial feature of the class of theories he takes to fail this requirement (by precluding the intelligibility of genuine knowledge) is not that they construe the relation between appearance and reality ("certainty" and "truth", "knowledge" and "the absolute") in representational terms. It is that they take the termini of the relation to be characterized by a structural difference: representing appearances are construed as *conceptually articulated*, while represented realities are not. Theories with this shape excavate a gulf of intelligibility separating knowing from the known, mind from world.[43]

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

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[43] This is how I understood his claim that such theories presuppose "the notion that there is a *difference between ourselves and this knowledge*" in the sense that "the absolute *stands on one side* and that *knowledge.. is on the other side,* for itself and separated from the absolute…Hence it assumes that knowledge…is outside the absolute and therewith outside the truth as well." [M74]. In the context of such an assumption, it is a contradiction to treat knowledge as nonetheless genuinely possible.

This is the problem with the idea of "getting the truth in its purity simply by subtracting from the result the instrument's part in that representation of the absolute which we have gained through it."[44] The result of "subtracting" its conceptual form from our understanding would be something unintelligible. We cannot understand the relation between what is intelligible and what is not intelligible, for the simple reason that we cannot understand what is not intelligible. A picture of this sort cannot satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition.

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

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

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[44] [73].

red. (In the *Perception* chapter, Hegel uses a thought of Aristotle's to show how the

notion of exclusive difference can be used to make sense of states of affairs as having the

internal structure of objects-with-properties.)

This way of understanding the metaphysics of determinateness is by no means

idiosyncratic to Hegel. Besides its Spinozist (and, indeed, Scholastic) antecedents, it is

the master idea behind contemporary information theory, which understands the

information conveyed by a signal in terms of the possibilities its receipt excludes for its

recipient. And it can be understood as another way of expressing the understanding of a

proposition as a partition of possible worlds into those compatible and those incompatible

with its truth. But what warrant is there for thinking of this metaphysical conception of

determinateness in terms of material incompatibility as a conception of the *conceptual*?

Justifying that identification requires giving an account of two defining characteristics of

the conceptual. First, one must show how to justify in its terms the Kantian identification

of *intelligibility* in terms of conceptual form, by saying what it is to *grasp* or *understand*

something that is in conceptual form in this sense of "conceptual form." Second, one

must show how what is conceptually contentful in this sense also exhibits

representational purport. These correspond to the two dimensions of intentionality I

distinguished last time: 'that'-intentionality and 'of'-intentionality, what one can think or

say, and what one would thereby be thinking or talking *about*.

Chapter Two addressed exactly these two issues. Starting with the notion of conceptual

contents as articulated by the relations of material incompatibility they stand in to other

such contents, it showed both what one must *do* in order thereby to count as *cognitively*

grasping such contents, and how doing that amounts to practically acknowledging the

representational purport of those contents. Grasping or understanding a conceptual

content is engaging in the process of *experience*. This is Hegel's successor-conception of

Kantian apperception. For Kant, what one must do in order to apperceive (to be

cognitively aware) is judge. Judging, in turn, is understood as rationally integrating a

commitment into a developing whole exhibiting the distinctive synthetic unity

characteristic of apperception. That unity is a rational unity, with critical, ampliative, and

justificatory dimensions, corresponding to the normative obligation to extrude materially

incompatible commitments, acknowledge material consequences, and assess justificatory

credentials. The contents commitments must possess in order to be subject to these

rational normative obligations must, accordingly, stand in relations of material

incompatibility and consequence to other such contents. Grasping or understanding such

a content is practically being able to distinguish what is materially incompatible with it

(what it conceptually excludes), what is a material consequence of it (what it

conceptually includes), and what it is a material consequence of (what conceptually

includes it). That is just to say that it is necessary and sufficient to be graspable in this

sense—to be apperceivable—that the contents be determinate, in the sense of standing to

one another in relations of determinate negation and (so) mediation. What is determinate

in this sense is in conceptual form.

In the *Introduction*, Hegel focuses on one dimension of the process of apperceptive

experience: the experience of *error*. This sort of experience is occasioned by finding

oneself with materially incompatible commitments. Practically acknowledging the error

is exercising one's critical task-responsibility to repair it, removing the incompatibility by

relinquishing or modifying at least one of the jointly incompatible commitments. In the

previous chapter I explained how it is in the experience of error that *representational*

purport is practically taken up—that is, that determinate (hence conceptually contentful)

commitments are taken or treated *as* representations, as appearances *of* some reality.

Incompatible commitments must have a common topic. For if two (or more) properties

are incompatible, what is impossible is that they should be exhibited by one and the same object (at the same time). If one attributes incompatible properties to two different objects, one has not yet made a mistake. To take it that one *has* made a mistake, that the commitments *are* incompatible, *is* to take them to refer to or represent one and the same object.

In the second phase of the experience of error, a subject responds to the acknowledgment of error by fulfilling the critical task-responsibility of repairing the incoherence, by amending or discarding one of the commitments. Doing that is treating the amended or discarded commitment *as* a mere appearance, and the retained and resulting commitments as expressing how things really are. In this way, through the experience of error, the distinction between what things are *in themselves* (reality) and what things are merely *for consciousness* (appearance) becomes something *to* consciousness itself. That distinction is practically implicit in the process that is the experience of error. This is how consciousness incorporates as a basic aspect of the structure of its functioning a practical appreciation of its determinate subjective commitments as purporting to represent how things really, objectively are. It treats its commitments as *about* things in the sense of answering to how things are in themselves for the correctness of how things are for it.

3.   So Hegel's Spinozist concept of <u>determinateness</u>, in terms of articulation by relations of modally robust exclusion, material incompatibility, or determinate negation, meets the principal requirements for a meta-concept of <u>conceptual contentfulness</u>. It makes sense of what it is to *grasp* a conceptual content, and of what it is for such contents to have a *representational* dimension. Furthermore, the ways these two criteria of adequacy are satisfied are deeply connected. In the context of Hegel's structural critique of traditional modern epistemology, the key explanatory virtue of this non-psychological conception of the conceptual is that it applies not only to subjective

thoughts, but also to objective facts. For both are determinate—there are determinate ways consciousness takes things to be and there are determinate ways things are—in virtue of standing in relations of material incompatibility to other ways one could take things to be or things could be. But the subjective and objective senses of "material incompatibility" are not the same. If two states of affairs are materially incompatible, then it is *impossible* for both to obtain. (If two objective properties are materially incompatible, then it is impossible for one and the same object simultaneously to exhibit both.) But if two thoughts or judgments are materially incompatible, it does not follow that it is impossible for one subject to be simultaneously committed to both. It only follows that the subject *ought not* to be, that such a subject is *obliged* to *do* something to *change* the situation: to fulfill the standing critical task-responsibility to rectify the situation by eliminating the incoherence. On the side of objects, incompatibility of properties is an alethic modal matter of impossibility; on the side of subjects, incompatibility of commitments is a deontic normative matter of impropriety.

But the notion of material incompatibility or determinate negation that comes in these two flavors is not simply ambiguous. For what one must *do*, in order thereby to count as practically *taking* or *treating* two objective properties or states of affairs *as* objectively incompatible is precisely treat the corresponding commitments as normatively incompatible—in the sense that finding oneself with both obliges one to *change* one's commitment, in acknowledgment of an *error*. Treating two commitments as incompatible in the deontic normative sense *is* representing two properties or states of affairs as incompatible in the alethic modal sense. What one must do in order to manifest practically one's grasp or *understanding* of conceptual contents is suitably engage with them in the practice or process of experience, especially the experience of error, by fulfilling one's obligation to resolve acknowledged incompatibilities. Doing that is treating incompatible commitments as *representing* incompatible states of affairs.

The relation between the sense of "materially incompatible" that is articulated by deontic normative relations of what one is obliged or entitled to do, on the subjective side of representings (what things are for consciousness), and the sense that is articulated by alethic modal relations of what is necessary and possible, on the objective side of representeds (what things are in themselves) is one of reciprocal sense-dependence. It is not that there cannot be objective properties and states of affairs standing in relations of modal incompatibility to one another unless there are representings of them. It is that one cannot *understand* what one is saying or thinking in saying or thinking that they stand in such relations, except as part of a story that includes what subjects who *represent* them as so standing, by practically acknowledging their normative obligation to do something to repair the situation when they find themselves with commitments to objects having incompatible properties, or to incompatible states of affairs more generally. And one cannot understand the nature of the obligation to alter one's conceptual commitments when they turn out to be incompatible unless one understands them *as* representing objectively incompatible situations. This relation of reciprocal sense-dependence is responsible for the Janus-faced character of Hegel's metaconcept of <u>determinate negation</u>. On the one hand, it characterizes the alethic modal *relations* that (as Kant taught) structure the objective world. On the other hand, it characterizes the norm-governed subjective *process* or practice that is experience—which is always, *inter alia*, the experience of error. In this latter aspect, it is not a matter of static relations, but a dynamic principle of movement, change, and development.[45]

That one cannot understand the most fundamental structure of the objective world apart from understanding what one must *do* to represent things as being so is an essential element of Hegel's idealism. One can put the point by saying that objective substances,

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[45] The pure movement of this alienation, considered in connection with the content, constitutes the necessity of the content. The distinct content, as determinate, is in relation, is not 'in itself'; it is its own restless process of superseding itself, or negativity…[M805]

no less than subjects, things no less than thoughts, as determinate, are essentially *conceptually* structured.[46] But unless one keeps in mind the complex fine-structure of Hegel's Janus-faced non-psychological conception of the conceptual in terms of determinateness as articulated by material incompatibility, one will not understand what is meant by such a claim.

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

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

…is consciousness of what <u>to</u> it is the true, and consciousness of its knowledge of this truth. Since both are *for consciousness,* consciousness itself is their comparison; whether its knowledge of the object corresponds or fails to correspond with this object will be a matter *for consciousness itself.* [85]

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the alteration of the knowledge, however, the object itself becomes to consciousness something which has in fact been altered as well. For the knowledge which existed was essentially a knowledge of the object: with change in the knowledge, the object also becomes an other, since it was an essential part of this knowledge. Hence it comes to pass for consciousness that what had been to it the *in-itself* is not in itself, or, what was *in itself* was so only *for consciousness*. When therefore consciousness finds its knowledge not corresponding with its object, the object itself will also give way. In other words, the standard [Maßstab] of the examination is changed if that whose standard it was supposed to be fails to endure the course of the examination. Thus the examination is not only an examination of knowledge, but also of the standard used in the examination itself. [85]

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

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

appears to trade on an obviously unwarranted slide. Even if we grant that what it is a claim *about* (what it represents) is essential to the identity of the claim—so that altering the represented object would alter the content of the claim—it just does not follow that the content of the claim is correspondingly essential to the identity of the represented object—so that altering the content of the claim alters the object. "Being essential to" is not in general a symmetric relation. So for instance, we might think that the identity of my parents is essential to my identity. Anyone with different people as parents would be someone different from me; it is not possible for me to have had different people as parents. But when we look at the converse, it does seem possible that my parents might never have had any children, or only had some of the children they did, not including me. Essentiality of origin of humans does not entail essentiality of offspring. It is easy to see Hegel here as engaging in a sleight-of-hand, attempting to smuggle in unobserved an implausible idealism that makes what is thought about it essential to the identity of what is thought about. But that would be to misunderstand the claim he is making.

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

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

The challenge posed by the earlier passage is echoed here. How are we to understand the "movement" which consciousness "exercises" on the *object* of its knowledge? The key question will turn out to be this: when commitment to the stick as bent is discarded and replaced by commitment to the stick as straight, what exactly is the "new, true object"? Answering this question correctly is integral to understanding the sense in which, on Hegel's account, the representational purport of conceptually contentful commitments is itself something *to* consciousness, implicit in its own process of experience. In order to

understand the justification for saying that the experience of error changes not only how the subject is committed to things being (the stick is taken to be straight, not bent), "consciousness's knowledge", but also the *object* of that knowledge, the essential point to realize is that the "new, true object" which "emerges to consciousness" is *not* the straight stick. (After all, *it* didn't change; it was straight all along.)

5.   Hegel describes the experience like this:

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

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

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

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

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

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

position to see that on our first reading we misunderstood "knowledge of the object" in the argument

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

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

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

In this presentation of the course of experience, there is a moment in virtue of which it does not seem to be in agreement with the ordinary use of the term "experience." This moment is the transition from the first object and the knowledge of that object to the other object. Although it is said that the experience is made in *this other object,* here the transition has been presented in such a way that the knowledge of the first object, or the

being-for-consciousness of the first in-itself, is seen to become the second object itself. By contrast, it usually seems that we somehow discover another object in a manner quite accidental and extraneous, and that we experience *in it* the untruth of our first Concept. What would fall to us, on this ordinary view of experience, is therefore simply the pure *apprehension of* what exists in and for itself. From the viewpoint of the present investigation, however, the new object shows itself as having come into being through an *inversion of consciousness* itself. [87]

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

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

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

This shift of perspective is what makes possible the "science of the experience of consciousness" [87]—the working title with which Hegel began the project of writing what would become the *Phenomenology*. The particular commitments acknowledgement of whose material incompatibility intiates a process of experience are contingent. What is necessary about that process is the acknowledgement of error, and the subsequent disillusionment it leads to. What is necessary is "the *movement* which is cognition—the transforming of that in-itself into that which is for itself…", as Hegel says at the very end of the book.[47] At this point in our story, we understand what that movement *is*, but not yet why it is the key to the *science* of the experience of consciousness. That will be the topic of the final section of this chapter.

III.   **From Skepticism to Truth through Determinate Negation**

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[47]   [802], in the final chapter, *Absolute Knowing*.

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

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

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

        The issue arises because of the expository trajectory we have traversed. In Chapter One, I claimed that we should read the opening of the *Introduction* as concerned that epistemological skepticism not be forced on us already by our semantics. The more specific diagnosis was that skepticism will be forced on us if we construe the relation

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

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

In this context, there is no reason not to construe the semantic relation between appearance and reality in representational terms. But understanding conceptual content in terms of the concept of <u>determinate negation</u> does not just *allow* a such a representational construal. In Hegel's hands it makes possible a constructive *analysis* of the representational dimension it finds to be implicit in conceptual content.[48] Hegel

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[48] I take one of the positive points of Hegel's Introduction to the *Phenomenology* to be a suggestion as to what it is to treat such conceptual contents as appearances *of* a reality, to take such Sinne to be modes of presentation of Bedeutungen, to understand thinkables that can be expressed *de dicto* (e.g. as the thought *that*

combines this fundamental aspect of Spinoza's thought (the structural isomorphism of the order and connection of things and ideas, construed in terms of relations of determining negation) with a Kantian idea that Spinoza did *not* have. For Spinoza did not appreciate the distinctive *normative* character of the "order and connection of ideas," which distinguishes it from the order and connection of things. Hegel's synthesis of Spinoza with Kant depends on Kant's grounding of semantics in pragmatics: his account of what one must *do* in order to take responsibility for a judgeable conceptual content.

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

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the object in the corner is round) as always also in principle expressible *de re* (e.g. as the thought *of* the ball that *it* is round). To do that one must acknowledge them as subject to a certain kind of normative assessment: answerability for their correctness *to* the facts, objects, and properties that they thereby count as *about*.

articulated in normative terms, is intelligible as the (re)presentation of objective alethic modal relations of incompatibility. Unlike Spinoza's, Hegel's concept of <u>determinate negation</u> is Janus-faced, displaying subjective and objective aspects that are complementary in the sense of being reciprocally sense-dependent.[49] On the side of the subject, the normative significance of negation is pragmatic: it yields an obligation to movement, change, development. Determinate negation, material incompatibility mediates the relation between pragmatics and semantics—as well as the relation between the expressive and the representational dimensions of intentionality, on the semantic side.

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

7.   Hegel wants to understand the relation between the two "objects", the "first in-itself" and the "being- for-consciousness of the in-itself" as one of *negation*. "This new object contains the nothingness [Nichtigkeit] of the first, it is what experience has made of it" [86]. The idea is that skepticism consists in taking the sense in which the second object is negation of the first to be *formal* or abstract negation, rather than *determinate* negation. Doing that is "allowing the result which emerges from an untrue mode of knowledge" to "dissolve into an empty nothingness." The point is that the sense in which the second object "contains the nothingness of the first" is not that "The stick is

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

bent," is succeeded by "The stick is *not* bent." It is that it is succeeded by the realization that "The stick is bent," is not saying how things really are. It is an appearance, a *mis*-representation *of a straight stick*. That is the materially incompatible commitment for which the bent-stick representation was discarded, changing its normative status. The original commitment is not revealed by its incorrectness as an appearance—but as the appearance *of* a *reality*. It is genuinely an appearance of that reality: a way that reality shows up for consciousness. It is wrong, but it is not simply wrong. It is a path to the truth.

When Hegel says that "the result which emerges from an untrue mode of knowledge" must "be grasped as the nothingness *of that whose result it is,* a result which contains what is true in the previous knowledge," this is so in a double sense. First, the original take on things is not simply cancelled, leaving a void, as a bare contradiction of it would do. It is replaced by a contrary, substantive commitment—one that is materially, not merely formally incompatible with it. Something positive has been learned: the stick is straight. Second, the transition from the original object to the second, true object is a change of status from a propositional attitude ascribable to the subject *de dicto* to one ascribable (also) *de re*. Where before we, and the subject, could say "S believes *that* the stick is bent," after the experience of error and the rejection of the original endorsement in favor of a materially contrary one, the very same attitude is ascribable as "S believes *of* a straight stick that *it* is bent." That is the point of the analysis of representational purport and its uptake in terms of the experience of error, which I discussed last time. The transformation of status is a rejection of a prior endorsement, but it is not *just* a rejection of it. In an important sense, it is an enrichment of its content, as it becomes *to* the subject a claim *about* something. The representational dimension of its conceptual content becomes manifest—albeit by its being revealed as a *mis*representation.

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

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

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

Nonetheless, we can ask: Why doesn't Hegel's account of experience as the experience of error, as the unmasking of what we took to reality as appearance, as the revelation of what was to subjects the way things are in themselves as merely how they

are for consciousness provide exactly the premise needed for a fallibilist metainduction? The fallibilist metainduction is the inference that starts with the observation that every belief we have had or judgment we have made has eventually turned out to be false, at least in detail, and concludes that every belief or judgment we ever will or even could have will similarly eventually be found wanting—if we but subject it to sufficient critical scrutiny. Early on in the *Introduction*, Hegel tells us that this skeptical conclusion is a natural one for those who have not learned the lessons he is teaching us:

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

What one needs to learn to see that this is the wrong conclusion is the central *semantic* significance of the experience of error for the intelligibility of the representational dimension of conceptual content. But to understand the positive significance of the unmasking of commitments as determinately mistaken, as misrepresentations since corrected, a substantive new conception of truth is required. That conception is developed in the body of the *Phenomenology*, and only hinted at in the introductory material. It is foreshadowed, however, already in the *Preface*.

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

Appearance is the arising and passing away that does not itself arise and pass away, but is in itself, and constitutes actuality and the movement of the life of truth. [47]

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

The passage continues with a famous image:

The True is thus a Bacchanalian revel, with not a member sober; yet because each member collapses as soon as he drops out, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose.[50]

The revel is the restless elbowing of commitments discovered to be incompatible. Those that "drop out" are those that undergo the transformation of experience and are rejected in order to maintain the rational homeostasis that Hegel identifies as a state of "simple repose." The party continues its movement and development, because the place of those that fall away is immediately taken by other commitments.

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

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

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

Judged in the court of this movement, the single shapes of Spirit do not persist any more than determinate thoughts do, but they are as much positive and necessary moments, as they are negative and evanescent.

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

First, the truth-process whose structure is that of the experience of error is the process by which conceptual contents develop and are determined. It is not just the process by which judgments are selected, but also the process by which concepts evolve. It is the process in and through which more and more of how the world really is, what is actually materially incompatible with what in the objective alethic sense becomes incorporated in material incompatibilities deontically acknowledged by subjects. For one's response to the acknowledged incompatibility of two commitments one finds oneself with often is to adjust one's commitments concerning what is incompatible with what (and so what follows from what). If my initial concept of an <u>acid</u> obliges me to apply it to any liquid that tastes sour, and applying it commits me to that liquid turning Litmus paper red, I might respond to a sour liquid that turns Litmus paper blue (and the incompatibility of those two color-commitments) not by rejecting either the perceptual judgment of sourness or the perceptual judgment of blue, but by revising the norms articulating my concept. I might, for instance, take it that only *clear* liquids that taste sour are acids, or that cloudy acids don't turn Litmus paper red. It is because and insofar as they inherit the results of many such experiences of error that the conceptual contents subjects

acknowledge and deploy track the objective conceptual articulation of the world as well as they do. That is why the experience of error is a truth-process.

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

The third point is that the recollection phase of experience is a crucial element in what Hegel calls (in [87]) the *science* of the experience of consciousness. So far in these chapters on the *Introduction* I have talked a lot about the experience of consciousness, but not officially about the *science* of the experience of consciousness. This might well have led to some puzzlement. Why am I talking about the role in experience of mundane concepts such as <u>bent stick</u> and <u>straight stick</u> when the book Hegel is introducing us to

focuses exclusively on concepts such as <u>consciousness</u>, <u>self-consciousness</u>, and <u>agency</u> (that is: cognitive authority, the social institution of authority, and practical authority)? Why have I been discussing the development of constellations of judgments and concepts when Hegel is concerned, at least in the second half of the *Introduction*, as in the *Phenomenology*, with the development of "shapes of consciousness"? Such questions, while understandable, are misplaced. Though I have not explicitly been talking *about* it, what I have been doing is an exercise of the "science of the experience of consciousness." For that "science" is the explicit, self-conscious *understanding* of the "experience of consciousness."

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

Then, and I think *only* then and on that basis, we can consider what it is to render the development of *either* kind of concept in *scientific* terms, in Hegel's sense of that

term. To do that is to tell a certain kind of retrospective, rationally reconstructive story about their development—one that displays an expressively progressive *history*, made out of the *past*. This is the third phase of the process of experience, which is initiated by the acknowledgment of the material incompatibility of some commitments, proceeds through the local and temporary resolution of that incoherence by relinquishing or modifying some commitments, while retaining others, and culminates in comprehending the experience by situating it as the culmination of a process in which previous commitments show up as ever more revelatory, but still inadequate appearances *for* consciousness of what (one now takes it) things are *in* themselves. The capstone of Hegel's account (at the end of the *Reason* chapter, and further at the end of the *Spirit* chapter) will be to show us how this retrospective rationally reconstructive *genealogical* phase of the process of experience means that such experience is at once *both* the (further) determining of the content of concepts (whether determinate or philosophical), in the sense of the expressive dimension of conceptual content ('that'-intentionality) that is articulated by *relations* of determinate negation, *and* the discerning of referents (Bedeutungen, what things are in themselves) that are represented by such senses (Sinne, what things are for consciousness) along the representational dimension of conceptual content ('of'-intentionality), as articulated by the *process* that is the experience of error, normatively governed by relations of determinate negation.[51] That is a story for another occasion.

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

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[51]   Spirit is this movement of the Self which empties itself of itself and sinks itself into its substance, and also, as Subject, has gone out of that substance into itself, making the substance into an object and a content at the same time as it cancels this difference between objectivity and content. [M804]

self-consciousness, or at the ground-level of empirical consciousness. That is why he assimilates them in the *Preface* passage we have been considering:

Judged in the court of this movement, **the single shapes of Spirit** do not persist any more than **determinate thoughts** do, but they are as much positive and necessary moments, as they are negative and evanescent.

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

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

This, then, is the necessity in virtue of which the present road toward science is itself already a *science.* And, in accordance with its content, it may be called the science of the *experience of consciousness.* [87]

Part Two:

Mediating the Immediate:

Consciousness and the Inferential Articulation of

Determinate Empirical Conceptual Content

Chapter Four:

Immediacy, Generality, and Recollection:

First Lessons on the Structure of Epistemic Authority

Hegel opens his *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* by articulating a basic epistemological criterion of adequacy: any understanding of the processes and practices that institute cognitive relations between minds and the world they know about must make it intelligible that if everything goes well, the result is genuine knowledge of how things really are. He then argues that this requirement, what I called the "Genuine Knowledge Condition," cannot be met by theories exhibiting a familiar, otherwise tempting structure, whose paradigm he takes to be Kant's account in the first *Critique*. Such approaches envisage knowledge as a cognitive relation between a mind whose understanding consists in the application of concepts and an objective reality that, considered apart from that cognitive relation, is not in conceptual shape. Skepticism will result, he claims, from any picture that requires minds to process or transform a nonconceptual reality so as to get it into the conceptual form intelligibility requires.

Hylomorphic models of this kind must appeal to a notion of the content common to knowings and what is known, which appears in a conceptual form on the subjective side of the intentional nexus and in nonconceptual form on the objective side. Since intelligibility is identified with what is in conceptual form, he argues, the concept of such amphibious common content must be acknowledged to be unintelligible as such. Such an account must lead to skepticism, since the way the world really is ("in itself", he says) cannot be understood. Only its appearances (what it is "for consciousness") are in the right shape to be intelligible.

Underlying the epistemological point is a semantic one: for the common content to count as *determinate* it must be conceptually articulated, in the sense (defined by standing in relations of determinate negation) that Hegel gives to 'conceptual'. The *Consciousness* chapters are devoted to exploring this notion of <u>determinateness</u>. So Hegel does not challenge the identification of what is intelligible with what has a conceptual form, shape, or structure. He takes it that a good thing to mean by "conceptual content" is just what must be exhibited by the intelligible as such. His own constructive response to this critical semantic and epistemological argument is to develop a *conceptual realism*, by articulating a sense of 'conceptual content' in which the objective, no less than the subjective pole of the intentional nexus, can be seen to be conceptually structured, to possess or exhibit conceptual content. The difference between the objective and subjective forms such conceptual contents can take is understood in other terms. More specifically, as I read Hegel, to be conceptually contentful is identified with standing in relations of material incompatibility or exclusive difference ("determinate negation") from other such conceptually contentful items. The difference between the conceptual contents of facts on the objective side and thoughts on the subjective side is to be understood in terms of the difference between alethic modal incompatibility and deontic normative incompatibility. It is *impossible* for one object at the same time to exhibit

incompatible properties, whereas a subject merely *ought* not think of it as exhibiting such properties.

In the first chapter of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel opens the extended argument that will lead us to this conception by considering its polar opposite. The conceptual realism he endorses seeks to satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition by construing both poles of the intentional nexus as conceptually structured. Approaches that fall under the rubric he calls "sense certainty" (SC), by contrast, agree in accepting the conclusion that to understand knowledge as requiring conceptualization of the nonconceptual commits one to taking conceptualization to be falsification, but seek to avoid the specter of skepticism and satisfy the Genuine Knowledge Condition by seeing empirical knowledge as based on a purely *nonceptual* taking-in of nonconceptual reality. The complementary epistemological criterion of adequacy that a theory must make room for the possibility of error (what I called the "Intelligibility of Error Condition") is addressed by seeing that possibility creep in precisely when what is cognitively given *non*conceptually is subsequently conceptualized. A foundation of genuine empirical knowledge is nonetheless thought to be secured by construing the immediate deliverances of sense experience as passive, in a way that contrasts with conceptual activity and allows no room for error apart from and in advance of such activity.[52]

A reasonably widely held view among contemporary philosophers of language is that the sort of causal contact with the perceptible world that is expressed in explicit form by the use of demonstratives should be understood as non- or pre-conceptual. This *de re*

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

element in empirical knowledge is contrasted with the conceptually articulated *de dicto* element. Some thinkers appeal to a primitive stratum of "pure *de re*" beliefs, which would be expressed by using *only* demonstratives (though they could be possessed by creatures without language, and so without demonstratives).[53] Stripped of its overtly cartesian trappings, there seems to be much that is still attractive about the idea of a minimal kind of cognition that consists in an exercise of *mere* receptivity, simply registering, noticing, or pointing out what sense delivers. This would be a kind of cognition that, while it need not be taken to be infallible (since the causal mechanisms might go wrong sometimes), nonetheless would be particularly secure. For it would at least be immune to errors of mis-assimilation, misclassification, and mistaken inference, on the grounds that the subject has not *done* anything with or to what is merely passively registered, noticed, or pointed out, and so not anything that could have been done *incorrectly*.

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

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

associated with immediacy then obliges the candidate knower (consciousness) to *do* something, to make distinctions and invoke relations among the various instances of authority of this kind.

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

All certainty is either *mediated* or *not mediated*, that is, it either requires proof or is neither susceptible nor in need of any proof. There may be ever so much in our cognition that is mediately certain only, that is only through proof, yet there must also be something *indemonstrable* or *immediately certain*, and all our cognition must start from *immediately certain* propositions.[54]

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

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

"Certainties", that is, commitments, arrived at by reasoning are accordingly denominated "mediated." Those with a noninferential provenance, by contrast, are called "immediate."

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

In *Sense Certainty*, Hegel distinguishes a number of dimensions of Kant's distinction between intuitions and concepts. Two of them are of particular importance to

begin with. First, for Kant the intuition/concept distinction lines up with the receptivity/spontaneity distinction. Intuition is a passive capacity, the capacity to be sensuously affected, to be given representations that the subject simply finds itself with. Applying concepts, by contrast, is something the subject actively *does* (though not in general intentionally). This dimension is of the first importance for the epistemological strategy of sense certainty, since the thought is that where the subject does not *act*, it cannot *err*.[55] The second dimension of the intuition/concept distinction is that it coincides with that between *particular* representations and *general* ones. *What* one does in applying concepts is understood as *classifying* particular, bringing them under universals (that is, concepts, which Kant understands as rules). This idea fits nicely with the first one, since classifying involves *comparing* what is classified with other things. Doing that introduces the possibility of making a mistake, getting things wrong. Classification involves the possibility of *mis*classification, placing particulars under the *wrong* universals, ones that do not in fact characterize them. According to this line of thought, the possibility of epistemic error arises only when the deliverances of sense are brought under concepts.

        Hegel distinguishes these two dimensions of Kant's distinction between intuitions and concepts in the first paragraph of *Sense Certainty* as "immediate knowledge" and "knowledge of the immediate. The first is a matter of "our approach being immediate or receptive." This is immediacy of the *act* of "apprehending without comprehending."[56] It is to be distinguished from "knowledge of the immediate," which is immediacy of the *content* apprehended.

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

[56] All lightly paraphrased quotations from §90.

We can think of these two senses of "immediate" as corresponding to immediacy as the *noninferentiality* of the provenance of an episode and immediacy as the *nonconceptuality* of its content. Here it is worth comparing one of the central moves Wilfrid Sellars makes in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind." He is concerned to argue there that when we talk of observational reports or perceptual judgments as being "noninferential," we must be careful to distinguish between taking that predicate to apply to the act and taking it to apply to the content. We must not be confused by what he calls "the notorious 'ing'/'ed' ambiguity."[57] Observation reports and perceptual judgments, in the sense of reportings and judgings, are noninferential in the sense that those acts are not the products of processes of inference. They are the results of exercising reliable dispositions to respond differentially to environing stimuli, and should not be assimilated to the extraction of consequences from premises. But that is not at all to say that grasp of the concepts that are applied observationally can be made sense of apart from mastery of the use of those concepts in inferences, that is, non-observationally, or that the contents of those reports and judgments is intelligible apart from their standing in inferential relations or being governed by norms of inference. For Sellars, a parrot trained to respond to the visible presence of red things by uttering tokens of "Rawk! That's red!" might share reliable differential dispositions with a genuine observer of red things. But it is functioning at most as a measuring instrument, labeling, not describing the things it responds to *as* red.

It is only because the expressions in terms of which we describe objects…locate these objects in a space of implications, that they describe at all, rather than merely label.[58]

The genuine observer of red things must, as the mere differential responder to red things need not, place it in a "space of implications" by knowing something about what follows from something's being classified as red, and what would be evidence for or against such a classification being correct. If by "noninferential knowledge" one means knowledge

[57] [ref.] to EPM.
[58] "Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities" [ref.] §108.

one could have even though one had no practical mastery of proprieties of inference, Sellars claims, then there is no such thing as "noninferential knowledge." The concept is unobjectionable only as it applies to acts of making observation reports or perceptual judgments, that is, to reportings and judgings, and indicates that those particular acts did not result from the exercise of specifically inferential capacities. The existence of cognitions that are noninferential in this sense is entirely compatible with claiming that the capacity to have *any* determinately contentful cognitions requires the subject *also* to have inferential capacities, even if they need not be exercised in every cognitive act of the subject.

Exactly one hundred and fifty years before Sellars, in his opening chapter Hegel is making a point of just the same shape.[59] The fact that cognitions acquired receptively through sensation are noninferential in the sense that they are not the result of exercising inferential capacities does not mean that they are nonconceptual in the sense that they are intelligible as determinately contentful apart from the situation of those contents in a "space of implications" of the sort exploited by inferential capacities. Being immediate in the sense of intuitive as an act of receptivity does not, Hegel will argue, entail being immediate in the sense of intuitive as having a content that does not involve universals. Those two Kantian senses of "intuitive" come apart. Running them together results in what Sellars called the "Myth of the Given." *Sense Certainty* is, *inter alia*, an argument against the Myth of the Given. (Sellars was perfectly aware of this, describing "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" as his "incipient *Meditations Hegeliènnes*" and aligning himself with Hegel under the rubric "that great foe of immediacy."[60])

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[59] "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" was delivered as lectures in London in 1956, and Hegel wrote all of the *Phenomenology* apart from the Preface in 1806.
[60] In §20 and §1 of "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind."

When we look at Hegel's argument for that conclusion, however, we see that he conjoins the Sellarsian line of thought with another, which is not present in Sellars. If the two sets of considerations are not properly separated, it will look as though Hegel is offering a fallacious argument for the conclusion that a coherent conception of the epistemic authority of sensuous immediacy requires acknowledging the role of sense universals in articulating the contents of its deliverances. Hegel structures his discussion in three movements of thought, unpacking what is implicit in the notion of <u>knowledge of the immediate</u>, what is implicit in the notion of <u>immediate knowledge</u>, and what is implicit in the notion of <u>immediate knowledge of the immediate</u>.[61] While there is good and sufficient methodological reason for structuring the discussion this way, it obscures the relations between the two crucial distinctions that articulate his argument as I would understand it. The first of these, the distinction between immediacy of (the origin of) the act of sensing and immediacy of the content sensed, which I have been emphasizing, is indeed reflected in the distinction between immediacy of the act of knowing and immediacy of the content known, which Hegel uses to organize his discussion.[62] The other crucial orienting distinction is between two senses of immediacy of content, one corresponding to particularity as opposed to generality, the other to authority residing in unrepeatable episode tokenings as opposed to repeatable episode-types. The first is modeled on the distinction between singular terms (representations of particulars) and predicates (representations of universals or properties). The second is modeled on the distinction between demonstratives and indexicals ('this', 'now'), which are token-reflexives (in Reichenbach's terminology) each tokening of which might refer to

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[61] The first is introduced in §94 and its consequences extracted in §95 and §96, the second is introduced in §100 and unpacked in §101 and §102, and third is introduced in §103 and what is implicit in it elaborated in §104-§107.

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

something different, on the one hand, and expressions all cotypical tokenings of which types are construed as coreferring (such as 'tree' and 'night'). These very different distinctions correspond to two further dimensions of Kant's intuition/concept distinction, beyond that of act/content (ing/ed).

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

The Bad Argument results from failing to distinguish three kinds of repeatability that Hegel points out, and treating them as though they all amounted to generality or universality in the sense in which the universals or properties expressed by predicates

contrast with the particulars referred to by singular terms. All three are important for arguments Hegel makes, but they, and the arguments they actually support, must be carefully distinguished. The first sort of repeatability concerns the kind of epistemic authority distinctive of the deliverances of sensuous immediacy. It is, Hegel observes, a *kind* of authority, which can be exhibited by *different* episodes with *different* contents.

An actual sense-certainty is not merely this pure immediacy, but an *instance* of it. [63]

This observation is an important move in Hegel's argument. But it clearly does not follow from the fact that there is a kind of generality in the Fregean *force* of immediacy, that it can be invested in different represent*ing*s, that the *contents* in which it can be invested, what is represent*ed*, must be general rather than particular. Only entitlement to the latter claim can motivate the transition to the discussion of sense universals such as **white** and **cubical** in the *Perception* chapter. Hegel is not trying to make this move in one step.

It can easily look as though he is doing something structurally analogous, running together two other senses of 'repeatable', however. He considers how we might express in language what is merely "meant" or "pointed out" by a consciousness taking in what is sensuously given without characterizing or classifying, hence conceptualizing it. When *we* try to express explicitly sense certainty's understanding of its immediate experience as a passive *registration*, without comparison or classification, or committing ourselves to any determinate inferential consequences) of what is merely there (a way of talking about immediacy in the sense of independence on the side of the thing), we can do so by using a bare demonstrative: 'this'. The use of the demonstrative is as a device of *direct reference*. It is a kind of *reference*, because it is merely *pointing out* what is there—not *saying* anything *about* it. It is *direct* (immediate) in the sense of not relying on or

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[63] §92.

otherwise employing (being mediated by) concepts; it does not involve the application of concepts at all. (This is one kind of immediacy of *content*. The tokening is also immediate as a process, that is, as pertains to its *origin*, since it does not result from a process of inference. But that is not the current point.) But 'this', he points out, while a pure demonstrative, is an expression *type* that admits of many different *tokenings*. 'This' is repeatable, it applies generally, indeed *universally*. *Anything* can be picked out by some tokening of the type 'this'.

It is as a universal too that we *utter* what the sensuous [content] is. What we say is: 'This', i.e. the *universal* This; or, 'it is', i.e. *Being in general*…

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

"If we describe it more exactly as 'this bit of paper', then each and every bit of paper is 'this bit of paper', and I have only uttered the universal all the time."[64]

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

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[64] §97, §102, and §110.

for *any* particular (in the case of 'I', any particular self) it is possible to refer to it by using a tokening of the repeatable type 'this'. So 'this' ('I') is a predicate, which expresses a concept and stands for a universal or property: the universal or property shared by all things that are properly called 'this' ('I'), that is, all particulars (or particular selves).

   That would be a Bad Argument. Spelled out as I just have, the fallacy should be obvious. Although 'this' is a repeatable expression type that can be applied to any particular thing or situation, it is not *predicated* of them, it is not *describing* them, it is not a universal in the sense of expressing a *property* that they share or a *concept* that they fall under. To refer to something as 'this' is not to characterize it in any way, certainly not to attribute a property to it, even a very general one. 'This', 'I', and 'red' are all repeatable expressions, and can be applied on different occasions to different particulars. But the sense of 'apply' is quite different: referential in the first case, predicative in the second. 'This' and 'I' are not *true of* anything. Put another way, there is a perfectly good sense in which 'this' and 'I' mean something different on different occasions of their tokening. In order to know what is meant by 'this', or who is meant by 'I', it is not enough to understand the use of the expression *type* in general. One must also know the circumstances of its particular tokening. In this sense the demonstrative and indexical expression types are *ambiguous*. But that is not the same as saying they express universals. 'Bank' is not a universal that applies both to the shores of rivers and to financial institutions. Of course in another sense, these words are not ambiguous. For what each tokening means is determined in a uniform way from the circumstances in which it is produced. As Kaplan has taught us to say, different tokenings of expressions like this have the same *character* (type), but express different *contents*. No distinction of this sort applies to expressions such as 'red'. The predicate/term (universal/particular) distinction and the character/content distinction are actually orthogonal to one another, since in addition to singular term types where a single character determines different

contents for different tokenings (such as 'this' and 'I') and predicate types whose characters assign the same content to all tokenings (such as 'red'), there are singular term types whose characters assign the same content to all tokenings (such as 'Hegel', or a suitable lengthening of that name) and predicate types where a single character determines different contents for different tokenings (such as "…is the same color as this sample").

These passages cannot be ignored, and the argument they invite us to attribute should neither lightly be attributed to Hegel, nor—far worse—endorsed as a good one. (Few commentators on this chapter measure up to this tripartite standard.) As I would reconstruct the argument that emerges from *Sense Certainty*, Hegel is fully aware of the distinction that vitiates the Bad Argument, and is in fact concerned to insist on it. On the side of the immediacy of content (as opposed to the immediacy of the origin of the act of sensing—it's being noninferential in the only sense Sellars and Hegel allow that cognition can be noninferential), Kant's understanding of intuitions construes them as *particular*, by contrast to the *generality* of concepts. Hegel sees that this doctrine is ambiguous. Kant in the Second Analogy of Experience carefully distinguishes relations of representations from representations of relations, the former a matter of relations among the subject's representings, and the latter a matter of relations represented as objective. His (meta)concept of <u>intuition</u>, however, elides the analogous and equally important distinction between particularity of representations and representations of particularity. Singular terms are representations of particulars, while predicates and sortals are representations of general properties or universals: things that can be true of, apply to, or be exhibited by many particulars. Here what is particular is what is represent*ed*. Token-reflexive expressions such as demonstratives and indexicals are particular represent*ing*s, in the sense that what must be semantically evaluated is particular, unrepeatable tokenings of the repeatable type.[65] Put otherwise, these

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[65] Fussy terminological note:

representings exhibit a structure of authority that Sellars (in *EPM*) calls "token-credibility." Epistemic authority accrues to uses of expressions of this kind in virtue of features of the provenance of particular tokenings of them, and vary from one to another. By contrast to judgments like "This pig is grunting," and "The frog is on the log," which are token-credible if credible at all, judgments like "Snow is white," and "Baryons are hadrons," have a kind of credibility (epistemic authority) that accrues equally to all of the tokenings of those types.

Kant thinks of intuitions as *both* singular-term-like, in representing particulars, *and* demonstrative-like, in being unrepeatable token(ing)-reflexive representations. These features can, of course, coincide. But they need not. There are demonstrative and indexical predicates, such as "that shape," and "my mother's favorite color." And there are singular terms all the cotypical tokenings of which are coreferential, like Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and "the inventor of bifocals." When these features diverge, Kant's intuition/concept distinction breaks down. We already saw that a similar breakdown occurs when immediacy of origin diverges from immediacy of content, in *either* of these senses of "immediacy of content."[66]

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a) It is tokenings (acts or episodes of tokening), not tokens that are unrepeatable in the relevant sense. A religious enthusiast who makes a sign inscribed with an arrow and the legend "You are a sinner!" and goes around pointing at various passersby utilizes a single token (the sign), but performs many unrepeatable speech acts (tokenings), whose semantics varies from tokening to tokening.

b) Demonstratives and indexicals are different species of token(ing)-reflexive expression types. It is wrong to think of demonstratives as a kind of indexical, expressions relative to an index that consists not of a time, place, speaker, or world, but of a demonstration. That is wrong because in the case of genuine indexicals, the index in question can be specified independently of features of the particular speech act whose semantics depends on that index. But what is being demonstrated is highly context-dependent along a further dimension. In Lewis's example, what makes something "the most salient pig" can be *any* feature of the situation at all. Which one matters is not settled in advance, as it is for proper indexicals.

[66] One might be tempted to argue that the two distinctions do not really generate three senses of 'intuition', since uses of demonstratives are always exercises of receptivity in the sense that they are noninferentially elicited. This would not be at all plausible for indexicals, which include not only 'here', but 'there', not only 'now', but 'then'. But they also include "a week from last Tuesday," which can surely be used as the conclusion of an inference—as indeed, it then becomes clear on reflection, can even the simplest here-now-me indexicals. The same considerations show that even demonstratives, whose most basic use *is* in making noninferential reports and perceptual judgments, also always have inferential uses: "If she left an hour ago, she should be here by now," surely reports the product of an inferential process.

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

The Good Arguments begin with the observation that the authority of immediacy is itself a *kind* of authority. This is true, in turn, along two different dimensions. First, the authority of having been immediately (in the sense of noninferentially) responsively elicited can be invested in *different* contents. Second, for an unrepeatable episode to be intelligible as possessing any kind of epistemic *authority*, it must be related to *other* episodes that can inherit or appeal to that authority. Otherwise it is a *mere* occurrence, like an eddy in a stream. Since our aim is to disentangle these two strands of argument, we'll consider them sequentially.

Hegel does not leave any possibility that we will fail to see that one of the central lessons of the discussion of *Sense Certainty* is that immediacy is ultimately unintelligible apart from its relation to universals. He repeatedly says things like "sense certainty has demonstrated in its own self that the truth of its object is the universal."[67]

As to the first, it begins with this sort of observation: one tokening of 'this' picks out a tree, another a house.[68] These presentations have the same kind of authority: the authority of sensuous immediacy. It will help in our discussion to introduce notational conventions permitting us to distinguish between episode- or expression-*types* and episode- or expression-*tokenings*. We can refer to the types by placing a token of the expression in question between angle brackets, and to the tokenings by placing such a token between slanted lines. Different tokenings of the same type can then be

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[67] §99. Other examples include:
> So it is in fact the universal that is the true [content] of sense-certainty §96.
> What consciousness will learn from experience in all sense-certainty is, in truth, only what we have seen, viz. the This as a *universal*… §109.

[68] Hegel splits up the pure indication that would be made explicit by a tokening of 'this' into temporal and spatial dimensions, which would be made explicit by tokenings of 'now' and 'here', and makes the point indicated in terms of a "now that is night" and a "now that is day", on the one hand (in §96), and a "here that is a house" and a "here that is a tree" on the other (in §101). But the importation of this distinction is irrelevant to the point I am discussing.

distinguished by subscripts. Then $/this/_i$, which picks out a tree, has a different content from $/this/_j$, which picks out a house, and a different content yet from some $/this/_k$, which picks out a stone. Each has the authority of immediacy, that is, of experiences, putative or candidate knowings, with which one simply *finds* oneself. *What* is given or presented to the subject, and can differ from occasion to occasion, can be called its "content," even within the scope of a commitment to understanding such content as being nonconceptual. The potential *diversity* of such contents must be acknowledged, as what makes immediate sense knowledge "appear as the *richest* kind of knowledge."[69] That the contents of different acts of sensory knowing can at least barely differ from one another is the very weakest sense in which those contents could be thought of as determinate.

We'll see further along that a stronger necessary condition must obtain as well. But even the minimal observation that the same sort of epistemic authority of immediacy can be exhibited by episodes with different contents (which must be acknowledged if they are to be intelligible as having the significance even of bare referrings or "pointings-out") already implicitly brings into play a certain kind of universal or principle of classification applying to them. For $/this/_j$ and $/this/_k$ have in common their difference from $/this/_i$. A 'this' that is a house and a 'this' that is a tree have in common that they are both different in content, not merely different as unrepeatable tokenings, from any 'this' that is a stone. That much they have in common, that is a *classification* of their contents. (Using '≠' to indicate mere difference or distinguishability of content, this is the fact that $/this/_j \neq /this/_i$ and $/this/_k \neq /this/_i$. Both are of the kind of the kind "$\neq /this/_i$".) Merely to distinguish instances of immediacy from one another, to see them as different instances of one kind of authority, is already in a weak sense implicitly to classify, compare, and characterize them.

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[69] §91.

Still, this is a pretty minimal sort of classification: each episode is what it is, and not another. (As Hegel says it gets classified only as a "not-this"—for some other tokening of 'this'.[70]) The degenerate character of the universals we can see as implicitly brought into play in this way is a consequence of the weakness of the relation of mere difference. But realizing this is just the first step.

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

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

Now if the authority of immediacy simply contradicts itself, then it is no authority at all. In treating immediacy as conferring some sort of credibility or right to endorse, we are implicitly distinguishing between the *kind* of authority, and the *contents* of its instances. We are, in effect treating the incompatibility as a feature of the *contents* in which the authority of immediacy is invested. The content that I merely indicate at one time *we*

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[70] §96.

might express (using the least committal feature-placing language) by saying "It is night," is not only different from but incompatible with the content I might similarly indicate at another time, which we could express as "It is day." (It would beg the question against sense certainty to insist that the consciousness involved must apply these concepts. The idea is that *we* use those concepts just to keep track of the rich nonconceptual content that the consciousness in question, according to the conception of sense-certainty, merely points out, entertains, or contemplates.) To recognize any sort of content here at all is to acknowledge that two such contents can contradict (strongly contrast with) one another.

This relation of incompatibility, which Hegel often talks about using the term 'entgegensetzen',[71] (he also uses "ausschließen") is stronger than mere difference, and it induces a correspondingly richer sort of universal. We might use '#' to indicate the notion of incompatibility, and so express the fact that a 'this' (or 'now') that is night (that is, a content that could be picked out by a tokening of 'this' produced at night) "vanishes" into one that is day: $this/_l \# /this/_m$. Incompatibility of contents in this sense is by no means as promiscuous a relation as mere difference among contents. For instance, it need not be the case that $/this/_l \# /this/_i$—for trees can appear at night or in the day. The universal "$\#/this/_m$", which Hegel calls "not day…a negative in general,"[72] is a genuine universal, under which $/this/_l$, but not $/this/_i$ or $/this/_j$ falls. In fact, for many purposes we can represent the repeatable content of an experience or claim by the set of experiences or claims that are incompatible with it. The contents of commitments are determinate insofar as the class of other commitments they exclude or are incompatible with differ (merely differ) from one another.

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[71] For instance in §98.
[72] §98.

The process whereby one certainty (commitment) "vanishes in another," that is, has the authority it possesses in virtue of the immediacy of its origin (its having been noninferentially elicited by receptive sensory processes) undercut by the advent of another certainty with credentials of exactly the same kind but whose content is not mere *different* (distinguishable) but *contrary*, is a process of *experience* [Erfahrung] in the sense that Hegel gives to that expression in his *Introduction*. This is a much richer sense of 'experience' than the notion of <u>sense experience</u> that lies at the heart of the conception of sense certainty. As Hegel will argue in the *Perception* chapter, it opens the way for the acknowledgement of *error*.

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

A second line of thought entangled with this one throughout *Sense Certainty*, which comes to be the central focus in the third movement of the section [§§103-8]. The issue it addresses is what is required for a dateable, intrinsically unrepeatable act or event—a unique occurrence—to be associated with a content that can be "held onto" or "preserved" after the expiration of the act itself, so as to be available for comparison with the contents of other such acts. The lesson of the second good argument is that deictic or demonstrative expressions do not form an autonomous stratum of the language—a language game one could play though one played no other—and would not even if what was demonstrated had the shape of facts or judgeable contents. Deictic tokenings as such are unrepeatable in the sense of being unique, datable occurrences. But to be cognitively significant, what they point out, notice, or register must be repeatably available, for instance to appear in the premise of inferences, embedded as the antecedent of a conditional used to draw hypothetical consequences, and embedded inside a negation so that its denial can at least be contemplated. Demonstratives have the potential to make a cognitive difference, to do some cognitive work, only insofar as they can be picked up by other expressions, typically pronouns, which do not function demonstratively. Deixis presupposes anaphora. When I say that this lesson is not a philosophical commonplace in the way the first is, I mean that the philosophers who have seen in what is expressed by demonstratives a crucial nonconceptual basis for our capacity to make conceptually articulated claims about the empirical world have not typically emphasized or looked closely at the anaphoric mechanisms by which what uses of demonstratives make available to knowing subjects is taken up into the conceptual realm. This is a lesson we by and large still need to learn from Hegel.

Putting the point another way, if we are to succeed in treating the unrepeatable (not merely particular, but unique as an occurrence) *act* of sensing as the source of epistemic authority, it must be possible to treat that authority as invested in a content in a way that is *not* undercut by the fact that the *same* sort of authority may in a *different*, subsequent

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

Hegel introduces the idea that the evanescence of the 'now' (equally the 'this') raises problems for the conception of immediacy of content already in the first movement of experience expounded under the heading of 'sense certainty' (and is then repeated in the second). The content indicated by phenomenal consciousness—which from our phenomenological perspective we can pick out by attributing a tokening of 'Now'—spontaneously changes to an incompatible content, and then to yet another incompatible with it. The strategy explored in third movement is to rescue an understanding of the authority of immediacy by showing how the content introduced in an evanescent act can be "fixed" or "held fast" by another sort of act, a "pointing-out" of the first that preserves it by making it's content repeatable.[73] So we need to think about

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[73] thus for instance "festhalte", "Bleibende", "aufgezeigte" in §108.

the distinction and relation between two sorts of acts, one essentially evanescent, which might be made explicit by a tokening of 'now' (or 'this'), and the other which points to the first, inheriting its content and authority from it.

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

I point out the Now, and **it** is asserted as the truth. I point **it** out, however, as something that <u>has</u> <u>been</u>, or as something that has been superseded [etwas aufgehobene]; I set aside the first truth.[74]

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

I now assert as the second truth that **it** *has been*, that **it** is superseded.[75]

This, Hegel says, is a kind of negation of the first claim. (But notice that it is a very different sort of negation of a $/now/_q$ that is day from that constituted by a subsequent $/now/_r$ that is night.) Next

But what has been *is not*; I set aside the second truth, **it**s *having been*, **it**s supersession, and thereby negate the negation of the 'Now', and thus return to the first assertion, that the '*Now*' *is*.[76]

So at the second stage, it is apparent that what is true is that the immediate is not. It only has been. The past, which is the truth of the future, the only reality it has, is a negation of the present. But this negation is in turn negated. The original unrepeatable event was authoritative precisely as the sort of thing that has been and has being *as* vanished. It is *now* taken to be and indicated as something whose authority resides in being an

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[74] § 107.
[75] § 107.
[76] § 107.

unrepeatable event. Its authority, properly understood, thus involves mediation, relation, contrast, and comparison, as the negation of the negation of immediate unrepeatable being. It has significance for now precisely by *not* being now. To treat the authority as consisting and residing in the unrepeatable event, one must *recollect* it. Recollection [Errinnerung] refers to something that is no longer, *as* something that is no longer. The authority it has now depends on this reference to what no longer exists, because of what it was when it simply existed. It is by the sacrifice of its immediacy, by its relation to a future that negates its negation as past, that the immediate acquires a significance.

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

Notice for instance the emphasized '**it**'s in the passages cited above in which Hegel is "holding fast to the Now pointed out". 'Then' can function just like 'it', as a pronoun picking up its reference from its anaphoric antecedent. Such '*then*'s are

repeatable and reusable. Each tokening of "now" I utter indicates something different, but I can use many different 'then's to indicate whatever it is that that one "now" indicated. It is the possibility of recollection later by such an expression that makes an utterance of 'now' or 'this' a move in a language game, and not just a noise (*flatus vocii*) or an ejaculation like 'ouch'. The immediate in the sense of the unrepeatable requires this mediation in the sense of relation to other tokenings as (content-) repetitions of it for it to have any cognitive significance or content—even one incompatible with what would be expressed by later tokenings of the same type.   Any such tokening can, accordingly, only be understood as investing a content with the authority of immediacy if it is seen as an element (Hegel says "moment") in a larger, temporally extended, whole comprising also acts of different types.[77]

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

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

The 'Now' and the pointing out of the 'Now' are thus so constituted that neither the one nor the other is something immediate and simple, but a movement which contains various moments.[78]

This account presents a crucial fact about the use of demonstratives and similar indexical expressions in contributing to empirical knowledge. *Deixis presupposes anaphora.* It is a fact that is too often overlooked by contemporary theorists of demonstratives, who are prone to suppose that an autonomous language or fragment thereof might consist entirely of demonstrative expressions.

If one focuses just on the immediacy of contact that is genuinely involved in a particular use of a demonstrative expression such as 'this', it is easy to forget that what makes such immediate contact have a potential significance for *knowledge*, for instance what makes the content it raises to salience available for use as a premise in *inference*, to draw a conclusion or learn something from it that one could remember and use again, is the possibility of picking up that content and making it repeatable, by treating it as initiating an anaphoric chain: "This chalk is white, it is also cylindrical, and if it were to be rubbed on the board, it would make a mark. (This is anticipating our story a bit, since inferential articulation as an essential element of cognitive significance will not be put into play by Hegel until his discussion in *Perception*). The chain 'This chalk'...'it'...'it'...'it' is a repeatability structure that makes the content of the original demonstration repeatably available, just as though we had christened the chalk originally with a proper name, say 'Charlie', and used other tokenings of that repeatable type to make the reference. The use of demonstrative expressions presupposes the use of nondemonstrative expressions, in particular anaphoric ones. In this sense, then, anaphora (the relation between a pronoun and its antecedent) is more fundamental than, prior in the order of explanation to, deixis (the use of demonstratives): there can be an autonomous

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[78] [M107]

set of linguistic practices (ones one could engage in though one engaged in no others) that exhibit anaphoric reference but not deictic reference (though it would not be an *empirical* language), while there could not be an autonomous set of linguistic practices that exhibit deictic reference but not anaphoric reference.[79]

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

The conception of empirical knowledge that Hegel calls "sense certainty" mistakenly tries to understand the role of immediacy of origin—the immediacy of the act of endorsing a content—in terms of various conceptions of immediacy of content—the immediacy of what is endorsed. Immediacy is a category of independence, in the normative sense of authority without correlative responsibility. *Sense Certainty* dismisses two senses in which one might take sensory content to be immediate. Content immediacy as particularity is the denial of contrastive repeatability, or the involvement of universals or generality in any form. This means that possession (or grasp) of some sensory content is independent of any relation to other acts with contents that are similar

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

in some respect, or that have incompatible contents—which induce respects of similarity among contents, as it were, horizontally. The idea is that classifying or characterizing a particular content by bringing it under a universal involves comparing it with others, which accordingly have a certain sort of reciprocal authority over the content of the original particular. That the content of one act should in this way be responsible to the contents of other acts—so that what it is depends on what they are—is what this sort of content immediacy rules out. It turns out that content cannot be immediate in this sense and still be determinate in a minimal sense. Content immediacy as temporal unrepeatability is the denial of recollective repeatability. This means that possession (or grasp) of some sensory content is independent of any relation to other acts with the very same content (not just in some respects, but in all respects). But apart from their as it were vertical relation to other acts that inherit their content and authority from acts of immediate sensory awareness, the contents of those acts are as evanescent as the acts themselves. So no determinate content can be immediate in this sense either.

I began my discussion of *Sense Certainty* by urging that Hegel fills in Kant's notion of immediacy by analyzing his intuition/concept distinction as conflating three distinctions that are actually orthogonal to one another: receptivity vs. spontaneity of episodes, particularity vs. generality of what is represented, and unrepeatability (token-credibility) vs. repeatability (type-credibility) of representings. I then argued that we can acquit Hegel of commitment to the Bad Argument if we disentangle two good lines of thought that are not sufficiently clearly separated in his discussion of them. Both start with the observation that the epistemic authority of sensory episodes that are immediate (noninferential) in their provenance is a *kind* of authority. It is a kind of authority that, first, can be invested in *different*, even *incompatible* contents. And it is a kind of authority that, second, can be inherited anaphorically *from* one unrepeatable demonstrative or indexical (tokening-reflexive) episode *by* others that have the *same* content, but are *not* themselves immediate in their origin as the originating episode was.

The epistemic authority conferred by sensuous immediacy of origin is genuine and important. But it is in principle intelligible only in a larger context that involves both generality and anaphoric repeatability structures relating immediately authoritative episodes to ones that inherit that authority in a way that is *not* immediate. This latter recollective structure picks up on a theme from Hegel's *Introduction*, and foreshadows the structure that will be attributed to agency in the *Reason* chapter. The former point is already fully present in Kant, who treats judgments involving both intuitions and concepts as the minimal units of awareness or experience, and intuitions without concepts as blind.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that the overall structure Hegel discerns in this chapter is *also* already foreshadowed in Kant. For it can be seen as a development of the structure of transcendental syntheses culminating in experience that Kant offers in the A edition deduction of the categories in the first Critique.[80] To yield anything recognizable as experience, he says, *apprehension in intuition* must be capable of *reproduction in imagination*, and these reproductions must then be suitable for *recognition in a concept*. To be cognitively significant, the sort of pointing-out that we would express explicitly by the use of demonstratives must be capable of being picked up and reproduced (preserved) by an act of the sort we would express explicitly by the use of anaphorically dependent pronouns. To amount to anything recognizable as even minimally determinate contents, the repeatables so constituted must then be capable of being classified under various distinguishable and contrasting kinds or universals. The two senses in which we are to conclude that the contents of our sensory experiences can not be construed as immediate then correspond to denying that in order to apprehend them we must be able to reproduce or to recognize them. The denial of that is just what I have been interpreting Hegel as arguing in *Sense Certainty*.

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[80]   A98-106.

Hegel on Consciousness

Chapter Five:

Understanding the Object/Property Structure in Terms of Negation:

      An Introduction to Hegelian Metaphysics in the *Perception* Chapter

I

The task Hegel sets himself in the *Consciousness* chapters of the *Phenomenology* is to make explicit what is implicit in the concept of <u>empirical knowledge</u>. In the terms I introduced in discussing his *Introduction*, this requires saying what is required to satisfy the Genuine Knowledge condition: offering a broadly semantic account of the nature of empirically contentful thought that leaves open at least the possibility that when things go well, how things are for consciousness is how they are in themselves, things appear as they really are. The *Sense Certainty* chapter begins with a simple model. Its starting-point is the recognition that at the core of the idea of empirical knowledge lies a distinctive structure of epistemic authority exercised by episodes of sensory awareness that a knowing consciousness finds itself with, as something that happen to it rather than something done, episodes that in particular are not products of acts of inference. The contents of these empirically authoritative immediate episodes are of the sort that would be expressed linguistically by the use of demonstratives or indexicals ('this', 'that', 'here', 'now'). They have what Sellars calls "token-credibility", contrasting this species with the sort of credibility that accrues to repeatable types (such as Quine's "There have been black dogs,") rather than unrepeatable tokenings elicited observationally.

The way of understanding empirical consciousness that Hegel calls "sense certainty" (a form of self-consciousness—a way a consciousness can understand itself) seeks to secure the intelligibility of genuine knowledge by identifying these episodes of sensory awareness as themselves already amounting to knowledge, in a way taken to be independent of their relations to anything else. On this conception, error becomes possible when, but only when, the knowing consciousness actively does something with or to the passively acquired episodes of sensory awareness: compares or classifies them, or draws conclusions from them. The strategy of sense certainty is to discern an autonomous foundational layer of sensory knowledge that is incorrigible because it restricts itself to what is given in sensation. The thought is that where consciousness does not act, it cannot err. Hegel seeks to show that this notion of <u>sensory</u> <u>givenness</u> cannot survive the unpacking of its implicit presuppositions. (Exactly 150 years later, Sellars would take up this same task in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind.")

The main result of the arguments Hegel rehearses in *Sense Certainty* is that the token-credibility of unrepeatable episodes of immediate sensory awareness is not intelligible as free-standing and autonomous. This distinctive sort of epistemic authoritativeness is real and important, but it is intelligible as yielding a kind of knowledge only when it is understood as situated in a framework that includes two kinds of repeatability of the contents in which it is invested. Diachronically, it must be possible to for the subject "hold onto" what has been experienced when not still experiencing it. One must be able to recollect and thereby secure what is known in acts of consciousness that are responsible to the original, authoritative sensory knowing. These dependent episodes are what the token-credible experiencing is authoritative over. What would be expressed linguistically by demonstratives can amount to knowledge only as part of a larger structure that includes what would be expressed linguistically by tokenings anaphorically dependent on the token-credible demonstrative episodes. Though as immediate in origin they are not themselves the *conclusions* of inferences, episodes of sensory awareness would be epistemically idle if they were not in principle available to

serve as *premises* for inferences. An unrepeatable deictic tokening 'that' (for instance in "That is rain,") can count as expressing knowledge only if it can be picked up anaphorically and used to draw a conclusion (for instance "It is wet,"). Deixis presupposes anaphora.

The other sort of repeatability found to be implicit in the concept of the empirical epistemic authority of episodes of immediate sensory awareness, as part of the context within which alone it is intelligible, by contrast, is taken up as the central topic explored in the very next chapter, *Perception*. This is repeatability as universality.[81] To be understood as determinately contentful, even synchronically, experiences must be conceived as unrepeatable instances of repeatable kinds. More specifically, the *Perception* chapter investigates what is implicit in the idea of *sense* universals, as articulating the contents of what would be expressed linguistically by observation reports codifying perceptual judgments. The progression within the *Consciousness* chapters of the *Phenomenology* is from consideration of the presuppositions of the epistemic authority distinctive of sensory *immediacy*, to the presuppositions of the epistemic authority distinctive of *universality* (in the sense of sense universals, those that are noninferentially applicable), and finally to the presuppositions of the epistemic authority distinctive of pure *mediation* characteristic of theoretical concepts (those one can be authorized to apply only as the conclusions of inferences).

The point of departure of the *Perception* chapter is this lesson we are to have learned by the end of *Sense Certainty*: sensuous immediacy, to be understood as determinately contentful, must be understood as involving an element of repeatability as universality. This conclusion emerges from the observation that playing a cognitive role as even potentially constituting a kind of knowledge entails that the deliverances of sense can be understood as *immediate* or noninferential in only one of the two senses that are run together by empirical consciousness understanding itself according to the structure of sense certainty. They can exhibit immediacy of *origin*, but not immediacy of *content*.

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[81] "It is merely the character of positive universality which is at first observed and developed." [114].

That is, the cognitive deliverances of sense *can* be understood as exhibiting a distinctive kind of epistemic authority invested in unrepeatable mental events or acts in virtue of their etiology. This authority derives from their being exercises of responsive sensory consciousness, rather than of inferential capacities. The process from which they result (by which they are elicited) is not an inferential process. In that sense they are 'immediate': the process that issues in episodes of sensory awareness is not mediated by middle terms of the sort characteristic of a *Schluss*, an inferential move, construed syllogistically. However, the claim is, to be intelligible as cognitively contentful, the deliverances of noninferential sensings that are immediate in this procedural sense must in another sense be *mediated* immediacies. Specifically, they must consist in the application of sense universals: concepts that have observational uses in which their application is noninferentially elicited by the exercise of perceptual capacities.

II

Understanding the basis for this claim depends on exploring a complex constellation of intricately interrelated philosophical (Hegel is happy to say "logical") metaconcepts: mediation, universality, determinateness, and negation. The principal result of the investigation of the presuppositions under which purely sensory awareness could count as a kind of knowledge in the *Sense Certainty* chapter is that this constellation of concepts, articulating a notion of conceptual contentfulness, must be applicable to any sort of sentience that is intelligible as a kind of sapience. The

Perception chapter argues that this requirement has surprising *structural* consequences. Where construing acts sensory awareness according to the categories of sense certainty was compatible with understanding the contents of that awareness as what would be expressed in what Strawson calls a "feature-placing" vocabulary—"It is day," "It is raining,"—fuller consideration of those contents shows that sensings must present the richer structure of "objects with many properties," which would be expressed linguistically in a vocabulary distinguishing and relating singular terms and predicates. That argument proceeds by teasing out the implications of Hegel's nonpsychological conception of conceptual contentfulness, which is articulated by the aforementioned metaconcepts: determinateness, negation (or difference), mediation, and universality.

As I see the argumentative relations among these concepts that are in play early in the *Perception* chapter, our entry is provided by the concept of determinateness. When we investigate what determinateness requires, we find that it implicitly involves a complex notion of negation. In terms of that notion of negation, it then turns out to be possible to explain and show the applicability of both the concept of mediation and the concept of universality. So the picture is something like this:
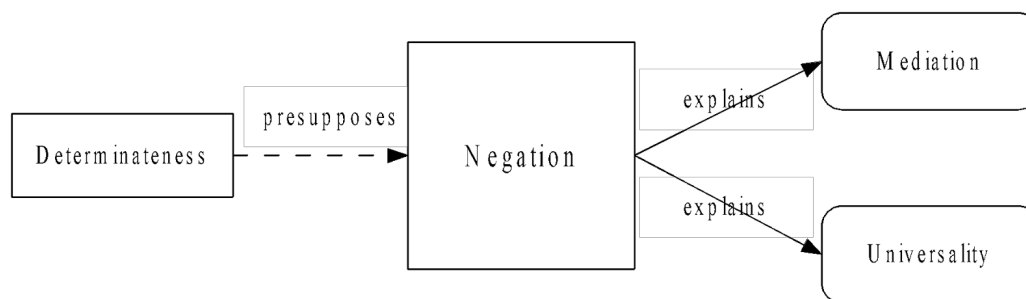

The linchpin of this structure is clearly the concept of negation. What is it, and how does it emerge from the consideration of determinateness?

The master idea here is the Spinozist scholastic principle "Omnis determinatio est negatio"; all determination is negation. The idea is that being determinate requires some limitation, contrast, or exclusion. The image is of something that has a limit or boundary,

so that there is a contrast between it and what is *not* it. That is how negation comes into view. The picture here is then:

A Determinate Thing:

Not It

It
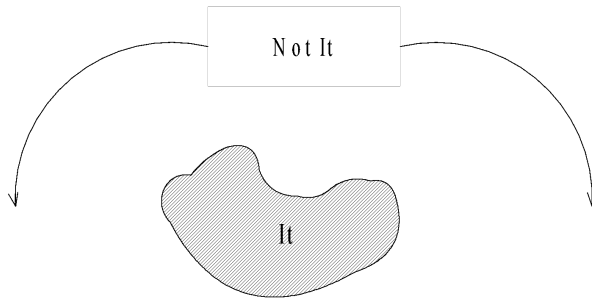
What is "Not It" is everything else, things that are outside of or different from It. Understanding the metaphor of limits or boundaries is a matter of understanding the sense of "not", "else", "outside", or "different" that the metaphor appeals to. The observable contents expressible in a feature-placing vocabulary that were introduced in *Sense Certainty* offer a couple of alternatives. The <u>day</u> of "It is day," and the <u>raining</u> of "It is raining," are different. So are the <u>day</u> of "It is day," and the <u>night</u> of "It is night." But they are different in different senses of "different." In the language Hegel uses in *Perception*, <u>day</u> and <u>raining</u> are *merely* or *compatibly* or *indifferently*[gleichgültig] different, while <u>day</u> and <u>night</u> are *exclusively* [ausschließend] different. For, though different, <u>day</u> and <u>raining</u> are *compatible* features (it can be both day and raining), while <u>day</u> and <u>night</u> are *incompatible* (it cannot be both day and night).

As I understand him, one of Hegel's most basic thoughts is that determinateness must be understood in terms of exclusive difference. Mere difference is not enough. The contrast between It and Not It required for something to be determinate (for a feature to have definite boundaries) requires that nothing *can* be both It and *not* It. This modally robust exclusion is built into the geometric representational apparatus of Venn diagrams with literal boundaries, as in the picture above. For a point *can*not be both inside and outside a closed plane figure. In this same modal sense, sets—for instance, those

representing the extensions of properties—have exclusive 'boundaries'. For it is *impossible* for something to be both an element of a set and *not* an element of that set. The 'not' of Not It is an *exclusive* not. That is the point of the *law* of noncontradiction. It is not just that some regions or sets contingently do not both contain and not contain any points. That is a *necessary* feature of regions and sets. The negation that is defined model-theoretically as part of an extensional semantics for properties itself expresses a modally robust kind of exclusive difference, not mere difference. The modal force is just hidden in the metavocabulary that is the medium of expression of the semantics (whether set-theoretic or geometric).

The connection between determinateness and modally robust exclusion—the ruling out of some alternatives—is codified in the technical concept of <u>information</u>. A signal is informative, contains or expresses information, just insofar as it rules out some alternatives. The measure of information, by which amounts of information are determined, compares the alternative situations or responses that are possible *before* receipt of the signal to those that remain *after* the signal has ruled out some of them as no longer possible (according to the signal). While information can distinguish merely different alternatives, it does so by *ruling out* some of them, excluding them as no longer possible. This same idea is expressed in possible worlds semantics when a determinate proposition is identified with a *set* of possible worlds, a *partition* of all the possible worlds into those *compatible* with the proposition, and those *incompatible* with it or ruled out by it.

The thought with which *Perception* begins, I am claiming, is that the determinateness of the content even of an immediately given sensory knowing, an act of sensory awareness, as conceived according to the metaconception Hegel calls "sense certainty", must be understood in terms of what it excludes or rules out, what is exclusively different from it, not just what is merely or indifferently different from it. The metadifference between two kinds of difference shows up already in the contents of acts of sensory awareness that would be expressed in a feature-placing vocabulary. The

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

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

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

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

Is this difference of opinion about what is given in sensory experience an empirical disagreement? Can it in principle be settled by introspection? Has traditional empiricism suffered from restricting itself to too narrow a conception of the basic knowledge delivered by sense experience? Hegel's analysis of what is implicit in the idea that basic sensory knowledge has a content that is *determinate* provides an argument for the claim that knowledge of which experiential features are exclusively different from

which, and which merely different, *must* be part of what one knows in having experiences with those features. (This is not to say that a subject need be incorrigible on such matters.)

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

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

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

III

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

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

Wilfrid Sellars observes, the primitives appealed to by classical empiricists are determinate sense repeatables. They were concerned with how merely determinable sense repeatables might be understood in terms of these, not with how unrepeatables might give rise to determinate repeatables.

It is in virtue of these facts that I take determinate negation to be a more metaphysically fundamental concept than mediation and universality, as pictured in the first figure in Section II above. The concept of negation that plays the axial role in the metaphysics Hegel introduces in *Perception* is a rich and complex one. As I have indicated, it is introduced as one element of a dyad. This is the metadifference between two kinds of difference: mere or compatible difference and exclusive or incompatible difference. We have seen that these two kinds of difference articulate determinate repeatable features into compatible families of incompatible features, as in the paradigm of colors and shapes. The next step in understanding exclusive difference is to consider it in relation to another kind of negation. Determinate negation also contrasts with formal or abstract negation. The latter is *logical* negation, in a non-Hegelian sense of "logical." Two features stand in the relation of determinate negation if they are *materially* incompatible. I am helping myself here to Sellars's terminology, itself not wholly uninfluenced by Hegel. The idea is that items determinately negate one another in virtue of their nonlogical *content*. Such items stand in the relation of formal or abstract negation if they are logically incompatible: incompatible in virtue of their abstract logical form.

This distinction is as old as logic. It is the distinction between Aristotelian *contraries* and Aristotelian *contradictories*. Red and green, circular and triangular, are contraries, while red and not-red, and circular and not-circular are contradictories. Both of these are kinds of *exclusive* difference. So this is a further metadifference, between two species of exclusive difference. The first metadifference, between compatible and incompatible differences, is a structure of co-ordination. Neither sort of difference is definable in terms of the other; both are required for determinateness. Together they

yield compatible families of incompatible feature-kinds. By contrast, contrariety and contradictoriness are interdefinable There are accordingly two orders of explanation one might pursue in relating them, depending on which one takes as primitive.   One can define contraries in terms of contradictories, so determinate negation in terms of formal negation: for Q to be a contrary of P is for Q to imply P's contradictory, *not-P*. <u>Green</u> is a contrary of <u>red</u> and <u>triangular</u> of <u>circular</u> just insofar as <u>green</u> implies <u>not-red</u> and <u>triangular</u> implies <u>not-circular</u>. Or, one can define contradictories in terms of contraries, so formal negation in terms of determinate negation: for something to be the contradictory of P, *not-P*, is just for it to be the minimal contrary of P, in the sense of being implied by every contrary Q of P. <u>Not-red</u> is implied by *all* of <u>red</u>'s contraries: <u>green</u>, <u>blue</u>, <u>yellow</u>, and so on, and <u>not-circular</u> is implied by *all* of <u>circular</u>'s contraries: <u>triangular</u>, <u>square</u>, <u>pentagonal</u>, and so on.

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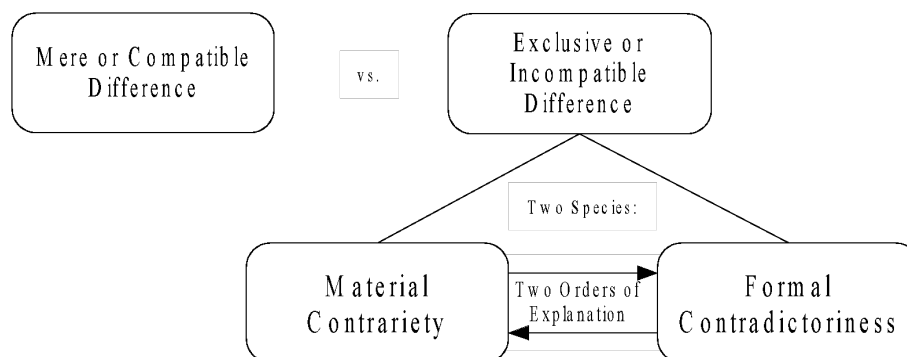
Hegel takes <u>determinate negation</u> to be prior in the order of explanation to formal or abstract negation. He accordingly has the second picture in mind, understanding contradictories in terms of contraries. The tradition of extensional logic and semantics, extending from Boole through Russell to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

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

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

identity and individuation), and mere characterizing predicates expressing properties such as 'red' (which do not individuate),—which is part of what Aristotle's essentialism is a theory of.

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

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

On this basis, contradictoriness, and so formal negation, can be introduced. Contradictory properties are definable as properties with complementary extensions within the domain of objects. *Not-P*, the contradictory of *P*, is the property whose extension consists of all and only the objects in the domain that are not in the extension

of *P*. The relation of contrariety is not really represented in such extensional structures. What are intuitively contraries, such as **square** and **circular**, will have disjoint extensions. But not every pair of disjoint extensions corresponds to proper contraries. If the domain does not happen to include a mountain made of gold, **being made of gold** and **being a mountain** will be disjoint properties, without being contraries. The failure of Tarskian structures to represent contrariety is the result of the modal character of that notion. Contradictoriness of properties *is* represented, because negation is given the same reading in all models: contradictory properties are those pairs whose extensions exhaustively and exclusively partition the domain of objects. In order to represent contrariety of properties, we could in this object-based framework impose a non-logical, material constraint on the Tarskian interpretation function, to ensure that the extensions of contrary properties *P* and *Q* are disjoint in *every* model.

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

incompatible and compatible difference (exclusive and mere difference) for granted. It just builds it in at a different level, as something latecoming.

A particularly extreme version of the extensionalist order of explanation is that of the *Tractatus*. Not only does it not build modality into its primitives, it offers only the most attenuated version of modality, constructed at the very end as something to be understood in terms of logical contradictoriness and (so) formal negation. The Tractarian scheme starts with mere difference of objects, and mere difference of relations among them. Properties are understood as just relations to different objects. All elementary objects can stand in all relations to all other objects. At the ground level, there are no combinatory restrictions at all, except those that follow from the adicity of the relations. What is syntactically-combinatorially categorically possible ("logically possible") is possible *tout court*. Elementary objects put *no* constraints on the Sachverhalte they can enter into, so no restrictions on the properties they can simultaneously exhibit. At this level, properties do not stand to one another in relations of exclusive difference—e.g. where being A's mother meaning one cannot be B's father. More complex facts can be incompatible, but this is intelligible only where one truth-functionally includes the logical negation of an elementary fact included in the other. As I mentioned above, dissatisfaction with this treatment of contrariety of colors seems to have played an important role in moving Wittgenstein away from the Tractarian way of thinking about things.

IV

Grafting on at the end substantive modal constraints on admissible models in the way of possible worlds semantics does not alter the basic Tarskian extensionalist order of explanation. The order of explanation Hegel pursues in *Perception* is the converse of it. It is of the essence of extensional approaches to appeal only to mere or compatible

difference of objects. Besides compatible differences of features, Hegel also acknowledges incompatible or exclusive differences. We have seen that these come in two Aristotelian species: formal contradictories and material contraries. Hegel focuses on the material (nonlogical) incompatibility of such contraries. On the basis of this nonlogical modal primitive, he then elaborates the full aristotelian structure of objects-with-properties (particulars characterized by universals).

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

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

incompatibility applies only to the *same* 'Now'. We could say that the 'Now' is playing the role of a *unit of account* for incompatibilities.

What this role is becomes clearer when we think of it in connection with the second dimension of repeatability that emerged from the consideration of the form of self-consciousness that is sensory consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty, namely *recollective* repeatability. For what would be expressed by "Now_1 is night," is also incompatible with what would be expressed by "$Then_1$ was day," if '$then_1$' expresses a recollection, a holding on to, of what is expressed by 'now_1'. The unit of account for incompatibilities is the "holding onto" that is expressed by the whole anaphoric chain of recollections of the initial demonstrative 'now'.

Further, 'here' expresses a similar unit of account for incompatibilities. What would be expressed by "$Here_1$ is a tree," is not incompatible with what would be expressed by "$Here_2$ is a house." But it is incompatible with what is expressed by "$Here_1$ is a house." And it is incompatible with what would be expressed by "$There_1$ is a house," if what would be expressed by '$there_1$' stands to what would be expressed by '$here_1$' as a recollection that would be expressed by '$then_1$' stands to what would be expressed by 'now_1', that is, as an anaphoric repeatable "holding onto" the spatial demonstrative '$here_1$'. Indeed, the temporal and spatial indexicals can be combined into the spatiotemporal indexical "here-and-now." What such indexicals express are still units of account for incompatibilities. So are the anaphoric repeatables formed from them, what would be expressed by '$there_i$-and-$then_j$'s that are holdings-onto what would be expressed by any '$here_i$-and-now_j'. And what holds for these indexical experiencings holds also for demonstrative ones. That what would be expressed by "$This_1$ is triangular," does not exclude what would be expressed by "$This_2$ is circular." But it does exclude what would be expressed by "$That_1$ is circular," if the '$that_1$' functions as an anaphoric dependent recollecting the original tokening '$this_1$'.

In all these case we can see that the same anaphorically extended structure relating unrepeatable indexical or demonstrative experiencings plays the role of a unit of

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

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

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

One of Kant's innovations is his introduction of Newtonian spatio-temporal identification and individuation of empirical objects, as a replacement of the traditional

Aristotelian identification and individuation of individual substances through their essences and accidents. In the transition from the discussion of sensory consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty (immediate demonstrative awareness of sensible features) to sensory consciousness understanding itself as perception (sensory awareness of empirical objects with observable properties), Hegel is forging a conceptual link between Kantian-Newtonian spatiotemporal identification and individuation and the aristotelian structure of objects-and-properties (particulars-and-universals).

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

V

Understanding functional units of accounts for incompatible sense repeatables more specifically as *objects* or *particulars* involves further unfolding of what is implicit in distinguishing compatible or merely different sense repeatables from incompatible or exclusively different ones. Hegel says of the features that "these determinatenesses…are really only properties by virtue of the addition of a determination yet to come," namely thinghood.[82] He elaborates that notion of <u>thinghood</u> along two dimensions: the thing as *exclusive* and the thing as *inclusive*. In talking about these two different roles essential to being a "*thing* of many properties", he describes it as on the one hand "a 'one', an excluding unity," and on the other hand as an " 'also', an indifferent unity." The unity of the units of account essentially involves this distinction and the relation between being a 'one' and being an 'also'.[83] These correspond to the roles played by objects with respect to *incompatible* properties, which they exclude, and their role with respect to *compatible* properties, which they include. So the intracategorial metadifference between two kinds of difference between what now show up as *properties* is reflected by the intracategorial difference between two complementary roles *objects* play with respect to those properties, as repelling incompatible properties and as a medium unifying a set of compatible properties.

As to the first, he says:

[I]f the many determinate properties were strictly indifferent [gleichgültig] to one another, if they were simply and solely self-related, they would not be determinate; for they are only determinate in so far as they differentiate themselves from one another [sie

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[82] [113].
[83] [114].

sich unterscheiden], and relate themselves to others as to their opposites [als entgegengesetzte].

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

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

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

The One is the *moment of negation*… it excludes another; and it is that by which 'thinghood' is determined as a Thing.[84]

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

On the other hand,

This abstract universal medium, which can be called simply thinghood…is nothing else than what Here and Now have proved themselves to be, viz. a *simple togetherness* of a plurality; but the many are, *in their determinateness*, simple universals themselves. This salt is a simple Here, and at the same time manifold: it is white and *also* tart, *also* cubical…. All these many properties are in a single simple 'Here', in which, therefore, they interpenetrate…And at the same time, without being separated by different Heres,

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

they do not affect each other in this interpenetration. The whiteness does not affect the cubical shape…each…leaves the others alone, and is connected with them only by the indifferent Also. This Also is thus the pure universal itself, or the medium, the 'thinghood', which holds them together in this way.[85]

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

the medium in which these determinations permeate each other in that universality as a simple unity but without making contact with each other, for it is precisely through participation in this universality that each is on its own, indifferent to the others—As it has turned out, this abstract universal medium, which can be called thinghood itself…is none other than the here and now, namely, as a simple ensemble of the many.[86]

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

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

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[85] [113].
[86] [113].

This simple medium is not merely an "also," an indifferent unity; it is also a "one," an excluding unity.[87]

These different but complementary roles reflect, within this ontological category, the distinction between compatible and incompatible differences, within the ontological category of properties.
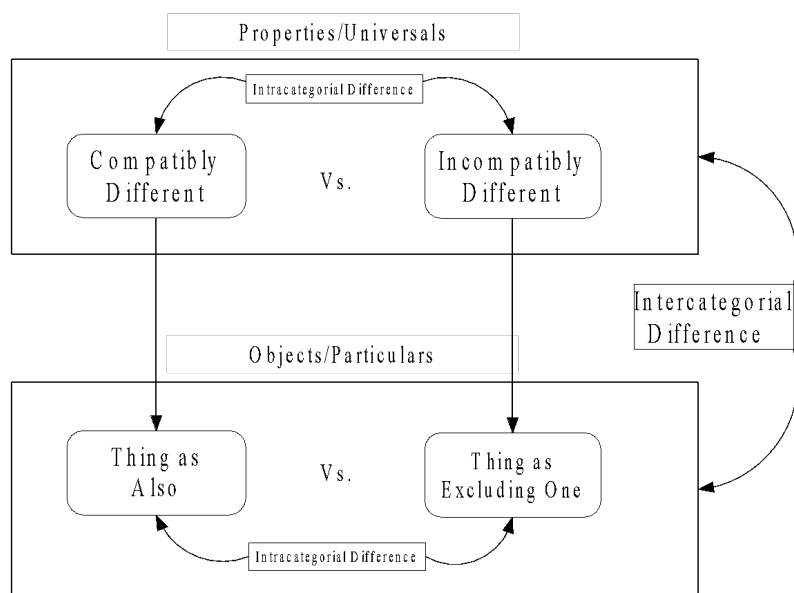
We have seen that determinateness demands that the identity and individuation of properties acknowledge not only compatible differences between them, but also incompatible differences. Does the identity and individuation of objects also depend on

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[87] [114]. Also: "I now further perceive the property as determinate, as contrasted with an other, and as excluding it…I must in fact break up the continuity into pieces and posit the objective essence as an excluding "one." In the broken-up 'one,' I find many such properties, which do not affect each other but which are instead indifferent to each other." [117]

both the role of things as unifying compatible properties and their role as excluding incompatible ones? Hegel says:

...these *diverse aspects*...are *specifically determined*. White is white only in opposition to black, and so on, and the Thing is a One precisely by being opposed to others. But it is not as a One that it excludes others from itself...it is through its *determinateness* that the thing excludes others. Things are therefore in and for themselves determinate; they have properties by which they distinguish themselves from others.[88]

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

But the sense in which objects exclude or are opposed to other objects cannot be the same as the sense in which properties exclude or oppose one another. What would the units of account for *those* exclusions be? More deeply, we have seen that the material contrariety of properties admits of the definition of opposites in the sense of contradictories. Property Q is the opposite of property P in this sense just in case it is exhibited by all and only the objects that do not exhibit P. This is how not-red is related to red. An argument due to Aristotle shows that objects do not have opposites in this sense of contradictories.[89] The corresponding notion of an opposite in the ontological category of objects would have object b being the contradictory of object a just in case b exhibits all and only the properties not exhibited by a. But the properties *not* exhibited by any object always include properties that are incompatible with one another, and hence not all exhibitable by any one object. The red circular object does not exhibit the properties of being green, yellow, triangular, or rectangular. So its opposite would have to exhibit all of these properties (as well as all the other colors and shapes besides red and circular). That is impossible. The chart above has the properties of not being identical to my left little finger, and of not being identical to Bach's Second Brandenburg Concerto.

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[88] [120].
[89] Book V of the *Categories*. [ref.]

Its opposite would have to have the property of being identical to both. Since they are not identical to each other, this cannot be.

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

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

Here we see another aspect of the contrast in orders of explanation between the Tarskian extensionalist tradition and Hegel's metaphysics of universals and particulars. The extensionalist tradition offers an answer to the question about how the identity and

individuation of objects relates to that of properties: Leibniz's Law. It comprises two parts, a weaker and a stronger claim:

LL1: The Indiscernibility of Identicals.

LL2: The Identity of Indiscernibles.

(LL1) says that identical objects must have all the same properties. (LL2) says that objects with all the same properties are identical. The identity of indiscernibles is stronger than the indiscernibility of identicals in that it seems to depend on there being "enough" properties: enough to distinguish all the objects that are really distinct. As it arises in the extensionalist framework, Leibniz's Law appeals only to the mere difference of properties and the mere difference of objects. It becomes controversial how to apply it when modally robust properties are in the picture.[90] How do these principle look in an environment where exclusive difference of properties is also in play, as well as mere difference?

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

- It would underwrite talk of objects as excluding one another.

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

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

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

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

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

So thinking about things from the extensionalist direction, beginning with mere differences of objects and identifying merely different properties in effect with sets of them, does yield a version of the principle of Exclusivity of Objects. If object *a* is red and object *b* differs from it by not having that property, then appeal to the notion of formal or abstract negation yields the result that *b* has the property that is the contradictory of red. It has the property <u>not-red</u>. That property is exclusively different from <u>red</u>, in that it is a property of formal negation that it is *logically* impossible for any object to have both properties simultaneously. The fact that the principle of the Exclusivity of Objects, that merely different objects will have not only compatibly different properties but also incompatibly different ones, arises early in the Hegelian order of explanation and late in the extensionalist one is a consequence and reflection of the two orders of explanation regarding the relations between material contrariety and formal contradictoriness that they adopt.

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

pitch and volume. But any monochromatic Euclidean plane figure must have both shape and color on pain of not qualifying as a determinate particular of that kind.

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

VI

This observation completes the rehearsal of the argument that elaborates what is implicit in the idea of the contents of sensory consciousness as what would be expressed in a feature-placing vocabulary, through the consideration of what is implicit in the requirement that the features articulating those contents must be *determinate*, through the consideration of the relation of negation and universality, to the much more finely structured idea of those contents as presenting a world consisting of empirical objects with many observable properties. We are now in a position to understand what Hegel is after when, in the opening introductory paragraphs of the *Perception* chapter, he says such things as:

Perception…takes what is present to it as universal.[91]

As it has turned out…it is merely the character of positive universality which is at first observed and developed.[92]

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[91] [111].
[92] [114].

Only perception contains negation.[93]

Being…is a universal in virtue of its having mediation or the negative within it; when it *expresses* this in its immediacy, it is a *differentiated, determinate* property.[94]

Since the principle of the object, the universal, is in its simplicity a *mediated* universal, the object must express this its nature in its own self. This it does by showing itself to be *the thing with many properties*.[95]

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

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

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[93] [111].
[94] [113].
[95] [111].

…sensuous universality, that is, the *immediate* unity of being and the negative…[96]

For here he is announcing that in this chapter we get our introduction to one of his master-ideas, that *determinateness* should be understood as a kind of *identity* constituted by *difference*, unity articulated by disparity. (That it is determinate *sensuous* universality is why the sort of unity of being and the negative is characterized as "immediate." I have glossed this as what I called "immediacy of origin," the fact that the episodes of sensory awareness being considered are passively elicited by the exercise of noninferential differential responsive capacities.) Though he has other big ideas, this is the central structural innovation of his thought about what he calls "logic", which only later in the story is differentiated into a semantics addressing the structure of the subjective realm of thought and an ontology or metaphysics addressing the structure of the objective realm of being. One of my main interpretive claims is that determinate negation or material incompatibility on the side of the thinking subjects is *deontic* incompatibility (a matter of commitment and entitlement) and on the side of the objects thought about is *alethic* incompatibility (a matter of necessity and possibility), and that Hegel's idealism is a story about the unity constituted by *these* different kinds of differences. But that is a story for another occasion.

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

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

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

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[96] [115].

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

γ) the many properties themselves, the relation of the two first moments: The negation, as it relates itself to the indifferent element and extends itself within it as a range of differences; the point of individuality in the medium of enduring existence radiating out into multiplicity.[97]

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

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

from

2. exclusive difference of incompatible universals.

This brought into view the

3. metadifference between mere and exclusive difference.

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

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

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[97] [115].

4. material contrariety, corresponding to determinate negation,

and

5. formal contradictoriness, corresponding to abstract logical negation.

There is then also the

6. metadifference between determinate and abstract negation logical negation.

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

Implicit in the concept of repeatables as universals is the

7. difference between universals and particulars.

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

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

8. difference between two roles they play:

- particulars as 'also's, that is as medium hosting a community of compatible universals, and

- particulars as "exclusive ones," that is as units of account repelling incompatible properties.

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

Corresponding to this difference on the side of particulars is the

9. difference between two roles universals play with respect to particulars:

- universals as related to an inclusive 'One' in community with other compatible universals, and

- universals as excluding incompatible universals associated with different exclusive 'One's.

Finally, there is the

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

Unless the distinctions and intricate interrelations between these different ways in which things can be said to differ from or negate others are kept firmly in mind, nothing but confusion can result in thinking about Hegel's metaphysics of negation. As an illustration, both determinate properties and objects can be understood as, to use a favorite Hegelian phrase, "negations of the negation." But in very different ways, accordingly as both what is negated and the negating of it must have senses drawn from different elements of the list above. For instance the first negating of a negation is intracategorial, among universals, and the second is intercategorial, distinguishing particulars from universals. In the first case, the identity of a determinate property consists in how it negates or differs from all of its material contraries. Each is in sense (2) the negation of the property in question. And it is by being the contrary of, negating, all of its exclusive contraries that it is the determinate property that it is. This is one sense in which universals as such "contain negation within themselves," which is why perception, which "takes what is present to it as universal," thereby itself "contains negation." In the second case, according to the order of explanation I have attributed to Hegel, particulars are understood in terms of their exclusive difference, of types (7) and

(9), from universals. Since the universals are the determinate universals they are because of their negations of one another, particulars can be understood as negations of the negations that articulate those universals. They are of the category that does *not* negate others of its category in the way universals do negate others of their category. These two examples of kinds of identity that are intelligible as constituted by negating a negation are obviously quite different, due to the difference in the kinds of negation.

VII

This is the structure I take it that Hegel elaborates from the requirement of *determinateness* of the repeatable features characteristic of empirical consciousness understanding itself a sense certainty. It is introduced in the first five paragraphs of *Perception*. In the body of the chapter, he recounts three large movements of the experience of empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving. Here we, Hegel's phenomenological consciousness, look on at how this underlying structure manifests itself to the phenomenal consciousness by showing the inadequacy of the abstractions that articulate its self-understanding. The overall difficulty is that this sort of self-consciousness still understands the sense in which the properties it perceives are given to it immediately: not only in terms of immediacy of their origin, but still also in terms of the immediacy of their content. As Hegel puts it, according to its self-conception:

It has only to *take* it, to confine itself to pure apprehension of it…If consciousness itself did anything in taking what is given, it would by such adding or subtraction alter the truth.[98]

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[98] [116].

 This means that

His criterion of truth is therefore *self-identity*, and his behavior consists in apprehending the object as self-identical.[99]

The trouble is that diversity (dissimilarity, diversity of moments) is also explicitly a feature of the content of sense perception as determinate.[100] The three movements of the experience of perceiving consciousness are conceptual strategies—each ultimately unsuccessful—for explicitly reconciling the elements of unity and diversity, self-identity and difference, implicit in ground-level determinate sense experience. In accordance with its self-conception, Hegel says, any failure to reconcile these diverse moments must be attributed not to a feature of what is perceived, but to the perceiving of it.

In general, what we see is that so long as empirical consciousness understanding itself according to the categories of perception seeks to its experience as exhibiting independent principles of unity and disparity ("these empty abstractons of a 'singleness' and a 'universality' opposed to it"[101]) that are somehow bolted together to yield a conception of the multifarious kinds of identity-through-difference (" 'being-for-self' burdened with opposition"[102]) we have seen to be implicit in the notion of determinateness, it is doomed to confusion and failure. In its first experience, it notices that what it takes to be the immediately simple, self-identical unity it experiences essentially involves multiplicity, diversity, and difference. (Hegel walks us through several of the dimensions of identity-through-difference retailed in the previous section.) Empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving cannot understand how on this basis *e pluribus unum*, one arising out of many, is possible. Identity and diversity are exclusively different features. So it must be impossible for one single, self-identical content to exhibit both. In particular, one cannot conceive of objects as determinate apart

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[99] [116].
[100] Paraphrase of the final sentences of [116].
[101] [130].
[102] [130].

from their relation to their properties, and one cannot conceive of the properties, in terms of which objects are determinately what they are, as determinately what *they* are apart from their relations (of exclusion) to other properties. So, one cannot understand either *objects* or *properties* as both *determinate* and *independent* of their relations to other things (properties to other properties, objects to properties, and objects to other objects).

Since those sorts of unities are not intelligible according its guiding metaconception, perceiving consciousness takes it that it must be making some sort of a mistake in its taking-in of what is given to it. Either the object of perception is unified and self-identical, and multiplicity is being spuriously added by the perceiving subject, or what is perceived is really diverse and a spurious unity is being conferred by the perceiving subject. What drives the second experience of perceiving consciousness is the question of where to locate *responsibility for* diversity or unity.[103] This is really the issue throughout the body of the chapter. The first metaexperience sought for both in the objective realm of what is perceived. In the second, the loci of responsibility considered are the perceived object and the perceiving subject. The second strategy of perceiving consciousness—still laboring under an understanding of identity as requiring autonomy, excluding essential relation to something other—is to respond to the failure of its first strategy by assigning a role to consciousness in making sense of the complex constellation of unity and diversity required by determinateness.

One way to do that is to take the thing experienced to be indeed one and autonomous, but to be experienced *as* exhibiting diverse properties only because of its relation to our various senses.

We get the entire diversity of these aspects, not from the Thing, but form ourselves, and they fall asunder this way for us because the eye is quite distinct from the tongue…[104]

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[103]   Hegel invokes this issue explicitly by using the phrase "nimmt (sie) auf sich" (takes it upon itself, takes it up), in [118], [120], [122], and again in summary in [131].
[104]   [119].

The idea here is the one Shelley expresses in a passage in *Adonais* where he imagines the "white radiance of eternity" refracted through the multicolored stained glass of the mind to yield the multiplicity we see:

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.

The Shelleyan strategem cannot rescue perceiving consciousness' commitment to understanding identity as involving no substructure of difference from or relation to others, though. For the "various properties which seem to be properties of the Thing,"[105] the "diverse aspects for which consciousness accepts responsibility," are still "*specifically determined*. White is white only in opposition to black...."[106] So the difficulty of understanding identity as constituted through (exclusive) difference is not solved on the subjective side of perceiving consciousness. And on the side of the objective perceived thing, whose unity or identity construed in terms of autonomy is supposed to be preserved by relegating manyness to consciousness,

...it is in its *determinateness* that the thing excludes others. Things are...in and for themselves determinate; they have properties by which they distinguish themselves from others.[107]

The way in which exclusive intracategorial difference is essential to the identity both of properties and of things remains a problem even after responsibility for the diversity of properties has been assigned to one pole of the intentional nexus and responsibility for the unity of the thing has been assigned to the other.

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[105] [119].
[106] [120].
[107] [120].

And the converse Kantian version of this second strategy fares no better. The idea here is that "the Thing itself is the *subsistence of the many diverse and independent properties*," and that "positing these properties as a oneness is the work of consciousness alone."[108] For Kant, what is given is a sensory *manifold* of intuition. Imposing unity on that manifold is solely the responsibility and the result of the work of the understanding. But once again, the identity of each of the diverse properties consists in its exclusive difference from others, and the specific unity imposed on some compatible set of them when they are gathered together into an object as a one as 'also' is distinguished from other such specific unities only by the exclusive difference of some of their various properties.

So dividing responsibility for unity and responsibility for diversity between subjective and objective poles of the intentional nexus, between the act of perceiving and what is perceived, will not solve the underlying problem. Both perceptual experiencings and what is perceptually experienced must be understood as determinate. That means both must exhibit the aristotelian structure of particularity and universality, which implicitly, but essentially, exhibits a fine structure articulated by different sorts of difference or negation, a complex constellation of kinds of categorial identity constituted by relations of different sorts of difference.

Hegel sees one last desperate strategy as available to empirical consciousness understanding itself according to the metaconceptual commitments of perceiving, in attempting to salvage its hopelessly simple-minded atomistic understanding of identity as consisting solely in self-relation, so excluding any essential relation to what is different from it. Interestingly enough—given the account I have offered above of the metaphysical analysis of the aristotelian structure of objects-with-properties I take Hegel to be offering, and its alternatives—the third strategy he considers is what I there called the Tractarian version of the Tarskian extensionalist order of explanation. This begins

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[108] [121].

with mere difference of simple ("elementary") objects, and construes the variety of their properties in terms of their inessential (optional, contingent) relations to one another.[109]

This third strategy, too, is bound to fail. Each thing is supposed to be the determinate thing it is, and so distinguished from other things. But what makes it determinately different is just its properties, now conceived as its relation to other things. So those relations, the way it exclusively differs from others, are essential to its being the thing it is.

The thing is posited as being *for itself,* or as the absolute negation of all otherness, therefore as purely *self*-related negation; but…the Thing has its essential being in another Thing.[110]

The atomistic conception of identity as involving no essential differences must be abandoned.

Rehearsing the lessons of the three experiences of perceiving consciousness, Hegel says that it begins when

From sensuous being it turned into a universal…but a universal *afflicted with an opposition*; for this reason the universality splits into the extremes of singular individuality and universality…These pure determinatenesses…are only a 'being-for-self' that is burdened with a 'being-for-another.'[111]

What is required is a shift in understanding the relations between "the universality which is opposed to and conditioned by singular being":

But these two contradictory extremes are not merely *alongside each other* but in a single unity, or, in other words, the defining characteristic common to both, viz. 'being-for-self' is burdened with opposition generally…[112]

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[109] In [123] and [124].
[110] [126].
[111] [129].
[112] [130].

When fully articulated, the result is the complex structure of particulars and universals involving ten different sorts of negation or difference expounded in sections V and VI above. The holistic way in which the intricately interrelated items in it must be understood in terms of their relations to one another is what Hegel calls "understanding," and the objects understood he calls "forces." They are the topic of the final chapter of the *Conciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*, called "Force and Understanding."

Hegel on Consciousness

Chapter Six:

'Force' and Understanding—From Object to Concept

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

Part One: From Force to Law

The thirty-four paragraphs of "Force and Understanding," the third and final chapter of the *Consciousness* section of the *Phenomenology*, are among the most enigmatic, but also the most important, of the book. One puzzle that arises almost immediately concerns the topic of the first third of the chapter: What is *force* [Kraft]? For instance, if the Newtonian conception is intended, how it that in the many pages devoted to the topic, its sister-concept mass does not need to be so much as mentioned? What motivates treating it as the central concept in the next stage in the developing self-understanding of empirical consciousness? More generally, how are we to understand the role of 'force' in the transition from consciousness understanding its empirical knowledge as having the structure Hegel calls "perceiving" to its understanding empirical knowledge as having the structure he calls "understanding"? One notorious, more localized, less structurally important hermeneutic speed-bump concerns the third (by my count) of the conceptions of a supersensible world that are canvassed in the middle third of the chapter: the Inverted World. This is a world where everything is the opposite of what it is in the

actual world: what was sweet is sour, what was black is white, and so on. How is this even coherent? After all, a central point of the *Perception* chapter is the Aristotelian observation that no object can exhibit the opposite of every property had by some object. Even if it is intelligible, how does this bizarre conception arise out of consideration of the more familiar prior conception of a supersensible world that is the "calm realm of laws"? Perhaps most importantly, how should we understand the final understanding of the supersensible, which Hegel endorses, and how does it rationalize the major expository transition from *Consciousness* to *Self-Consciousness*, which is so important for understanding his idealism?

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

The restriction to *sense* universals, that is, to *observable* properties, as the form of knowable content is essential to the conception of empirical knowing Hegel calls

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

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

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

The opening sentence of *Force and Understanding* tells us that the result of the development of empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has been to bring into view for the first time *unconditioned* universals.[113] Their advent ushers in the conception of <u>thoughts</u>, which are the contentful elements characteristic of the sort of conception of knowing Hegel (adapting Kant's term to his own use) calls "understanding." The first requirement on understanding this conception of knowing as understanding is accordingly making sense of the difference between the "conditioned" universals that were all the conception of knowing as perceiving could countenance, and the "unconditioned" universals the understanding traffics in. We have seen that perceiving consciousness acknowledges only *sense* universals. Hegel's talk here of "conditioned" universals accordingly refers to *sensuously* conditioned universals. Thought encompasses in addition sensuously *un*conditioned universals, that is, universals that are *not* observable. These are purely theoretical. Where perception acknowledged entities that could in principle be known in two ways, either by observation or by inference from observation, thought acknowledges also entities that can *only* be known inferentially. The broadening is from a class of things that are occasionally inferentially accessible to a class that includes also things that are *exclusively* inferentially accessible. The *only* way to know about theoretically postulated entities is by inference—ultimately, from something that is observable.

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

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

only be known about by this second, inferential means—just as understanding empirical knowledge as sense certainty envisaged items knowable only by observation.

But we can say something stronger. Empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has not only provided itself with the conceptual raw materials needed to make intelligible the idea of unobservable theoretical entities. It has committed itself to their existence. For its intellectual progress from conceiving what is knowable empirically as having contents that would be expressed in a feature-placing language, as sense-certainty did, to conceiving what is knowable empirically as having contents that would be expressed in a term-predicate language (via the distinction between compatibly and incompatibly different contents) actually *commits* empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving to the existence of entities that are not immediately observable but are knowable only mediately, by inference. That is so because for it what is observable (and hence real, according to this way of thinking) is just sense universals, observable properties. The particular objects that have those properties are not themselves immediately observable. They are conceived as bare substrates, knowable in principle only indirectly, via their properties. They are in effect units of account for the compatibility of properties (the particular as the "also" of "indifferent matters") and for the incompatibility of properties (the particular as the excluding "one"). It has turned out that a structurally necessary feature of a world containing observable properties that differ from one another in two ways, both compatibly and incompatibly, is that the *particulars* that exhibit *sense universals* are not themselves immediately knowable. Only their observable properties are. The particulars discovered by consciousness conceiving itself according to the categories of perception, that is, as knowing through perceptually taking in sense universals, are theoretical entities.

My first interpretive claim, then, is that the topic unearthed and bequeathed for investigation by perceiving consciousness is the nature and status of theoretical entities: unobservables that can only be known inferentially.[114] It is consideration of this topic that launches the transformation to a new understanding of empirical consciousness, not as *perceiving*, but as *understanding*: grasping thoughts. My second interpretive claim is that in Hegel's discussion, *force* stands in allegorically for theoretical entities generally. What is motivated by the considerations put in play in the *Perception* chapter is that more general topic. The consideration of "force" is a way of talking about the class of things that are only epistemically and semantically accessible inferentially. In the end, it is this fact that motivates the consideration of explanation, which is one of the topics of the middle third of the chapter on consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding.

As I read him, appreciating Hegel's use of allegory in the *Phenomenology* is absolutely crucial to understanding what he is doing. So let me say something about this general trope, before specifically addressing this first instance of it. In a paradigmatic allegory, such as John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the characters, places, and events in a narrative represent ideas or concepts (Hopeful and Goodwill, the Slough of Despond and Vanity Fair, the breaking of the straps that bind Christian's burden to him, and seeing the Celestial City through a "perspective glass"). I think that at least the third through sixth chapters of the *Phenomenology* should be read as presenting *semantic* or *metaconceptual* allegories. I use these modifying adjectives to indicate that the lessons I think we should learn from the narratives Hegel presents concern semantic and metaconceptual concepts: the concepts we use to make explicit various ways of understanding the nature of determinate content, consciousness, self-consciousness, and rational agency. Figures such as the Master and the Slave, Stoicism, Skepticism, the Unhappy Consciousness, the Law of the Heart, the Frenzy of Self-Conceit, Virtue, and the Way of the World and the

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

vicissitudes of the experiences through which they arise and develop are to teach us lessons about the concepts that philosophically articulate our self-consciousness.

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

In the case at hand, the allegorical story itself is set in the conceptual framework of Newtonian physics as formulated by Boscovitch and Kant.[115] What their formulations have in common that matters for Hegel's story is eschewing appeal to the notion of <u>mass</u> in favor of repulsive forces associated with points resulting in impenetrability, those repulsive forces contending with the various more orthodox attractive forces. Reading the allegory properly, I am claiming, requires understanding force, the paradigmatic Newtonian theoretically postulated magnitude, as standing in allegorically for theoretical entities generally. A principal criterion of adequacy of this overarching hermeneutic

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

commitment to reading the discussion of force as a semantic allegory addressing various ontological and epistemological issues concerning theoretically postulated entities is that it be possible to make sense of the narrative progression at the manifest level from force and its expression, to the doubling of forces, to the play of forces, and on to discovering law as the truth of the play of forces, not only as rationalized *within* the allegory, but as making sense in the more general case. This requires motivating and explaining the transitions *without* having recourse to features available only inside the allegory. In particular, for instance, it would grossly violate the constraints of this sort of reading to invoke the peculiarities of electrical forces as having two poles generating both attractive and repulsive forces, or the universality of the law of gravity, in explaining what Hegel is doing in his discussion of the doubling of forces or the consideration of the relation of universal laws to more determinate ones. The moves made under the headings of the "doubling of forces" and the "play of forces" must be understood so as to apply to genes and bosons, qua purely theoretical, that is, exclusively inferentially accessible kinds of things, as well as to literal forces. This is a tall order.

The Boskovitchian allegory as it first shows up has at its center the distinction between *force* and its *expression*.[116] The thought is that force is not itself immediately observable. Its expression is what is immediately accessible through noninferential observation. In the allegory, gravitational force is not observable, but the accelerations it causes are. The presence and magnitude of the force must be inferred from its observable manifestations. A structure of this kind came into view already in the *Perception* chapter, with the thing of many properties. The ontological categorial conception of particulars as substrates of many sense-universals also envisages unobservables knowable only by inference from their observable manifestations. What the allegory of force and its expression is

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

allegorical for is the relation between purely theoretical, postulated entities and the observables on the basis of which those theoretical entities are inferentially accessible.

One of the main issues being addressed is the ontological status of those postulated, only inferentially accessible unobservable theoretical entities. (The distinction between particulars and universals, so important to perceiving consciousness, falls away as irrelevant to this larger question of the ontological status of unobservables of both categories.[117]) Until this point in the *Consciousness* chapters, reality has been identified with what is immediately, noninferentially observable. Empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty sought to secure the possibility of genuine knowledge by restricting its knowledge claims not only to what could be taken in noninferentially, but to what did not at all depend for its content on inferential moves, which were thought of what introduces opportunities for error. Empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving has appreciated the incoherence of this last aspiration, and has realized that far from requiring immunity from the possibility of error, genuine knowledge and the intelligibility of error are two sides of one coin. Determinately contentful knowledge requires the application of concepts as universals, which stand to one another in relations of material incompatibility-and-consequence (exclusion and inclusion). Potentially risky, because falsifiable, inferential commitments to what else must be and cannot be the case are implicit in any commitment to an object actually exhibiting a property.

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

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

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

Allegorically reconstruing the structure that showed up for perceiving consciousness as that of unobservable objects with observable properties in terms of force and expressions of force opens a line of thought that leads, as an intermediate result, to the reversal of the instrumentalist ontological commitment that has been implicit in the ways empirical consciousness can understand itself that have been canvassed so far. The observable expressions of unobservable forces show up as appearances mediating inferential epistemic access to the underlying reality that is the forces expressed. What this is allegorical for is a kind theoretical realism that turns the prior view on its head, identifying the real as what underlies observable appearance, accessible only by making inferences from that appearance. Of this conception Hegel says "Our object is thus from now on the syllogism, which has for its extreme terms the inner of things and the understanding, and for its middle term has appearances."[118] What is observable is demoted from being the real to being mere appearance that is inferentially revelatory of supersensible reality.

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[118] [145].

This identification of reality with theoretical entities is what Arthur Eddington famously endorsed in contrasting his two tables: the solid, colored, unmoving perceptible table of the manifest image and the constellation of colorless charged particles whizzing about at great speed in largely empty space that he calls the "scientific table." His verdict on their relation is clear. "I need not tell you that modern physics has by delicate test and remorseless logic assured me that my second scientific table is the only one which is really there - wherever "there" may be."[119] The observable table is a mere appearance. Now Hegel will in due course reject this invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism. In the allegory, the expressions of force can be no less real than the forces they express. One central result of the discussion of the play of forces is the total decoupling of the concept of <u>appearance</u> from that of <u>observability</u>. The whole play of forces is itself unmasked as mere appearance, its observable and unobservable aspects alike. Nonetheless, ontologically privileging the supersensible inferential deliverances of theory over what is immediately sensuously observable plays a crucial role in the developing experience of empirical consciousness conceiving itself according to the conceptual categories of understanding.

Within the allegory, this line of thought begins with consideration of unobservable forces and their observable expressions. I have suggested how I think this initial bit of the allegory should be read. But what larger lessons about inferential accessibility and the status of theoretical entities are we to learn by reading the later stages of the allegory—in particular the doubling of forces and the move to the play of forces? Within the allegory, the issue concerns how we are to understand the unity of a force in view of the diversity of its expressions. This concern with kinds of identity that essentially involve difference has of course been with us from the beginning of the *Phenomenology*, from the structure

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

comprising both repeatability-as-universality and diachronic-anaphoric repeatability in what would be expressed in feature-placing language in *Sense Certainty* to the intricate structure of universals and particulars retailed in *Perception*. It is this latter that Hegel appeals to when he first introduces the concept of <u>force</u>, to launch his allegorical discussion. That he does things this way means that there are *three* distinct conceptual levels intertwined at the beginning of his story: the one inherited from *Perception*, the allegory of force and its expression, and the extra-allegorical discussion of the ontological status of items that are only epistemically and semantically available inferentially, namely theoretically postulated entities.

The particulars that emerged from the experience of empirical consciousness understanding itself as perceiving themselves have a moment of diversity and a moment of unity or identity. The first is the particular as the medium of "merely indifferently different," that is, compatible universals. As properties inhering in one object Hegel says metaphorically that they "reciprocally permeate" one another, without however "touching", due to the "pure porousness" of their medium. The other moment is the particular as a unity, excluding the incompatible properties, possession of which distinguishes other particulars from it. The way in which the including unity is seen to consist in a diversity, and that diversity is seen to constitute a unity is, he says, what is called 'force'.[120] In that idiom, the inclusive diversity of force is identified with its expression, and its exclusive unity with "force driven back on itself", or "genuine force." The challenge is to understand both these aspects as equally essential to what force is:

In the first place, the force driven back into itself *must* express itself; and, in the second place, in that expression, the force is just as much the force existing *in itself* as it is that expression in this being-within-itself.[121]

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[120]   All quotes here from [136].
[121]   [136].

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

[T]he force is really the unconditioned-universal, which is in itself just what it is *for an other*; that is, what has the distinction — for the distinction is nothing else than *being-for-others* — in itself.[122]

Perceiving consciousness had already understood even merely compatibly different properties as nonetheless *different* in virtue of their relations to *other* properties, namely those they *exclusively* different from. The discussion of the diverse expressions of force as consisting in relations to diverse other forces is going to add a substantial new dimension to the developing semantic picture, within the scope of a further application of the principle that difference within identity is always a matter of relation to others. In particular, in the allegorical story, each one of the different expressions of a single force is the result of the relation of that force to a different other force. The first he calls the "solicited" [sollizitiert] force, the other the "soliciting" force.[123] In the allegory, an example would be an acceleration of one gravitating mass caused by its proximity to another gravitating mass, or by the positive charge of one object in the context of the positive charge of another. In the more general case that the allegory is allegorical for, the different observable manifestations of any theoretical object is to be understood as arising from its interaction with different theoretical objects: the postulated level of demand yields the observed price because of its interaction with a corresponding level of

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[122] [136].
[123] [137].

supply, the genotype yields the phenotype it does because of the (internal biochemical and external resource) environment in which it is expressed.

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

At this point it might seem that we have seen a view of this shape before.   After all, perceiving consciousness had already distinguished compatible, merely different properties by the different sets of properties from which they exclusively differ. Where is the conceptual progress made by empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding, along this crucial dimension of making intelligible a kind of identity that consists in relations to different things? In fact, a significant step has been taken, a substantial new element added to the semantic metaconceptual machinery the allegory is teaching us about. The notion of <u>determinate conceptual content</u> that empirical

consciousness understanding itself as perceiving put in place was expressed entirely in a subjunctive hypothetical register. The content of universals is articulated by relations such as: *If* a particular *were to* exhibit this index universal then it *could not* exhibit any of this class of other universals and *must* exhibit all of this other class of universals. We have seen how the whole elaborate Aristotelean ontological framework of things-with-many-properties can be elaborated from the distinction between compatible and incompatible difference. These all concern what is and is not *possible* and what is and is not *necessary*. Each possible state of affairs (Tractarian *Sachverhalt*) is understood to be the determinate state of affairs it is in virtue of its relations of exclusion and inclusion to other *possible* states of affairs.

By contrast, the immediate, observable expressions of underlying unobservable inferentially postulated theoretical entities are something *actual*, and are brought about only by interactions among those theoretical entities that are construed as *actual*. This becomes clear already with the "doubling of forces" when the expression of force is analyzed as the effect of solicited and soliciting forces: "What arises out of this is that the concept of force becomes *actual* by virtue of its being doubled into two forces, and how it becomes actual."[124] The sensuous immediacy of observable expression anchors inference to actuality. States of affairs are treated as actual by being taken to be expressed. Their contentfulness still depends on their being surrounded by a nimbus of other possible states of affairs from which they differ, compatibly or exclusively. But to this space of heretofore merely subjunctive relations has been added a distinction between states of affairs that are actual, that is expressed, and those that are not. (We think about the 'actuality' asterisk having been inscribed on some of the possibilia—and about the significance of doing so.)

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[124] [141].

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

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

For the first, as already remarked, Hegel says:

Our object is thus from now on the syllogism, which has for its extreme terms the inner of things and the understanding, and for its middle term has appearances…[125]

And further:

In this, what is the *inner true*… has come to be *for the understanding*; for the first time and from now on, there opens up over and above the *sensuous* (as the *appearing*) world a *supersensible* world (as the *true* world)...[126]

The true world, the world of things as they are in themselves, is now taken to be the theoretical entities, whose interactions produce the observable effects (in the allegory, the expressions of the forces) that constitute its appearance, what it is for consciousness. This is what I called "invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism." It is a theoretical realism in that, like Eddington in his famous essay, it identifies the real with the theoretical entities that are postulated as actual, whose activity is understood as the source of what is observable. It is invidious insofar as it understands the observable/theoretical distinction to be an ontological one, and, turning on its head the implicit instrumentalism of empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense certainty and as perceiving, treats *only* the theoretical entities as real.[127] What is sensuously immediate, the touchstone and paradigm of the real for the two previous forms of empirical (self-)consciousness, now appears only as an epistemic means, mediating the access of the understanding to an underlying theoretical reality, which is something *for* consciousness only by means of inferences whose premises are supplied by sensuous immediacy. The truth of the sensuously immediate world is the supersensible world it gives empirical consciousness inferential access to: "The supersensible is the sensous and the perceived posited as it is *in truth*."[128]

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[125] [145].
[126] [144].
[127] This is the view where, since no content can be acknowledged for the inner world of things as they are in themselves, "nothing would be left but to stop at the world of appearance, i.e. to perceive something as true that we [now] know is not true." [146]
[128] [147].

Invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism is, of course, a view that has had many philosophical adherents since Eddington. It is for instance a close relative of the view that Sellars endorses under the rubric of the *scientia mensura*: "In the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not,"[129] Sellars treats this view as a successor version of Kant's things-in-themselves, to be contrasted, as noumenal, with the merely phenomenal ordinary language "manifest image," which is a generalization of Eddington's plain man's observable table, the table of the pre-theoretical life-world.[130]

The invidious theoretical realism Hegel is considering is not quite identical to the scientific realism Sellars champions, however, and the difference points in the direction Hegel sees as implicit in the position he is considering here. For it is one thing to say that it is the deliverances of *science* that have sovereign authority "in the dimension of describing and explaining" (a qualification that is of cardinal significance for both thinkers), and another to say that what is real is exclusively the *theoretical* entities postulated by science. The latter is what makes the theoretical realism in question *invidious*. For natural science, too, countenances at least some observable properties and things as real (even if, Sellars more or less agrees with Eddington, colors are not among them, counting as only secondary qualities). The lesson Sellars thinks we should learn by seeing what is wrong with instrumentalism is not just that theoretical entities (that is, those that are only available inferentially) can be real, but more deeply, that the distinction between the observable and the theoretical should not be construed as an

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[129] *EPM* §41.
[130] In his Locke lectures, published as *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes* [Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968. Reprinted by Ridgeview Publishing Co. 1992]. Hegel remarks on this reading of Kant in [146], pointing out that it would be a ridiculous overreaction to think of things in themselves as an *unknowable* beyond on this conception of them. Sellars agrees and takes this fact to be a prime advantage of his critical rendering of the Kantian idea.

ontological distinction at all. It is of merely methodological or epistemic significance, a matter of our mode of access to things, which does not mark a distinction of ontological or metaphysical kind.[131] He rejects what he calls the "Platonic principle," according to which the most important distinctions of ontological kind (Being/Becoming) are to be marked off by our mode of epistemic access to them (intellect/sense). Pluto, formerly-known-as-a-planet, was originally theoretically postulated, as a body of such-and-such a mass in such-and-such an orbit, to explain perturbations in the orbit of Neptune. It did not change ontological status when telescopes were developed that enabled observational, noninferential knowledge of it.

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

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[131]   EPM § [ref.].

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

The Understanding, which is our object, finds itself in just this position, that the inner world has come into being for it, to begin with, only as the universal, still unfilled, *in-itself*. The play of Forces has merely this negative significance of being *in itself* nothing, and its only positive significance that of being the *mediating agency*, but outside of the Understanding... What is *immediate* for the Understanding is the play of Forces; but what is the *True* for it is the simple inner world.[132]

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

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[132]   [148].

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

Hegel makes it harder to see the answers to these questions than it perhaps needs to be by putting the cart before the horse in his exposition. That is, as I read him, this move is not explained and motivated before its outcome is characterized, in the passage quoted above. Rather, the outcome is stated first, and only then is the process that leads to it expounded. The play of forces allegorically introduces a *holistic* ontology. The forces are actual only in that they are expressed, that is, only in what is produced by their interactions with other forces. But now what is produced by those interactions is understood in exactly the same way, as being of the same kind, as the forces that interact. How is this identity as consisting in relation to others, whose identity also consists in its relations to others, to be understood? If the others are already individuated, then diverse expressions upon interactions with diverse others are intelligible. But if that individuation is itself thought of as consisting solely in such diverse interactions with diverse others, the conception threatens to collapse. I think the undifferentiated, indeterminate, "simple," "still unfilled" picture of the inner invoked in the passage quoted above is the result of understanding consciousness trying to make explicit what is implicit in this holistic picture, before it has developed the conceptual resources necessary to do so—before understanding itself as "infinite," in Hegel's somewhat alarming terminology.

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

[T]his play of Forces is so constituted that the force which is *solicited* by another force is equally the *soliciting* Force for that other, which only thereby becomes itself a soliciting Force. What is present in this interplay is likewise merely the immediate alternation, or the absolute interchange, of the *determinateness* which constitutes the sole *content* of what appears: to be either a universal medium, or a negative unity. [viz.: inclusive 'also' or exclusive 'one']…Each of these two sides, the *relation* of soliciting and the *relation* of the opposed determinate content, is *on its own account* an absolute reversal and interchange [Verkehrung und Verwechslung]. But these two relations themselves are again one and the same, and the difference of *form*, of being the solicited and the soliciting Force, is the same as the difference of *content*, of being the solicited Force as such, viz. the passive medium on the one hand, and the soliciting Force, the active, negative unity or the One, on the other. In this way there vanishes completely all distinction of *separate*, mutually contrasted *Forces*, which were supposed to be present in this movement, for they rested solely on these distinctions; and the distinction between the Forces, along with both those distinctions, likewise collapses into only one. Thus there is neither Force, nor the act of soliciting or being solicited, nor the determinateness of being a stable medium and a unity reflected into itself, nor are there diverse antitheses; on the contrary, what there is in this absolute flux is only *difference* as a *universal* difference, or as a difference into which the many antitheses have been resolved. [133]

Here the claim is that trying to make sense of the play of forces raises the same problem twice, once on the side of form and again on the side of content. On the side of form (what has been added by understanding consciousness, bringing with it the crucial added modal dimension of actuality), the distinction between forces depends on each of them

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[133]   [148].

playing the role of being solicited by a variety of *other* forces playing the role of soliciting actual expressions by their interaction. But if all there is to identify and individuate them is standing in these relations to *different* other forces, which similarly are distinguished only by *their* standing in such solicited/soliciting relations to different other forces, how is the process of individuation to get off the ground? On the side of content (the model of the determinate content of states of affairs inherited from perceiving consciousness) involves particulars exhibiting a diversity of universals, with that diversity being understood in terms of relations to others along two dimensions: relations to other compatible univerals in an inclusive medium (the particular as 'also') and relations to other incompatible universals via an exclusive unity (the particular as 'one'). For this picture of determinately contentful unity-in-and-through-diversity to be intelligible, it seems, those other universals appealed to in articulating the two dimensions of relations-to-others must already be intelligible *as distinct and distinguished from one another*.[134]

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

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

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

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

This difference, as a *universal* difference, is consequently the *simple element in the play of Forces itself*, and what is true in it. It is the *law of Force*.[135]

In fact a number of lessons are taught by this first (three-phased) experience of understanding consciousness: the ontological legitimacy of merely inferentially accessible entities, the essential role played by actuality in filling out the modal structure of necessity and possibility that articulates determinately contentful states of affairs, and the need for a holistic conception of what it is to be determinately contentful. The principal overarching form of the move being made, comprising these lessons, is however the transition from thinking in terms of <u>force</u> to thinking in terms of <u>law</u>. This is a shift of focus, consonant with the holistic lesson, from *relata* to the *relations* that, it has been learned, functionally define and determine those relata. Instead of asking about the

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[135] [148].

nature and ontological status of theoretical entities, in the sense of items that are only inferentially accessible, semantically and epistemically, to empirical consciousness, consciousness conceiving of itself as understanding now asks about the relations in virtue of which anything at all is inferentially accessible. These are relations of necessity, possibility, and impossibility that constrain and determine the actual interactions of thinkables: the determinately conceptually contentful states of affairs we think about.

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

[N]egation is an essential moment of the universal, and negation, or mediation in the universal, is therefore a *universal difference*. This difference is expressed in the *law*, which is a stable image of an unstable appearance. Consequently, the supersensible world is a calm realm of laws which, though beyond the perceived world—for this exhibits law only through incessant change—is equally *present* in it and is its direct tranquil image.[136]

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

I take it that one of the large lessons Hegel wants to teach us through the subsequent discussion in this chapter is that it is a mistake to reify the laws, that is, to think of them as constituting a supersensible world. To do that is to think of statements

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[136] [149]. I have substituted Baillie's 'calm' for Miller's 'inert' translating 'ruhiges'.

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

Before getting to the main point—which will lead us to lay the concept of <u>explanation</u> alongside that of <u>law</u>—Hegel makes two preliminary observations about the calm realm of laws picture. The first is that "The law is present in appearance, but it is not the entire presence of appearance; under ever different circumstances, the law has an ever different actuality."[137] "Appearance" here is the actual behavior of entities revealed both immediately through observation and mediately through inference: in the allegory, the "play of forces." Laws of nature determine how things actually interact only when supplemented by actual boundary conditions. The necessities and possibilities laws codify are hypothetical. They determine what actually happens only in the context of actual circumstances of application, which single out some of those hypotheticals as worthy of detaching conclusions from, by fixing which antecedents are factual (actually true). This observation reflects one of the advances of understanding over perceiving consciousness pointed out above: the realization that the extreme modal registers of necessity and possibility require help from the middle register of actuality in order to determine the actual "expression of forces", solicited by the concerted play of their fellows, to yield appearance. As it shows up here, the observation concerns the relations

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[137] [150].

of laws to forces. There are two kinds of necessity in play: the hypothetical necessity codified in law and lawful necessity as expressed under actual conditions. The latter is equivalent to force. The interplay between actuality, on the one hand, and necessity and possibility on the other hand—which can be construed in terms of relations between categorical and merely hypothetical necessity—in the constitution of determinate conceptual content is intricate. What is being rejected is the strategy of understanding it by construing the structure of necessity-and-possibility as a special kind of actuality: as a supersensible world.

Thinking of laws as a kind of superfact threatens to make unintelligible this relation between law and matter-of-factual forces (facts about the actual behavior of things). One way to think about the difficulty emerges explicitly a bit further on. It is that laws and the things they govern seem to present the same content in two different forms:

Force is constituted exactly the same as law; there is said to be no difference whatever between them. The differences are the pure, universal expression of law, and pure Force, but both have the *same* content, the *same* constitution [Beschaffenheit].[138]

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

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[138] [154].

misconstrued if it is thought of on the model of a relation between two kinds of *things* (represents, facts, worlds).

The second preliminary observation concerns a question about laws that is in some ways analogous to the holistic issue about how to understand the relations between individual determinate forces and the whole play of forces. In the allegory, this shows up as an issue concerning the relations between a single universal law (of gravitational attraction) and more specific laws of motion derivable from it when various conditions are fixed. "insofar as it is not *the* law in general but *one* law, it has determinateness in itself; and as a result there are indeterminately *many* laws on hand."[139] In this case, though, Hegel impatiently reads the allegory for us.

In saying that, the understanding supposes that it has found a universal law, which expresses universal actuality *as such*; but it has really only found the concept of law itself, but nonetheless in such a way that it says at the same time: All actuality is *in itself* lawful.[140]

Universal attraction, that is, the pure concept of law, thereby stands over and against determinate laws.[141]

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

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[139] [150].
[140] [150].
[141] [151].

[T]he expression of *universal attraction* has to that extent great importance as it is directed against that *representation*, that is devoid of thought, for which everything presents itself in the shape of contingency and for which determinateness has the form of sensuous self-sufficiency.[142]

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

These questions about how to understand the relations between laws and the "forces" they govern remain unresolved at this point in the text. I think Hegel takes them to be unresolvable so long as understanding consciousness remains bound to a representational paradigm, according to which what is expressed by modally qualified claims about what is necessary and possible are thought of as playing the expressive role of representing states of affairs that are *like* actual states of affairs: real, but located in a distinctively different ontological postal code. Hegel will recommend an expressive successor conception to this representational one, according to which statements of law express explicitly features of the framework within which it is possible to understand determinate ground-level states of affairs. It is a criterion of adequacy of that replacement picture that it provide satisfactory responses to the questions being raised here, once those questions have been transformed by formulating them without representational presuppositions about what laws express.

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[142] [150].

Part Two: Law and Explanation

The idea of the calm realm of laws as a supersensible world is the idea that laws are superfacts which are represented by statements of laws in the same way facts in the world of empirical appearance (including what is only accessible inferentially) are represented by ordinary statements about what properties objects have. Hegel considers a final way in which the representational semantic model deployed by empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding can be applied to yield a construal of the relations between law and the world of empirical appearance (the "play of forces"). This is what he calls the "inverted world" [verkehrte Welt]. The discussion of this topic is compressed and enigmatic. It has long been recognized as one of the most challenging passages in the *Phenomenology*. What the inverted world is the inverse of is in the first instance the world of appearance. But Hegel signals that the conception of the inverted world expresses another application of the same representational strategy for understanding the relations between law and appearance that led to the calm realm of laws by describing it also as an inversion of that picture: "since one aspect is already present in the first supersensible world this is the inversion of that world."[143]

The inverted world is indeed strange:

According, then, to the law of this inverted world, what is *like* in the first world is *unlike* to itself…Expressed in determinate moments, this means that what in the law of the first

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[143]   [157]. In this bit of the text, Hegel refers to the calm realm of laws as the "first supersensible world." I count it as actually the second, after reality construed as the purely theoretical entities that give rise to observable expressions according to invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism.

world is sweet, in this inverted in-itself is sour, what in the former is black is, in the other, white.[144]

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

The view being considered reifies the necessity-structured (lawfully related) possibilities that strongly contrast with actuality into another world, alongside the actual world. It is a supersensible world since unlike actuality, possibilities cannot be sensuously immediate, and so cannot even supply observationally delivered premises from which other merely possibles could be known inferentially.[145]

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[144] [158].

[145] I doubt that this is true, and I do not take Hegel to be committed to it. But the picture of the inverted world as a supersensible world does incorporate this claim.

So far, so good. We can see the inverted world as a conception that combines a semantic point familiar from *Perception* with the concern, new to understanding consciousness, with the relations between actuality (empirical appearance, including what is only epistemically available inferentially), allegorized as the play of *forces*, and necessity-structured possibility , namely the realm of *law*. The latter is reified, treated as a supraempirical world of merely possibles, which are thought of as represented by modally qualified statements in the same sort of way that actual facts are represented by ground-level empirical statements. But thinking of the merely possible states of affairs that render actual states of affairs determinate by strongly contrasting with them as constituting a *world* (albeit an "inverted" one) seems immediately to run afoul of another cardinal lesson we learned from the experience of perceiving consciousness. The facts that make up the actual world are *compossible*, materially compatible, *merely*, not exclusively different from one another. That seems like a reasonable necessary condition of thinking of them as making up a *world*. By contrast, the states of affairs that exclusively differ from actual states of affairs are not compossible or compatible with one another. **Sour** is materially incompatible with **sweet**, but so is **bitter**. And **bitter** and **sour** are materially incompatible with each other.[146] **White** is not the only contrary (the sense of "opposite" [entgegengesetzte] I am claiming is in play here) of **black**. **Red** and **green** are as well. The semantogenic possibilia that surround each actual fact like a cloud do not make up a *world* in the sense of a set of *compossible*, *compatible* states of affairs. The actual world, like any particular object, does not have an "opposite" in the sense of a contradictory, even though properties can.

I think the difficulties readers have had with the inverted world section of the *Phenomenology* are rooted in this fact. Hegel is not describing the inverted world as *indeterminate*, in the way it would be if what were sweet in the actual world were simply

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

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

While understandable, I think such worries are mistaken. The view Hegel addresses under the heading of the "inverted world" is a coherent one, and it has been and is endorsed and defended by serious philosophers who do *not* start with Hegel's account of determinateness in terms of contrariety. For the view he is considering is formally equivalent to contemporary possible worlds approaches to modality, epitomized by that of David Lewis. To see this, it will help to compare the possible worlds framework (PW) with the inverted world picture (IW). In orthodox PW, we contrast the actual world as just *one* maximal compossible set of states of affairs, with other possible *worlds*, also conceived of as (or as determining/determined by) maximal compossible sets of states of affairs. The states of affairs of the actual world are made intelligible by situating them in a *universe* of other possible worlds. We can then understand an actual state of affairs in terms of the truth at the actual world of a proposition, construed as a set of possible worlds (interpreted as those in which that proposition is true). Determinateness of an actual state of affairs is a matter of partitioning the universe of possible worlds in which it

is situated.   Two propositions are materially incompatible just in case there is no possible world in which both are true. Contradictories are minimum incompatibles (propositions entailed by everything materially incompatible with what they are contradictories of). Since two distinct possible worlds must have *some* difference in the propositions true at them, and they are *maximal* compossible sets of states of affairs, any two distinct possible worlds will have materially incompatible propositions true at them. That is, they do not *merely* differ, they also *exclusively* differ. Material incompatibilities of states of affairs (propositions) is encoded in what sets of states of affairs are taken to be genuinely compossible, i.e. to make up a genuinely possible world.

Exactly the same information is presented in Hegel's IW, but packaged somewhat differently.   Rather than contrasting the actual world with other possible *worlds*, each actual *state of affairs* is contrasted with all of the states of affairs that are incompatible with *it*. So what contrasts with the actual world, as a maximal set of compossible states of affairs, is rather the whole set of (noncompossible) nonfactual states of affairs. The IW is simply the set of all the states of affairs that stand in this relation of exclusive difference or material incompatibility, to *some actual* state of affairs. If this set determined, together with the underlying material incompatibilities (necessities-governing-possibilities), we can compute all the compossible sets of those states of affairs. What we do in PW is conversely to compute what is incompatible (noncompossible) with a given proposition (represented by a set of possible worlds), represented as a set of possible worlds, from the whole set of possible worlds, taken as settled in advance of the computation.   The PW framework and the IW framework are formally equivalent. We can start with the universe of possible worlds and compute material incompatibilities of states of affairs (propositions), construed as sets of possible worlds, or we can start by associating with each state of affairs the set of all states of affairs that are materially incompatible with it and compute the sets of maximal

compossible sets of states of affairs. Exactly the same information can be packaged in either way.

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

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

overcome to move beyond it (from the metaconceptual framework of *Verstand* towards the metaconceptual framework of *Vernunft*).

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

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

Looked at superficially, this inverted world is the opposite of the first in the sense that it has the latter outside of it and repels that world from itself as an *actual world*: that the one is appearance, but the other is the in-itself.[147]

This superficial view is to be deplored and rejected.

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

[S]uch antitheses of inner and outer, appearance and the supersensible, as two different kinds of actuality we no longer find here. The repelled differences are not shared afresh between two substances such as would support them and lend them a separate subsistence…*just such an sense-world* as the first, but in *representation* [Vorstellung]; it could not be exhibited as a sense-world, could not be seen, heard, or tasted, and yet it would be thought of as such a sense-world. But, in fact, if the one *posited world* is a perceived world, and its *in-itself*, as its inversion, is equally *thought of as sensuous*, then sourness, which would be the in-itself of the sweet thing is actually a thing just as much as the latter, viz. a *sour thing*, black, which would be the in-itself of white, is an actual black…[148]

I think there are two principal objections to this view on offer. First, the reification of contrasting possibilia that is being rejected amounts to construing the modal articulation of actuality, which was originally presented in the shape of *laws*, on the model (allegorically) of further *forces*. That is, the possibilia are understood as further states of affairs, participants in what was allegorized as the play of forces, in some sense of the same kind as actual states of affairs, only not actual. Such a conception faces the same

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147 [159].
148 [159].

sort of difficulty that led to the postulation of laws as distinguished from the actual play of "forces" they govern. Understanding the relations between actuality and necessity-governed-possibilities threatens to require postulating a superlaw governing those relations. Material incompatibilities (what is compossible) and consequences are treated as just more ultimately contingent (super)facts. Such a view, Hegel thinks, misconstrues the radically different role played in explanation by what is made explicit by modal claims.

From the idea, then, of inversion, which constitutes the essential nature of one aspect of the supersensible world, we must eliminate the sensuous idea of fixing the differences in a different sustaining element; and this absolute Notion [Begriff] of the difference must be represented and understood purely as inner difference…[149]

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

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[149] [160].

a priori and does not require empirical investigation to establish. But the question is at base a conceptual question about how to understand necessary connections.

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

In the law of motion, e.g., it is necessary that motion be split up into time and space, or again, into distance and velocity. Thus, since motion is only the relation of these factors, it—the universal—is certainly divided *in its own self*. But now these parts, time and space, or distance and velocity, do not in themselves express this origin in a One; they are indifferent [gleichgültig] to one another, space is thought of as able to be without time, time without space, and distance at least without velocity…and thus are not related to one another through *their own essential nature*.[150]

For both force and mass, the necessary relation of one to the other is an essential aspect of its identity. Each can be what it is only as standing in this necessary relation to something else. It is equally essential to the unity that is motion, according to its laws, both that it be split up into different components, and that that partition be in some sense cancelled by the assertion that the lawful relation among the components is necessary and essential to what they are.

The difference, then…is not a difference *in its own self*; either the universal, Force, is indifferent to the division which is the law, or the differences, the parts, of the law are indifferent to one another.[151]

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[150] [153].
[151] [154].

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

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

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

that the difference is not a *difference belonging to the thing itself*. This necessity, which is merely verbal, is thus a recital of the moments constituting the cycle of the necessity. The moments are indeed distinguished, but, at the same time, their difference is expressly said to be *not* a difference of the thing itself, and consequently is immediately cancelled again. This process is called "explanation." [Erklären][152]

The kind of essentially differentiated necessary unity expressed by law can is to be understood in the first instance by considering the process of explanation. A law such as $d=k*t^2$ can be exploited according to two different orders of explanation, depending on what one takes as premise and what as conclusion in an inference. One can explain why the stone fell the distance it did by computing d from t, or one can explain why it took as long as it did to fall the fixed difference by computing t from d. Hegel calls making these inferences "reciting the moments" that are necessarily related by the law (the "cycle of necessity"). The difference in the moments, in spite of their necessary connection by the law, is manifest in the different orders of explanation, the difference in what understanding consciousness is *doing* in making the two different kinds of move.

The exact nature of the relation between the distinction between two orders of explanation—inferring distance from time and inferring time from distance—on the one hand, and the distinction between the two necessarily related "moments" of the law, distance and time, is not yet clear to the shape of understanding consciousness being considered. It does not yet see how to understand the difference between distance and time as being a feature of the objective world. What it does appreciate, the new insight characteristic of this form of empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding, is that the differentiation into necessarily related moments that is essential to the articulation of the objective world expressed by laws is unintelligible apart from consideration of the inferential movement of empirical consciousness in explanations that traverse the moments in different directions. The idea is that the *objective relations*

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[152] [154].

among theoretical entities that are codified in laws can only be adequately understood in a context sufficiently capacious as to include *subjective* inferential *processes* of explanation ("subjective" not in a Cartesian sense, but in the sense of being activities of knowing subjects).

The claim that the objective pole of the intentional nexus cannot properly be understood apart from an understanding of the subjective pole, and so of the whole intentional nexus marks a decisive move in the direction of Hegel's idealism. It is of the first importance to understand it correctly. As already indicated, Kant already had a version of this thought, motivated for him, as Hegel motivates it here, by thinking about the distinctive expressive role played by the alethic modal concepts deployed in statements of laws and the subjunctive conditionals they support. ("If the stone *had* fallen for *t* seconds, it *would* have fallen *d* meters.") The expressive role of such conditionals is in turn a matter of the kind of subjunctively robust reasoning (inferences) they support. Statements of laws and subjunctive conditionals are (in Ryle's phrase) inference-tickets. They codify patterns of reasoning. Understanding what it means to say that the objective world is lawful, that states of affairs stand to one another in relations of incompatibility and necessary consequence, requires understanding the patterns of reasoning that those claims license. This view is a kind of *modal expressivism*.[153]

I see the move being made here as the second in a three-stage process of articulating ever more radical commitments collectively constituting Hegel's final idealist view. The first commitment is to what I have called "conceptual realism." The second commitment is to what I call "objective idealism." The third is to what I call "conceptual idealism." I offer these claims as a tripartite analysis of Hegel's idealism, claiming that

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

his view is what you get if you endorse all of them. I take it they form a hierarchy, with each commitment presupposing those that come before it.

As I read it, conceptual realism appears on the stage already in the *Introduction* to the *Phenomenology* (though not, of course, in all the detail that will be filled in at subsequent stages). This is the view, roughly put, that the objective realm of facts about empirical (but not necessarily observable) things, no less than the subjective realm of thoughts about them, is *conceptually* structured. Only an account that underwrites this commitment, Hegel thinks, can satisfy what I have called the "genuine knowledge condition": that when things go right, what things are for consciousness is what they are in themselves. Hegel's way of articulating conceptual realism depends on his nonpsychological conception of the conceptual. To be conceptually contentful is to stand in conceptual relations to other such conceptually contentful items. Conceptual relations are relations of material incompatibility (exclusive difference or contrariety) and consequence: Hegel's "determinate negation" and "mediation."

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

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

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

Xs are *sense-dependent* on Ys just in case one cannot in principle count as grasping the concept X unless one also grasps the concept Y. In this sense, the concept sunburn is sense-dependent on the concepts sun and burn, and the concept parent is sense-dependent on the concept child. As these examples show, sense-dependence can be either

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

The case that matters for thinking about what I am calling "objective idealism" is that of concepts that stand in a relation of sense-dependence but, unlike, say, superior and subordinate, *not* also in a relation of reference-dependence. One kind of example is provided by subjunctive response-dependent concepts and the properties they refer to. Suppose we define something as beautiful* just in case it would be responded with pleasure were it to be viewed by a suitable human observer. (The asterisk distinguishing "beautiful*" from "beautiful" marks my not being committed to this as being the right definition, or even the right form of definition, for "beautiful" itself.) Then one cannot understand the concept beautiful* unless one understands the concept pleasure (as well as others such as suitable human observer). Then one can ask whether the existence of beautiful* objects depends on the existence of pleasurable responses by suitable human observers. For instance, were there beautiful* sunsets before there were any humans, and would there have been beautiful* sunsets even if there never had been humans? It seems clear that there were and there would have been. For even if the absence of suitable human observers means that sunsets are in fact not observed, and so not responded to by

suitable human observers at all, never mind with pleasure, that *had* there been such observers they *would* have responded with pleasure. And that is enough for them to count as beautiful*. So there can be sense-dependence without reference-dependence.

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

I take it that at least in the discussion of perceiving consciousness and in the discussion up to this point of understanding consciousness, Hegel has implicitly been accepting that

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

What is new with objective idealism is the converse sense-dependence claim: this form of understanding consciousness realizes that it cannot make sense of the notion of law except in terms that appeal to processes of explanation. The objective idealism that emerges for understanding consciousness is accordingly a *reciprocal* sense-dependence

of the concepts articulating the *objective* things and relations and the concepts articulating the *subjective* thoughts and practices of understanding consciousness itself. Given what has gone before, this reciprocal sense-dependence is not limited to laws governing the objective world and the inferential manipulation of thoughts by subjects in explanation. So we can infer from the discussion of perceiving consciousness's experience of an objective world with an Aristotelian metaphysical structure that the concepts of <u>property</u> or <u>universal</u>, on the one hand, and the concept of what one is doing in *classifying* <u>by applying *predicates*</u>, on the other, are reciprocally sense-dependent. One cannot properly understand either one with understanding the other. Similarly, the concepts of <u>object</u> or <u>particular</u>, and the concepts of <u>*referring* with *singular terms*</u> are reciprocally sense-dependent. Given the notion of <u>fact</u> that perceiving consciousness bequeaths to understanding consciousness, we can add the reciprocal sense-dependence of that concept on the side of the objective world with that of the practice of <u>claiming</u> (or <u>judging) using declarative sentences</u> on the side of subjective practices.

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

Objective Ontological or Metaphysical Categories:	**Subjective Pragmatic Categories:**	**Syntactic Categories:**

Objects/Properties or Particulars/Universals	Referring/Classifying	Singular Terms / Predicates
Facts	Asserting, Claiming, or Judging	Declarative Sentences
Laws	Explaining as Inferring	Universally Quantified Subjunctive Conditionals

Asserting the sense-dependence of the concepts <u>object</u> and <u>particular</u> on concepts articulating the use of singular terms is rejecting the possibility of general reductive explanations along the lines Quine suggests when he defines singular terms as expressions that "purport to refer to just one object."[154] He takes it that the concept <u>object</u> is clear and independently accessible, and so can be appealed to in explaining that of <u>singular term</u>. Perhaps this is so for middle-sized bits of dry goods, but the idea begins to break down when pressed at the margins. Thinking about candidate objects such as musical notes, holes, *ressentiment,* theological phenomena such as irresistible grace, historiographical objects like the Enlightenment or modernity, concepts, cognitions, abstracta…overloads intuitions about objects and particulars and drives one inevitably to thinking about the use of the terms in question. That is why in the *Grundlagen*, Frege finds it necessary to address the vexed question of whether numbers are objects by investigating whether numerals are used as proper singular terms.

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

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

For Hegel, all these issues come down to the concept of <u>determinate negation</u>. The metaphysical analysis by perceiving consciousness of particulars and universals in the Aristotelian structure of objects with many properties stays as resolutely on the objective side of the intentional nexus as can be. As we saw, all he requires is the distinction, inherited from empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense-certainty, between two kinds of difference: compatible or "mere, indifferent" difference and incompatible or exclusive difference (contrariety). This distinction, he takes it (by contrast to the British empiricists) is a feature of immediate sense experience. Appealing only to these two kinds of difference, Hegel is able, in a *tour de force* of

analysis and construction, to elaborate, on behalf of perceiving consciousness, a richly articulated structure of facts about the possession by particulars of sense-universals: objects with many observable properties. (We have seen in this chapter how the discovery that implicit in the idea of observable properties differing in the two basic ways is the idea of objects as bearers of those properties, objects that are *not* observable in the same sense the properties are leads on to a generalized notion of theoretical entities, including properties and indeed facts, which are only inferentially accessible.)

This order of explanation shows that for Hegel *if* there is a reciprocal sense-dependence relation between the notion of <u>material incompatibility</u> that applies to properties, hence facts, and is expressed in laws in the objective realm, and the notion that applies to classification by applying predicates, making claims and judgments, and explanatory inferences in the subjective realm of thought, *then* corresponding sense-dependences will hold at all of the levels retailed in the chart above. The idea that there is such a sense-dependence does not make its first appearance with the discussion of the relation between <u>law</u> and <u>explanation</u>. Even though the experience of perceiving consciousness is conducted to the extent possible, in accord with the self-understanding of that form of empirical self-consciousness, at the level of what is perceived, the perceiving of it plays a substantial role even there. This is registered in the title of the chapter, "Die Wahrnehmung; oder das ding, und die Täuschung." "Täuschung" here is invoking the experience of error, which does not just come in here at the phenomenological level, as we follow the development of various versions of perceiving consciousness driven from one to the next by the inadequacy of the first.[155] The experience of error is also an important element of perceiving consciousness' own understanding. For what one must *do* in order thereby to count as taking or treating two properties as incompatible in the objective sense made explicit by alethic modal locutions is precisely to acknowledge the obligation, when one finds oneself committed to

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

attributing those properties to one and the same object, of *rejecting* at least one of those commitments. One does that by treating those commitments as incompatible in the sense made explicit by *deontic normative* locutions: one cannot be *entitled* to both *commitments*.

[T]he one who is perceiving is aware of the possibility of deception [Täuschung]…His criterion of truth is therefore *self-identity*, and his behavior consists in apprehending the object as self-identical. Since at the same time diversity is explicitly there for him, it is a connection of the diverse moments of his apprehension to one another; but if a dissimilarity makes itself felt in the course of this comparison, then this is not an untruth of the object—for this is the self-identical—but an untruth in perceiving it.[156]

An object perceived as having objectively incompatible properties is perceived as in so far such not self-identical. The diversity in question must be a matter of *exclusive* difference, *contrary* properties, not merely or indifferently different ones. Perceiving an object as diverse in that weak sense is not perceiving it as not "self-identical." Only perceiving incompatible properties triggers the experience of "untruth." Already here Hegel is asserting the sense-dependence of the objective alethic modal sense of "incompatible" ("exclusive difference") with the deontic normative one. Grasping the concept of objective modal incompatibility of *properties is* treating the corresponding *commitments* as incompatible in the deontic sense that normatively governs the activities of knowing subjects. There could *be* modal incompatibilities of properties or facts without deontic incompatibilities of commitments. The concept of the former is not reference-dependent on the concept of the latter. But one cannot in principle *understand* the sort of modal incompatibility that will be codified in laws unless one understands what it is appropriate to *do* when confronted with deontically incompatible commitments. And what one must do is respond to the experience of error by making an inference that explains it, by rejecting at least one of the claims. Objective incompatibility and the experience of error are reciprocally sense-dependent concepts. Because they are, so are

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[156] [116]. I take it that the lesson I am claiming is taught in the *Perception* chapter of the *Phenomenology* is also in play in the "Sein und Schein" section of the *Science of Logic*. [ref.]

the concepts articulated and elaborated in terms of determinate negation, as retailed in the chart above.

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

If this reading avoids pinning on Hegel an obviously crazy sort of idealism, it might be thought to court the converse danger of washing out his idealism to a view that is, to use the term Robert Pippin has used in raising this worry, anodyne. How exciting is it to be told that in order to understand lawfulness, what is made explicit by alethic modal vocabulary, one must understand the use of such vocabulary, the distinctive inferential role played by subjunctively robust conditionals? After all, anyone who has the concept law of nature has already mastered the use of a fairly sophisticated vocabulary and so can, in fact, use subjunctive conditionals. Anyone who talks or thinks at all about objects and properties (not even, perhaps, using terms corresponding to "object" and "property", but only to "Fido" and "furry"), facts or states of affairs, must *use* singular terms, predicates, and declarative sentences. Surely that much is not a philosophical discovery.

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

Conceptual realism is the thesis that the objective world, the world as it is in itself, no less than the realm of subjective activity that shapes what the world is for consciousness, is conceptually structured. John McDowell is endorsing conceptual realism in this sense when he say in *Mind and World* that "the conceptual has no outer boundary," beyond which lies a nonconceptual reality.[157] As I have been reading him, Hegel's version of this thought has a hylomorphic shape. Conceptual contents can show up in two different forms: an objective form and a subjective form. The first is a matter of how things are in themselves, the second how they are for consciousness. These are reality and its appearance, the phenomena and the noumena. Because both forms are conceptually articulated, and because the very same content can show up in both forms, "When we say, and mean, that such-and-such is the case, we—and our meaning—do not

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

stop anywhere short of the fact; but we mean: this—is—so," as Wittgenstein puts the point.[158] This is how the genuine knowledge constraint is to be satisfied: the criterion of adequacy on semantic theories that requires they not rule out on conceptual grounds the possibility that what things are for consciousness can be what they are in themselves.

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

Objective idealism adds to this hylomorphic version of conceptual realism a thesis about the interdependence—in the sense of *sense*-dependence—of these two forms that conceptual contents can take: alethic and deontic, objective and subjective. In order to grasp the concept <u>conceptual *content*</u>, which can take the two forms, it turns out one must grasp those two forms in their inter(sense-)dependence. On my analysis, the objective idealist reciprocal sense-dependence thesis takes on its substantial and distinctive significance for Hegel in the context of the three other strategic commitments already

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

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

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

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

Before passing to that exciting finale, however, there is one more aspect of the way the activity of explanation "traversing the moments" in inference bears on understanding the sort of objective law-governed holistic unity through necessarily related diverse components represented allegorically by the "play of forces" that should be noted. I take it that the use of "moment" throughout Hegel's writings is itself

motivated by the allegory of forces. It is of the essence of Newtonian physical analysis to represent the parabolic motion of a thrown object, for instance, as the vector produced by two forces (gravity and the throw) which are described as "moments" of the resulting motion. They are not self-standing "elements" that are bolted together to result in the parabolic motion, but components into which it useful to analyze the unity that is the motion, each equally operative at every point in the trajectory. The motion is the observable expression of the "play" of these forces. Hegel raises questions about how we are to understand this sort of holistic identity. I described the move from force to law as a shift of attention from relata to the relations they stand in to one another. Once it is understood that each is what it is only in (meta)relation to the other—the law essentially governing these forces and the forces being what they are only as governed by this law—the question becomes how to understand the whole comprising the related relata without considering one or the other as antecedently identified and individuated.

The answer is to understand this structure as the objective relational correlate of the process of inferentially traversing the moments in explanation, as when the distance fallen by an object is calculated from the time elapsed since it was at rest, or the elapsed time from the distance covered. That epistemic inferential activity depends not only on actual commitments (initial boundary conditions), but also on the manipulation of *terms*, in thought, speech, or writing, that *are* immediately identifiable and individuated. The sign-designs involved in the *statement* of a law, say "$d=kt^2$," are *not* holistically individuated. They are immediately perceptible and distinguishable. In virtue of the deontic role those signs play in inferences, how it is appropriate to manipulate them in explanation, they can be understood as standing for or expressing conceptual contents, which in virtue of the relations of material incompatibility and consequence *they* stand in, are holistically related to one another: different, but essentially and necessarily related. The intelligibility of the thoroughly mediated moments and the kind of relational unity they constitute essentially depends on the epistemic immediacy of the actual vehicles

used in making statements and manipulating them in inferential moves. The distinctness of the necessarily related moments in the play of forces is sense-dependent on the immediately (observably) distinct vehicles that come to express conceptual contents by standing in normative subjunctively robust relations of deontic incompatibility and consequence that govern actual inferential activities of manipulating those vehicles in explanation.[159]

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[159] I discuss this point further in Chapter Six of *Tales of the Mighty Dead*: "Holism and Idealism in Hegel's *Phenomenology*."

Hegel on Consciousness

Chapter Seven:

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

I

The last five paragraphs of *Force and the Understanding* sketch the final shape of

empirical consciousness conceiving itself as understanding, and the lessons we, the

phenomenological consciousness, are to learn from the achievement of this form of

phenomenal consciousness as the culmination of the process of development of the others

that have been rehearsed. The discussion is maddeningly compressed and telegraphic,

both in its characterization of understanding conceiving itself under the concept of

<u>infinity</u>, and in its account of how our understanding of that form of consciousness

motivates turning our attention from consciousness to *self*-consciousness, and so the

crucial expository transition in the book from *Consciousness* to *Self-Consciousness*.

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

constituted by necessary relations among different "moments", each of which is what it is

only in virtue of its relations to the others and its being comprised by the whole it is a

moment of. It the final form of understanding consciousness. The alarming term

"infinite" has actively misleading mathematical connotations (for us Cantorians), and

unhelpful (at least at this point) theological ones. It is probably best regarded here as a

merely suggestive label. The structure of identity and difference that it labels, we are told "has no doubt all along been the soul of all that has gone before," that is, it is the fully adequate conception of the actual structure of consciousness, which all the shapes considered up to this point (under the rubrics of empirical consciousness conceiving of itself as sense-certainty, as perceiving, and as understanding) are less adequate conceptions of.[160]

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

It is true that consciousness of an 'other', of an object in general, is itself necessarily *self-consciousness*, a reflectedness-into-self, consciousness of itself in otherness. The *necessary advance* from the previous shapes of consciousness for which their truth was a Thing, an 'other' than themselves, expresses just this, that not only is consciousness of a thing only possible for a self-consciousness, but that self-consciousness alone is the truth of those shapes.[161]

There are three claims here. Each of the "shapes of consciousness" considered up to this point, including the final one, is a conception of, a way of understanding, empirical consciousness. As such, they are forms of *self*-consciousness: ways of being conscious of consciousness. Further, "consciousness of a thing is possible only for a self-consciousness." That is, any empirical consciousness must have some such "shape".

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[160]   [163].
[161]   [164].

For it must be aware of the distinction between what *to* it things are in themselves and what *to* it they are for consciousness.[162] It is taught that by the experience of error. That aspect of consciousness incorporates a conception of consciousness, and hence constitutes a form of self-consciousness. This much of Hegel's picture was already on offer in the *Introduction*. What is new is a third claim, about what becomes visible for us only in contemplating the final experience resulting in understanding consciousness conceiving its object as infinite. This is the realization that so-conceived, the object of consciousness is no longer to it something other than consciousness. What things as they are in themselves is to consciousness just what it is to itself. This is the final sense in which consciousness is revealed to us as being self-consciousness.

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

But it is only *for us* that this truth exists, not yet for consciousness. But self-consciousness has at first become *for itself,* not yet *as a unity* with consciousness in general.[163]

But even the phenomenological consciousness does not at this point in the book understand everything it needs to understand fully to appreciate the lesson. There are reasons why we should not expect to be able to extract a detailed characterization of this view from the brief remarks Hegel makes in these five paragraphs. I think that the principal reason for the gnomic terseness of this brief but important part of the book is that Hegel is not pretending to lay out the view he is characterizing in any detail here. He cannot, for we do not yet understand what self-consciousness is, and will not, not just until the end of the *Self-Consciousness* chapter, but until the end of the *Reason* chapter.

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[162] Recall from the discussion of the *Introduction* the crucial distinction between what things are *to* consciousness and what they are *for* consciousness—unmarked in extant translations, save for Kenley Dove's.
[163] [164].

Only then will we be in a position to understand what it means that the final form of understanding consciousness not only *is*, like all the "shapes of consciousness" considered in the *Consciousness* chapters, a form of self-consciousness (because it is a conception of, a way of understanding, empirical consciousness), but also understands consciousness itself *as* a kind of *self*-consciousness. The characterizations Hegel offers here are placeholders, statements we will be able to understand as ones we were entitled to at this point, even though we are not yet in a position to understand them very well. We, like phenomenal consciousness as understanding, have only the most abstract and general conception of self-consciousness available. Empirical consciousness understanding itself under the concept of <u>infinity</u> understands consciousness as

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

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

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[164]   [164].

identity-in-and-through-difference empirical consciousness understanding itself as infinite takes to characterize the intentional nexus: the distinction that (as we were reminded already at the beginning of the *Introduction*) consciousness essentially involves, between what things are in themselves and what they are for consciousness. What sort of assimilation of the two distinguished elements, one on the side of the objective world, the other on the side of subjective activity, is it that consciousness conceiving itself as having the structure Hegel calls "infinity" performs, which *Hegel* is telling us amounts to taking the two to be two ways of regarding one thing, as the self which is self-conscious and the self of which it is conscious are one self?

Two sorts of assimilation are already on the table: conceptual realism and objective idealism. Conceptual realism says that what things are in themselves, no less than what things are for consciousness, is in conceptual shape. So when he says that in its final form "the Understanding experiences only itself," Hegel could mean just that what is *to* it what things are in themselves is already in conceptual shape, just as its thoughts are.[165] I think this is indeed part of what is meant. But only part of it. Objective idealism says that the concepts articulating what is to understanding consciousness what things are in themselves and the concepts articulating what is to it what things are for consciousness are reciprocally sense-dependent. One consequence of the objective idealist thesis is that a necessary condition of understanding the ontological structure of the objective world empirical consciousness is consciousness of, one must also understand the epistemic activities by which consciousness becomes conscious of it. That (like the conceptual realist thesis) is certainly a sense in which in experiencing the world, "Understanding experiences itself." It was just pointed out that conceptual realism also offers a sense in which "Understanding experiences *only* itself": it experiences only *conceptual* contentful states of affairs, whose content can also be the content of thoughts. It is a little more difficult to see objective idealism as making it sensible to say that

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[165]   [165].

understanding consciousness experiences *only* itself. We can say that it experiences only what cannot be understood apart from understanding what consciousness does in understanding it.

I think that Hegel is here invoking a third idealist thesis—gesturing at something not explained here, marking it as something we, his readers, will be in a position to understand only later in the book. He is doing what Sellars called "issuing a promissory note," to be redeemed later on. When we are in a position to unfold it, the thesis is what I will call "conceptual idealism." It is an account of the intentional nexus, that is, of the distinction (and relation) that consciousness consists in, the distinction between what things are in themselves, objectively, and what they are for consciousness, or subjectively. This is the distinction between reality and appearance, noumena and phenomena, between what is thought and talked *about* (what empirical consciousness is consciousness *of*) and what is thought or said about it. Another way of characterizing the distinction and relation conceptual idealism addresses, one that will prove particularly telling in the light of the use made of these terms in formulating objective idealism, is that it is the distinction and relation between *referents* and *senses*, between what is represent*ed* and represent*ings* of it. Its focus is on the process of *experience*. It is telling that in the formulation quoted above, Hegel says that what we discover (what we will later on be able to tell, once we have eyes to see it, was already visible at this point) by looking at consciousness understanding its object as infinite is that on that conception "Understanding *experiences* only itself." As we saw in our discussion of the *Introduction*, experience, which is the process that makes intelligible the possibility of genuine knowledge (the goal of empirical consciousness), is the experience of *error*: the unmasking of what was *to* consciousness reality, the way things are *in* themselves, as *appearance*, the way things are *for* consciousness. What still lies ahead for us readers of the book in the order of exposition, the developmental narrative of the education of phenomenological consciousness, is understanding the recollective,

rational-reconstructive phase of the experience of error, by which something new becomes *to* consciousness what things are in themselves. Gestured at in the *Introduction*, this dimension of experience first officially comes on stage at the ground level in the experience of empirical consciousness understanding itself as sense-certainty. It takes the form there of the discovery of the anaphoric-recollective dimension of repeatability, contrasting with and complementing the dimension of repeatability as universality, required to make sense of the epistemic significance of the sort of immediacy expressed explicitly by the use of demonstratives and indexicals. It is not fully on the table until we learn how to think about intentional agency in the *Reason* chapter. ("Reason is purposive agency," as Hegel says in the *Preface*.[166])

II

The argument of the closing passages of *Force and Understanding* has three phases. It starts with a characterization of the lessons to be learned from consideration of the final form of the supersensible world understanding takes itself to confront: the inverted world. The second phase consists of remarks about the structure of identity in and through difference that Hegel calls "infinity." The concluding phase is the claim that we can see (though it cannot yet) that in conceiving its object on the model of such an infinite structure, understanding consciousness has put itself in a position to recognize itself in its object—that it has actually become a form of consciousness that does not merely presuppose self-consciousness, but *is* a form of self-consciousness. (Specifying the exact register of the state of understanding (self-)consciousness is a delicate matter. I would put it like this: Infinity has been "no doubt all along the soul of all that has gone before,"[167] *in*-itself. Consciousness, *however* it understands itself (as sensuous certainty,

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[166] [22].
[167] [163].

as perceiving, as understanding), has no doubt always been *self*-consciousness, in the sense we finally come to understand it. *None* of the forms of (self-)consciousness considered in *Consciousness*, including the final form of understanding consciousness, which takes its object to be infinite, recognizes *itself* in its object and so is *for* itself self-consciousness in the sense Hegel tells us *we* can recognize consciousness as being. But the *self-conception* of that final form of understanding consciousness is *in itself* self-consciousness, even though that is not what that conception is *for* understanding consciousness.) The task of understanding these crucial, gnomic passages is accordingly the task of understanding the three lessons being taught about the inverted world as the final form of supersensible world, infinity, and consciousness being in a position to recognize itself in its object, and the rationales that move us from one to the other of these three thoughts.

Here is the first thought, leading into the second:

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

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

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one unity. Only thus is it difference as inner difference, or difference in its own self, or difference as an infinity.[168]

What is wrong with the inverted world [verkehrte Welt] is not the inversion, but the reification of it into a world—just as what was wrong with the conception of a supersensible "calm realm of laws" was the reification of laws into superfacts. In that case the mistake was to assimilate statements of laws to ordinary empirical statements, taking the former to represent something in the same sense in which the latter represent facts. The representational semantic paradigm of representings and represented ('Fido' and Fido) is extended beyond ground-level empirical (but not necessarily observable) staements and states of affairs to include modal statements of necessity in the form of laws or of impossibility and necessity in the case of the inverted world. The difference between the two cases is diagnosed as a difference in the kind of state of affairs that is represented. This is what Hegel means by the "sensuous representation fixing the differences in a different sustaining element." The supersensible worlds are thought of as worlds just like the world of empirical facts—only supersensible. Merely possible states of affairs (worlds) are thought of as just like the actual world—only merely possible. (Compare the boggling Cartesian response to Leibniz's idea of "petites perceptions," described as just like Cartesian episodes of conscious awareness—except "inconscient".[169]) Hegel is here diagnosing the mistake that Sellars calls "descriptivism."[170]

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

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[168] [160]. I have tweaked Miller's translation. It is important that Hegel uses "Vorstellung", representation just where he does, and that makes it misleading to translate "darstellen" as "represent" here.

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

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

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

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

In the final sentences of the passage quoted above, Hegel says that understanding the sense in which these determining exclusive differences are implicit in and constitutive of the determinate identity of any thing or state of affairs will be understanding the structure he is calling "infinity." That structure is the model for a nondescriptivist expressivist semantics that encompasses representational structure but is more

comprehensive, extending to the use of concepts whose principle expressive role is not to describe how things are. As a first step toward understanding the expressivism Hegel is recommending is noting that it is a version of Kant's fundamental claim that some concepts, paradigmatically those expressed by alethic modal vocabulary in subjunctively robust conditionals such as those underwritten by laws, have as their principal expressive role not empirical description but making explicit features of the *framework* that makes empirical description possible. Since every empirical description presupposes what those concepts express, Kant says they must be knowable *a priori*, that is, in a way that does not depend on knowing whether any particular empirical description actually applies to something. They are his categories. In Hegel's version, empirically describable states of affairs (possible and actual) are intelligible as determinate only insofar as they stand in relations of material incompatibility and consequence (his "determinate negation" and "mediation") to one another. Those content-conferring relations are what are expressed explicitly by statements of law and of the relations articulating what is misunderstood as the inverted world. So they play that framework-explicating nondescriptive expressive role that Kant discovered (even though Hegel's account of the nature and significance of that discovery is different from Kant's).[171]

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

Infinity, or this absolute unrest of pure self-movement, in which whatever is determined in one way or another, e.g. as being, is rather the opposite of that determinateness, this no doubt has been all along the soul of all that has gone before…but it is as '*explanation*' that it first freely stands forth…[172]

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[171] I discuss this Kantian categorial idea and what subsequent philosophers such as Carnap and (especially) Sellars make of it in the first half of Chapter 1 of *From Empiricism to Expressivism*, and the alethic modal case specifically in Chapters 4 and 5.

[172] [163]. "Stands forth" is translating "hervortreten."

I have referred to infinity as a "structure", and in the broadest sense I think that is appropriate. But it is correct only if the term is not restricted to something static. Infinity can only be understood in terms of the movement of understanding consciousness, which first shows up as "traversing the moments" inferentially in explanation. Statements of necessary lawful consequence and expressions of exclusive difference as noncompossibility play their distinctive role in expressing norms governing these explanatory movements of the understanding. In this game, empirical descriptions specify *positions*, while modal statements of necessity and possibility constrain *moves*. The reifying descriptivist mistake Hegel diagnoses in the last two conceptions of supersensible worlds, the realm of laws and the inverted world, is to think of specifications of the moves on the representational model of specifications of further positions—which then must be thought of as positions of a special kind. (What was wrong with the supersensible world of theoretical entities postulated by invidious Eddingtonian theoretical realism was not that theoretical entities were understood as empirically describable, just as observable ones are, but the invidious contrast between them as exclusively real and their observable expressions as mere appearance.) Thought of this way, the mistake Hegel is diagnosing belongs in a box with that made by the Tortoise in Lewis Carroll's "Achilles and the Tortoise": treating rules in accordance with which to reason as though they were premises from which to reason.[173]

To understand the sense in which the modal articulation of the objective empirical world is not to be understood to be something alongside the actual world (even in a universe of merely possible worlds) but as something *within* it, something *implicit* in it, then, we must focus on the *process* that Hegel calls the "movement of the understanding." He tells us that that movement first shows up in the development of

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[173] "Conclusions are drawn from premises in accordance with principles, not from premises that embody those principles," as Gilbert Ryle puts the point "'If,' 'So,' and 'Because'", in *Philosophical Analysis: A Collection of Essays*. Max Black (ed.) [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950] p. 328.

understanding consciousness in the guise of understanding conceiving of itself as explaining. That is the process, *inter alia*, of making what is implicit in the actual empirical world as it is in itself explicit for consciousness. ("An sich" can mean both in itself and implicit, and Miller uses both translations.) It is a general principle for Hegel that we are to understand what is implicit in terms of the process by which it is made explicit. One of the reasons it is so hard to understand these concluding paragraphs of the *Consciousness* chapters is that at this point in the book we have not been told much about this process. We can bring to bear what we learned about the experience of error in the *Introduction*, and the anaphoric recollective dimension of repeatability in *Sense Certainty*, but I take it that the principal conceptual raw materials that need to be deployed to fill in what Hegel says here about the movement that reveals the understanding as infinite only become available for us in the *Reason* chapter. We are told that understanding consciousness conceiving itself as infinite is in a position to see itself in its object even though it does not yet do so. That insight is something to understanding consciousness, implicit in what it does, but not yet explicitly for understanding consciousness. Hegel discusses consciousness that *does* explicitly see itself in the world that is the object of its knowledge and the arena of its action under the rubric of *reason*:

Reason is the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality; thus does idealism express its Notion.[174]

So it makes sense to appeal to what we learn by the end of the *Reason* chapter to fill in the account that is sketched in such spare terms at the end of *Consciousness*. In particular, this will let us understand the further strand of idealism that is added here: the sense in which understanding consciousness conceiving itself as infinite is in a position to see itself in the object of its knowledge, beyond what is afforded by the conceptual realism and objective idealism already on board. This is what I am calling "conceptual idealism," which is explicitly invoked in the passage just quoted.

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[174] [233].

III

The movement of the understanding that first shows up as inferentially traversing the moments in explanation is an aspect of the larger movement that in the *Introduction* Hegel calls "*experience*." At the time he wrote the *Force and Understanding* chapter, the working title of the book was still *Science of the Experience of Consciousness*.

The focus of the discussion of experience in the *Introduction* is the experience of *error*. The aspect of conceptual content on which inferential explanation turns is necessary consequential relations of the sort made explicit in statements of law. The aspect of conceptual content on which the experience of error turns is material incompatibility or exclusive difference—since the experience of error is triggered by finding oneself with incompatible commitments. The broadening of topic from what is representationally reified by descriptivist understanding consciousness as the calm realm of laws to what it representationally reifies as the inverted world accordingly corresponds to a widening of focus from one focused on explanation to one that encompasses also the experience of error.

In the discussion of Hegel's *Introduction* I offered an account of the experience of error that was also informed by looking ahead to the lessons I take to be put in place in the later *Reason* chapter. Hegel's conception of <u>experience</u> is built on Kant's account of the cognitive activity that, as he puts it, "synthesizes an original unity of apperception." The unity in question is a rational unity of doxastic commitments, governed by a regulative ideal that I take to comprise three dimensions of rational obligation. Knowers have an *ampliative* rational task-responsibility to acknowledge commitment to the inferential consequences of their commitments. They have a *justificatory* rational task-responsibility to have reasons providing evidence for their commitments. And they

have a *critical* rational task-responsibility to acknowledge and repair incompatibilities among their commitments. A constellation of judgments that evolves (is "synthesized") in response to these rational demands exhibits the rational structural unity distinctive of apperception. Practical acknowledgement of these normative rational demands is the self-consciousness in virtue of which the elements of that constellation count as *judgments*, which are the unit of Kantian consciousness. They are the minimal units for which one can take rational responsibility, which is the responsibility to integrate them into a constellation exhibiting the distinctive kind of unity normatively governed by rational ampliative, justificatory, and critical obligations.

In his conception of experience as the experience of *error*, Hegel emphasizes the *critical* rational task-responsibility: the responsibility to resolve conflicts arising from the *material incompatibility* of judgments. Already with Kant, judgments are intelligible as such, as semantically contentful, just in virtue of standing in the relations of material incompatibility and necessary consequence appealed to by the rational task-responsibilities governing their synthetic integration into an apperceptive unity. Hegel is impressed by the *pragmatist* order of explanation implicit in Kant's story: the way in which the notion of <u>*semantic* content</u> is to be understood in terms of *pragmatics*, that is, functionally, in terms of the role of (what then become intelligible as) judgments in the practical discursive process (Hegel's "experience") that synthesizes a constellation of doxastic commitments exhibiting a rational apperceptive unity. As we saw in discussing the *Introduction*, the rational requirement to revise one's commitments in the face of their incompatibility gives experience the shape of a continual unmasking of what was *to* consciousness the way things are in themselves, what it took to be the facts expressed by true judgments, as appearance, as merely what things were *for* consciousness. In addition to this emphasis on and interpretation of the significance of the critical dimension of the rational responsibilities constitutive of Kantian apperception, Hegel adds a further one that is decisive for his account of experience. It first comes to

the fore explicitly in the discussion of agency in the *Reason* chapter, but its centrality is emphasized in the final account of self-consciousness as reciprocal recognition taking the shape of confession and forgiveness at the end of the *Spirit* chapter. It is a *recollective* rational task-responsibility, given prominent place at the metalevel in *Absolute Knowing* under the heading of "Erinnerung."

The basic idea, I think, is that one cannot claim to know how things are in some respect unless one can offer a suitable explanation of how one came to know it or could have come to know it. If I claim to know what my sister in Seattle, 2500 miles away from me, is right now thinking, I owe a story about how I came by that information. (Perhaps she is texting me or talking to me on the phone.) In the absence of such a story, I am not entitled to my claim. This responsibility can, as in this case, overlap with the justificatory responsibility to have reasons for my beliefs, but is not identical to it, as Kant emphasizes in accusing "the celebrated Mr. Locke" of offering a mere "physiology of the understanding," a causal account of the antecedents of belief, in place of a proper epistemology, which would inquire not into modes of causal transmission of information but reasons justifying a belief. I might now be able to give sufficient reasons for a belief I acquired some time ago, even though those reasons were not available to me at the time. The requirement might be part of a KK principle: one cannot know unless one knows that one knows. But it incorporates what was right about Locke's emphasis on the processes that led to knowing. One might designate it an HK principle: one does not know unless one knows *how* one knows. Taking a candidate knower to have no idea, or a defective idea, about this would infirm the attribution of knowledge to that candidate. This much *epistemological self-consciousness* is required for the epistemic status of knowledge (the defining paradigm of consciousness). Having a belief that is *justified* by reasons, but not *vindicated* by a recollective story that rationally reconstructs a path by which one could find out that things are thus and so is, in Davidson's terms, believing *with* reasons but not yet believing *for* those reasons. By contrast to Davidson, for Hegel what is asked for is

not a mere causal story, for that would not rationalize the conclusion. (Davidson defines the difference in brute causal terms: believing *for* reasons requires only that the justifying reasons *somehow* cause the belief.) But it is not purely an inferential matter either.

Hegelian vindicating recollective stories at the ground level of empirical knowledge have the same structure as the ones Hegel tells in the *Phenomenology* at the metalevel of "shapes of consciousness." They exhibit a sequence constellations of commitments, each stage of which is leads to the next by a recounted experience of error. That is, each stage is found to contain an anomaly, a set of materially incompatible commitments, which might have been acquired either inferentially through the exercise of the knower's ampliative task-responsibility to extract necessary consequences of prior commitments, or immediately, through the exercise of noninferential perceptual capacities. The next stage is reached as a result of a determinate attempt to repair the anomaly that is thereby acknowledged as such, as the exercise of the knower's critical task-responsibility. The response to critical registration of the joint material incompatibility of a set of commitments that is *acknowledging* them *as* incompatible is practically accepting a normative obligation to *do* something to repair the epistemic situation, resolving the incompatibility. The repair phase can re-establish material coherence by revising on the one hand the doxastic commitments and on the other hand the consequential-and-incompatibility commitments relating them to other possible doxastic commitments. Revision might involve rejection of some commitments of either kind, or it might consist in less drastic adjustments and refinements. So finding oneself with commitments to the liquid tasting sour and turning Litmus paper blue, one is obliged to revise one's <u>acid</u>-concept that says that whatever would taste sour is an acid and whatever is an acid would turn Litmus paper red. One might do so by further qualifying the circumstances of appropriate application one takes to articulate the concept's content, so that only clear liquids that would taste sour count as acids, while preserving the consequences of application. Vindication differs from justification in part by its wider

scope. For recollective rehearsal retrospectively rationally reconstructs not just the development of the *beliefs* currently held, but also of the *concepts* that articulate them. On the side of the objects of knowledge, it addresses the full modal spectrum, explaining not only how one came to believe how things *actually* are, but also how one came to take the necessities and (noncom)possibilities implicit in those actualities to be as they are.

Hegel thinks that there is no safe resting-place for this process of experience. For there is no constellation of doxastic and inferential-incompatibility commitments—commitments as to what is actual and what is necessary-(noncom)possible—that is stable. *Every* such repertoire of empirical commitments is such that by applying the norms it incorporates *correctly* to the deliverances of sensuous immediacy, anomalies in the form of commitments that are incompatible according to those very norms will result. This is his version of the conceptual inexhaustibility of sensuous immediacy, the recalcitrance of empirical reality to being completely captured by determinate concepts. Every set of judgements and the concepts articulating them carries within it the seeds of its own destruction, in the form of liability to an eventual experience of error normatively requiring its repair and revision. This is part of what he means when he says that the final form of understanding consciousness takes the empirical world that is the object of knowledge to have the structure of "infinity." This conception of the conceptual inexhaustibility of sensuous immediacy contrasts strongly with that of Kant (and his empiricist forebears).[175] For Kant capturing sensuous actuality conceptually in judgments is an infinite task, in the sense that whatever set of empirical judgments one has does not exhaust the empirical judgments that could correctly be made, given the intuitions one is or will be presented with. My judgments can correctly capture conceptually what I see when I look at my hand, it is just that the task of capturing it *all* will require me to make a series of judgments that is infinite in the sense of never-ending. This is what Hegel calls "bad

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[175] I discuss these two contrasting approaches to the conceptual inexhaustibility of sensuous immediacy further in "Sketch of a Program for a Critical Reading of Hegel." [ref.]

infinity." Construing the conceptual inexhaustibility of immediacy instead as the in-principle instability of any constellation of empirical concepts and doxastic commitments (commitments as to what material incompatibilities and consequences govern the actuality captured in judgments) means taking the experience of error to be a necessary structural feature of discursive practice. Because that experience is the unmasking of what was to consciousness reality as actually appearance, what things were taken to be in themselves as merely what they were for consciousness, it is a commitment to "appearance as the passing away that does not itself pass away," a structured sequence of what turn out to be phenomena.[176] The study of that structure of experience is phenomenology.

Focusing exclusively on the in-principle instability of determinate empirical concepts manifested in the ineluctability of the experience of error threatens to portray experience as a skeptical "path of despair." In the *Introduction*, Hegel sets out avoiding building that conclusion into our picture of knowledge as a principal epistemological criterion of adequacy on semantics. It is the recollective dimension of experience that redeems it as revelatory of the real. In doing so, it shows how acknowledging the evanescence of any and every particular constellation of discursive commitments properly leads not to *skepticism*, but to a particularly radical kind of *fallibilism*. It is radical in that Hegel's fallibilism not only permeates the web of belief at every stage of its development but penetrates through it, reaching all the way to the concepts that are implicit in and articulate that web as relations of material incompatibility and consequence relating candidate believables to what is actually believed.

IV

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[176] [ref.] to *Introduction*.

To understand this role of the recollective phase of experience it is helpful to think of it in Fregean terms of sense and reference. This terminology was already invoked at two prior points in my story: in explaining first conceptual realism and then objective idealism. Thinking in these terms about how recollective rational reconstruction vindicates constellations of discursive commitments comprising both explicit doxastic and implicit incompatibility-and-inferential species provides a framework into which to set both conceptual realism and objective idealism, so as to deepen our understanding and appreciation of their significance. In the generic way in which I want to approach these terms, talk about "senses" is talk about what is sayable and thinkable. It is what is in suitable conceptual shape to be the content of (possible) knowings, in Hegel's terms what things can be *for* consciousness. Talk of "reference" is talk about what is talked or thought *about*, what is there to be (possibly) known, the objective realm of things as they actually are in themselves.

Expressed in this idiom, conceptual realism is the claim that reality, how things objectively are, in themselves, the totality of facts, no less than its appearances to consciousness in thought (how things are for consciousness), is conceptually structured and so sense-like. The realm of referents is a subregion of the realm of senses. The conceptual realm of graspable senses has no outer boundary. This is the view that McDowell expounds in *Mind and World*:

[T]here is no ontological gap between the sort of thing one can mean, or generally the sort of thing one can think, and the sort of thing that can be the case. When one thinks truly, what one thinks *is* what is the case. So since the world is everything that is the case . . . there is no gap between thought, as such, and the world. Of course thought can be

distanced from the world by being false, but there is no distance from the world implicit in the very idea of thought.[177]

Quoting this passage, Timothy Williamson objects to this way of thinking about things on the basis that it does not respect the distinction between sense and reference, as he understands it:

[O]n a coherent and natural reading of "the sort of thing that can be the case," such things are individuated coarsely, by the objects, properties, and relations that they involve. Thus, since Hesperus *is* Phosphorus, what is the case if Hesperus is bright *is* what is the case if Phosphorus is bright: the objects are the same, as are the properties. On this reading, McDowell's claim "When one thinks truly, what one thinks *is* what is the case" is false, because what one thinks is individuated at the level of sense while what is the case is individuated at the level of reference.[178]

Considering recollective processes will make visible a distinctively Hegelian rendering of the distinction and relation between sense and reference that vindicates conceptual realism in the face of this objection. It will also explain and justify the appeal made to the sense/reference distinction in formulating the thesis of objective idealism, asserting the reciprocal sense-dependence, but not reference-dependence, of concepts articulating the ontological structure of the objective world, such as object, property, fact, and law, on the one hand, and concepts articulating the processes and practices of talking and thinking about that world, such as referring, describing, judging or asserting, and inferring, (and so singular term, predicate, declarative sentence, and subjunctive conditional), on the other. The interpretive claim that objective idealism is an important component of Hegel's absolute idealism would be substantially strengthened by showing that he made available (meta)conceptual raw materials underwriting versions of the concepts of sense and reference I have used to formulate that thesis specifically as a claim of sense-dependence without reference-dependence.

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[177] John McDowell, *Mind and World* [Harvard University Press, 1994] p. 27.
[178] Timothy Williamson, *The Philosophy of Philosophy* [Blackwell Publishing, 2007], p. 16.

A recollective clarification of what I am talking about as Hegel's understanding of the distinction between senses and their referents (thinkables and what is thought about, representings and represented) might begin with the Tarskian order of semantic explanation, whose greatest poet and prophet is Quine. It starts with a domain of objects and sets of those objects, as extensions, that is, referents, of singular terms and predicates. The strict Tarski-Quine semantics remains rigorously extensional, that is, it appeals only to reference. Extensions can, it is true, be tracked from domain to domain, model to model (relational structure to relational structure), but nothing corresponding to *senses* emerges from doing so, except for purely logical vocabulary. Taking its cue from the constant intensions logical vocabulary exhibits in the framework of extensional model theory, however, the possible-worlds framework elaborated by Montague, Lewis, and Stalnaker shows how to erect a full-blown intensional semantics as a theory of senses, as a superstructure resting on the extensional Tarskian base. Senses show up as intensions, represented semantically by functions from indices (paradigmatically, possible worlds) to extensions. Seen from the vantage-point of the Lewisian possible worlds framework, extensional properties show up as *modally insulated*. That is, the question of what objects have what extensional properties is settled entirely by the facts at that world, depending not at all on what is true at any other point of evaluation. This intensional semantics remains true to its Tarskian roots, in that the order of explanation is from reference to sense, extension to intension.

By contrast, the originator of the terminology of Sinn and Bedeutung we are considering, Frege as I read him introduces it in the context of an order of explanation that begins with senses and explains reference in terms of them. Senses are something like inferential roles. They are the successors of the "conceptual contents" (begriffliche Inhalten) he devises his Begriffsschrift to express perspicuously. Of them he says:

[T]here are two ways in which the content of two judgments may differ; it may, or it may not, be the case that all inferences that can be drawn from the first judgment when combined with certain other ones can always also be drawn from the second when combined with the same other judgments. The two propositions 'the Greeks defeated the Persians at Plataea' and 'the Persians were defeated by the Greeks at Plataea' differ in the former way; even if a slight difference of sense is discernible, the agreement in sense is preponderant. Now I call that part of the content that is the same in both the conceptual content. Only this has significance for our concept script [Begriffsschrift] ... In my concept script...only that part of judgments which affects the possible inferences is taken into consideration. Whatever is needed for a correct inference is fully expressed; what is not needed is...not.[179]

In his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik*, Frege considers how to talk about the objects referred to by singular terms in terms of the inferential roles of the singular terms. (He is particularly interested in the numbers referred to by numerals, but his discussion is fully general.) He identifies "recognition judgments" as the key to understanding what I am saying is in effect the path from senses to referents. Recognition judgments express the "recognition of an object as the same again" when specified in two different ways. This is what in the idiom of "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" becomes two senses picking out one and the same referent. Recognition judgments are identity claims, whose distinctive inferential role is to serve as intersubstitution licenses for the terms flanking what counts as an identity sign in just virtue of playing this substitution-inferential role. In effect, Frege explains referents by appealing to a dyadic relation among senses. That relation, intersubstitutability *salva veritate* (commitment to any claim essentially involving the primary occurrence of one term entails commitment to the corresponding claim formed from it by substituting an occurrence of the other term) is reflexive, symmetric, and transitive. Having these structural properties qualifies it as an equivalence relation. So it determines equivalence classes of singular term senses. Bedeutungen are introduced as

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[179] Frege, *Begriffsschrift* [ref.] section 3.

corresponding to (in one sense determining, in another sense determined by) these equivalence classes of senses. It is this difference in fineness of grain that Williamson appeals to in his objection to McDowell's conceptual realism. If the world is indeed everything that is the case, that is, if it is a world of *facts*, the question is how finely individuated facts are. Frege himself, like McDowell, takes them to be as finely individuated as thoughts, that is, thinkables, senses. But he sharply distinguishes the realm of reference from the realm of sense, to which facts, as true thoughts=thinkables, belong.

Michael Dummett takes it that there is more to Frege's concept of <u>Bedeutung</u> than can be derived from this line of thought.[180] He distinguishes it, as articulating the "semantic role" conception of referents, which he credits Tugendhat with having identified, from what he calls the "name-bearer model." Frege does not seem to distinguish these two ways of approaching the concept of <u>Bedeutung</u>—possibly because of the universal truth for him of identity statements expressing recognition judgments of the form

⌈t⌉ = the Bedeutung of ⌈t⌉.

Dummett attributes his failure to distinguish what he takes to be two different senses of "Bedeutung" to confusion on Frege's part. Another hypothesis is that Frege offers the "semantic role" conception associating referents with equivalence classes of senses as an *analysis* of the name-bearer ("Fido"-Fido) model. More plausible than either of these readings, in my eyes, is that Frege thinks the name-bearer model gives us a merely intuitive grip on his technical concept, which cannot be made perspicuous and in any case applies only to the middle-sized bits of dry goods from which our concept <u>object</u> generalizes. In hard cases, it misleads.

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[180] Michael Dummett, *Frege's Philosophy of Language* [ref.] Ch. xxxx .

In particular, when the issue is the nature of the numbers thought about in arithmetic, or more generally when the referents in question, like numbers, fall under sortals defined by recognition judgments formed from other kinds by appealing to abstraction—as the "semantic role" conception shows is the case with <u>Bedeutung</u> itself—invocation of the name-bearer model is a font of confusion.   For that model invites ultimately bootless metaphysical speculation about the nature of the bearers associated with, say, numerals, and about the spooky (because, unlike the case with "Fido" and Fido, noncausal) nature of the relation between names and bearers. This is the sort of situation Wittgenstein warned us against (diagnosing the origin of distinctively philosophical puzzlements in misunderstanding the grammar when we extend one discursive practice to another) with his observation that thinking about the fact that if I have gold in my tooth it makes sense to ask where it was before it was in my tooth can lead one mistakenly to think that if I have a pain in my tooth it must make sense to ask where it was before it was in my tooth, and that if we had only used proper names for people and then started naming rivers, we might be tempted to think it must make sense to ask after the mother and father of the river. In any case, it seems clear that Frege adopts an order of explanation according to which the source of our first semantic grip on the concept of the <u>referents</u> determined by senses is the concept <u>sense</u>.

Hegel's account of the distinction and relation between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves, which I am recommending thinking of in terms of senses and referents, is like the Fregean and unlike the Tarskian in that the semantic order of explanation it adopts begins with senses rather than referents. It is distinguished from the Fregean account in that where Frege looked to a *dyadic symmetric* relation between senses, namely intersubstitutability *salva veritate*, to forge the link between sense and referent, the Hegelian account looks to *a*symmetric *sequences* of

senses to do so. A recollective reconstruction assembles appearances, ways things have been *for* consciousness, into *histories* that display them as successive appearances *of* an underlying reality, presented by the constellation of claims and concepts in which that history culminates (so far). The recollection exhibits a process by which how things really are, in themselves (according to it), was gradually, fitfully, but ultimately successfully revealed by different appearances of it. It traces an *expressively progressive* trajectory through the senses by which the referent was presented to the consciousness that thereby comes to know about it as it is in itself. The sequence of senses is expressively progressive in that each successive step shows up as the making explicit of some feature of how things really are that can now be seen, retrospectively, to have been all along implicit in prior appearances of it. Each progressive step consists in an experience of error: the presence of an anomaly in the form of incompatible commitments, acknowledgement of the anomaly in the form of an effective practical obligation to repair it, a revision of beliefs and concepts (doxastic and commitments concerning material incompatibility and inferential consequence) that resolves the difficulty, and a story about what it was about the situation as it is thus discovered to be that accounts for the prior appearance, both insofar as it is now taken to have been veridical and insofar as it is now taken not to have been veridical. The rationally reconstructed history vindicates both the beliefs (doxastic commitments) the currently endorsed view comprises and the concepts (material inferential-and-incompatibility commitments) that articulate them.

A paradigm here is the acknowledgement by each successive scientific theory of an obligation to explain, given that things are as they are taken to be by that theory, why the theories it supplants were as right as they were, and why they erred and failed in just the ways they did. So Newtonians had to explain how the massless Cartesian system was correct about the things it was correct about, and why it could not explain what it could not explain, and Einsteinians correspondingly had to show how Newtonian mechanics

approximated theirs for sufficiently slow, relatively small masses. Recollections offer the sort of Whiggish retrospective rational reconstruction traditional textbooks in science and math do. It is explained how we found out how things are, ignoring wrong turns, blind alleys, bad ideas, and degenerating research programs in favor of a step-by-step account of how inquiry revealed reality. The story is progressive in the sense Kant and his empiricist predecessors recognized: false beliefs are discarded and true ones accrued. But in addition to *doxastic* progress, it is also a story of *conceptual* progress, of how inferential norms that do not express alethically necessary consequences are discarded, and those that do endorsed, how commitments that were taken to be incompatible are discovered not to be, and *vice versa*. (When Frege thought about sortal predicates, he did not investigate their origins or credentials, or worry about the fact that people cheerfully count witches, humors, sins, and races.)

On this Hegelian account, what is *to* consciousness the way things are in themselves (the reality that has been being thought *about* all along, a referent) is a way they can be *for* consciousness (an appearance of that reality, a sense) that is *rationally endorsed*, i.e. to which it is committed *as* how things really are. The endorsement is rational in acknowledging rational task responsibilities of all four kinds governing the experience of error: ampliative, critical, justificatory, and recollective. That is, the endorsement is shown by recollection to arise in response to acknowledging material inferential consequences and incompatibilities, giving reasons, and historically vindicating the concepts articulating the commitments and their applications in judgment. The retrospective recollective rational reconstruction of how the truth was discovered culminates in an appearance endorsed as *veridical*, as one in which how things are in themselves shows up as being just how they are for consciousness. The other appearances are displayed as a sequence of more and more adequate appearances *of* that eventually revealed reality. In this way the noumenon/phenomenon distinction is drawn within the realm of phenomena. Referents are a privileged kind of sense. Intentional

aboutness, representation, is reconstructed as a relation within the conceptually articulated realm of graspable senses. Descriptions and what is described are the same kind of thing: Hegelian individuals, which are particulars *as* characterized by universals (this-suches, in effect, that state of affairs *that* S is P). What is described is presented by the true description of it.

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This is an account of how the distinction that consciousness essentially involves, between how things are in themselves and how they are for consciousness (between truth and certainty) arises *within* consciousness and is something *to* it. It is, accordingly, a story about consciousness of consciousness, that is it is a story about *self*-consciousness. It is an understanding of what *experience* consists in. It is at every stage an experience of *error*, and at the same time the revelation of the *truth*. Error, in the form of the acknowledgment of anomalous commitments, commitments materially incompatible with one another according to the conceptual norms implicit in those commitments, unmasks the commitments hitherto endorsed as not veridical, as not simply revealing how things have all along really been. They are seen now for what *they* really are: in some ways misleading, unveridical *appearances* of how things really are. (This is what Hegel talked about in the *Introduction* under the rubric of the "emergence of the second, new, true object.") The response to the realization that the knower has materially incompatible commitments (commitments that determinately negate one another) is not to negate those commitments *abstractly*, but *determinately*. That is, it is to replace them with another constellation of commitments (both the doxastic and those concerning inferential and incompatibility relations, which determine the conceptual contents available for endorsement) recollectively vindicated as expressing the reality that appearance is an appearance of. That is, the result of the experience of error is the revelation of the truth.

In the *Preface* Hegel describes how we are to think about this once we fully understand it (as phenomenal consciousness conceiving itself as understanding even at this stage in the book does not):

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

Looked at as a result, what emerges from this process is the *determinate* negative which is consequently a positive content as well.[181]

This is the process we have been talking about:

...experience is the name we give to just this movement, in which the immediate, the unexperienced, i.e. the abstract, whether it be of sensuous being, or only thought of as simple, becomes alienated from itself and then returns to itself from this alienation, and is only then revealed for the first time in its actuality and truth, just as it then has become a property of consciousness also.[182]

It is essential to this conception that there is in principle no stable resting-place for the process of experience. No set of determinate concepts is such that by applying them correctly according to the norms governing them and exercising one's ampliative, rational task responsibility (tracing material inferential relations) one will not eventually find oneself with commitments that are materially incompatible with one another according to the norms governing them, so requiring the exercise of one's critical task responsibility. Error and truth are made intelligible as inextricably interwoven aspects of the process of experience. They are two sides of one coin.

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[181]   [59].
[182]   [36].

To know something falsely means that there is a disparity between knowledge and its Substance. But this very disparity is the process of distinguishing in general, which is an essential moment [in knowing]. Out of this distinguishing...comes their identity, and this resultant identity is the truth...Disparity, rather, as the negative, the self, is itself still directly present in the True as such.[183]

For understanding consciousness to conceive itself under categories of *infinity* is for it to understand its object, the objective world as it really is, in itself, as what is revealed, discovered, by the process of experience, understood as having this character.

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

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

The True is thus a vast Bacchanalian revel, with not a one sober; yet because each member collapses as soon as he drops out, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose….

In the *whole* of the movement, seen as a state of repose, what distinguishes itself therein, and gives itself particular existence, is preserved as something that **recollects** itself, whose existence is self-knowledge, and whose self-knowledge is just as immediately existence.[184]

Saying that the arising and passing away that is the unmasking of commitments as appearances of an at least somewhat different reality does not itself arise and pass away is saying that experience will always include the experience of error, the motor of change and development of views and concepts. That is what is, according to each rationally

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[183]   [39].
[184]   [47]. Emphasis added.

reconstructed retrospective recollection, the process that also reveals the truth about how things really are, in themselves. It is the "movement of the life of truth." In Hegel's striking metaphor of truth as a "vast Bacchanalian revel" [Taumel], the tipsiness of the revelers marks their being in constant motion, lurching uncertainly, now in one direction, now in another. The wine (Hegel's favorite tipple already from his school days) that in the metaphor fuels the commotion is *reason*, in particular the ampliative and critical rational task-responsibilities that are practical norms corresponding to semantogenic relations of material consequence and incompatibility. Hegel says "Thus Verständigkeit too is a becoming, and, as this becoming, it is reasonableness Vernünftigkeit."[185] The same wine that fuels the revel guarantees that each member of the drinking party, each constellation of commitments, will eventually wear itself out and collapse beneath the table, only to have its place taken by a still somewhat soberer successor. Truth is not a property of any particular stage in the party, but of how it develops. "The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development...."[186]

The process of recollectively retrospectively rationally reconstructing an expressively progressive trajectory through the welter of actual experiences of error to yield a sense (a constellation of commitments, both doxastic and the material consequential and incompatibility commitments that articulate them) that is endorsed as presenting how things actually are in themselves, what all the other senses have been all along and more and more faithfully representing defines a distinctive sense in which what is discerned as having been implicit is expressed explicitly. The reality that the successive appearances are presented as appearances *of*, the represented referents that they have all along been *about*, is seen as having been *implicit* in them. The recollected sequence of experience vindicates the constellation of commitments in which it culminates by showing how what was implicit comes gradually to be expressed, how it

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[185] [55].
[186] [21].

emerges step by step into the light of explicit day. This sense in which experience is the path of truth as the making explicit of the reality that was semantically implicit in the sequence of never-wholly-veridical appearances, in the sense of being what those representings represent must be carefully distinguished from the sense in which relations of material incompatibility and consequence of the sort expressed explicitly by statements of law are implicit in the determinate facts and possible states of affairs they govern. This latter is the sense put in place as the lesson Hegel draws for us from consideration of the reifiying "two worlds" views, which treat the consequences and incompatibilities as more determinate things like those described by empirical statements of fact, just things located "jenseits", in a kind of supersensible world, whether the calm realm of laws or the inverted world. The mistaken thought behind these conceptions is that the facts about which objects exhibit which properties are *modally insulated*—in that sense, extensional. That is, it is the thought that they are intelligible as the determinate facts they are independently of what else *might*, or *must*, or *cannot* be true. Statements expressing those additional modal relations are construed as descriptive, fact-stating statements, just like the ordinary ground-level empirical descriptive claims that state how things merely are. They just describe a different *kind* of world, state a different *kind* of fact. The proper conception, Hegel tells us, is one in which the *conceptual articulation* of objective facts, made explicit in statements of necessary consequence and noncompossibility, are *implicit* in the objective determinate facts described by ground-level empirical statements of how things are. The crucial insight Hegel is offering, as I read him, is that *all* objective empirical properties (a class we have learned is not to be taken to be restricted to *observable* properties) are *modally involved*. Asserting that they obtain always essentially involves committing oneself to subjunctive consequences, to what would, could, and could not happen *if* other states of affairs *were* to obtain. The culprit here is the idea that there is a distinction between modally insulated and modally involved properties, and further that the former are antecedently intelligible independently of the latter. This is the fundamental idea on which the Tarski-Quine extensional order of semantic explanation is based, and through it, the

Lewis-Stalnaker possible worlds picture of modality built on it—what Hegel is prophetically, if proleptically criticizing under the rubric of the "inverted world." It is this conception I used as the starting-point of the recollective sketch of an expressively progressive development from a Tarskian order of semantic explanation through a Fregean one to the Hegelian—counter-chronological though this rational reconstruction is.

Understanding consciousness conceiving itself and its object as having the structure Hegel calls "infinity" has won through by its metalevel experience (as Hegel recollects it for us) to the realization that objective facts are conceptually structured, they and the properties they involve are determinate only insofar as they stand in modal relations of necessary consequence and incompatibility to each other and to other possible states of affairs and properties. All properties are modally involved because being determinate is incompatible with being modally insulated. It is in this sense that the alethic modal relations made explicit by statements of laws are implicit in the objective facts, whatever they are. On Hegel's hylomorphic conception of conceptual content, this same structure visible in the objective pole of the objects of knowledge is mirrored on the deontic side of the subjects of knowledge. Doxastic commitments as to how things really, objectively, are have the determinate conceptual contents they do only in virtue of being articulated by commitments to the goodness of subjunctively robust material inferential relations and relations of material incompatibility. On the side of the cognitive activity of subjects, these are deontic normative relations: norms according to which a commitment with one content necessarily commits one to endorsing other contents that follow from it, and precludes one from entitlement to still others. In each case the modal relations of consequence and incompatibility, whether alethic or deontic, are to be understood as implicit in, as conceptually articulating, the contents of thinkables, both facts and judgments. We have seen that this hylomorphic *conceptual realism* is explicated further by the claims of *objective idealism*. It asserts the reciprocal

sense-dependence of concepts expressing the ontological structure of objective reality, concepts such as <u>object</u>, <u>property</u>, <u>fact</u>, and <u>law</u>, and concepts expressing framework-constituting features of norm-governed discursive activities, practices, or processes, such as <u>referring</u>, <u>classifying</u>, <u>asserting</u>, and <u>inferring</u>. The *Perception* chapter explains the sense in which relations of material incompatibility and consequence must be thought of as implicit in taking the objective world to consist of facts about properties characterizing objects, and the *Force and Understanding* chapter does the same for a broadened conception of facts and the subjunctively robust consequential and incompatibility relations implicit in them.

This is *not* the sense of "implicit" in which recollection displays how things are in themselves as the explicit expression of what was all along implicit in the earlier stages of a reconstructed sequence of appearances of that reality for consciousness. To understand the recollective sense, we must already understand the sense that emerges already from the hylomorphic picture of conceptual content as showing up both in objective form as facts implicitly articulated by alethic modal relations of necessary consequence and noncompossibility and in subjective form as judgings articulated by deontic normative relations of material inference and incompatibility.[187] And the recollective sense of implicitness and its expression, understood as a theory of the semantic relation between senses and their referents, progressively transforms our understanding of the distinction between reference-dependence and sense-dependence, which is critical to the specification of the claims constitutive of objective idealism, by making possible the transposition of the sense/reference distinction from the Fregean key in which it was introduced into a Hegelian one. The path to what I have been calling

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[187] Hylomorphic conceptual realism is what Hegel makes of Spinoza's thought that "the order and connection of things is the same as the order and connection of ideas," [ref.], which in turn is what Spinoza made of Descartes's modeling of the relation between mind and world on the global isomorphism between discursive equations and extended figures in his analytic geometry.

"conceptual idealism" is paved by the recollective construal of the sense in which the in-itself ("Ansichsein") is implicit in how things are for consciousness.

Already something thought, the content is the property of individuality; existence has no more to be changed into the form of what is in-itself and implicit [Ansichsein], but only the <u>implicit</u> into the form of what is <u>explicit</u>, of what is objective to self [Fursichseins].[188]

Miller translates the middle part of this passage as: "but only the <u>implicit</u>—no longer merely something primitive, nor lying hidden within existence, but already present as a *recollection*—into the form of what is <u>explicit</u>…" I think the parenthetical remark is just right, and I would be very happy indeed if that is what Hegel said. But I can find no trace of it in the German.[189] Miller seems to have interpolated this explanation from what he understands of the previous context. I am claiming, consistently with Miller's interpolation, that the best way to understand what Hegel is saying here is to pair it with one of the claims with which the meta-recollection that is the *Phenomenology* concludes: "[R]ecollection, the inwardizing, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance."[190]

Conceptual realism is ultimately to be understood in terms of this *process* of *making* what is implicit explicit. This is a dimension of *making* that turns out to be an essential aspect of *finding*. Engaging in the full, ongoing experience of error, including the recollective reconstructive phases that show it also to be the revelation of truth, is what subjects must *do* in order thereby to *discover* how things anyway already objectively were. One important strand in German Idealism, starting with Kant, is a recoil from the idea of knowing as having as its ideal the passive reflection of how things are, with no omissions and no alterations. In its place they put an orienting concern with knowing as a

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[188] [29].

[189] "Schon ein *Gedachtes*, ist er Eigentum der Individualität; es ist nicht mehr das *Dasein* in das *An-sich-sein,* sondern nur *das Ansich* in die Form des *Für-sich*-seins umzukehren…"

[190] [808].

distinctive kind of practical doing. Hegel's conceptual idealism, as I understand it, develops from consideration of the sense in which recollection *produces* the in-itself that it reveals as what is represented by the sequence of more-or-less adequate representings of it.

This sense of making or producing the reality behind its appearances (the referents those senses represent) is *sui generis*. To begin with, it is emphatically not to be confused with reference-dependence. The claim is not that recollectively reconstructing a course of experience, so revealing it as at once driven by error and the process by which truth is discovered, *causally* brings into existence the objective reality it comes to know. Things would still largely be as they objectively are even if there were no knowers. Nor is it a relation of mere sense-dependence. Recollection *is* the doing that produces the distinction, essential to consciousness, of what is *to* consciousness what things objectively are, in themselves and what is *to* consciousness only how those things appear *for* consciousness. It is what we must understand to understand how that distinction can show up to consciousness itself, and hence why and how the concept of <u>consciousness</u> essentially involves the concept of <u>self-consciousness</u>. But sense-dependence is an essentially *semantic* relation: a relation between *senses* or contents. Conceptual idealism asserts rather a dependence of *semantics* on *pragmatics*. For it explains the semantic relation between sense and reference in terms of *recollecting*: an activity, a practice, a process. In its broadest usage, pragmatics is the study of discursive activities, practices, or processes—such things as referring, describing, fact-stating, and inferring. This dependence of semantic relations on pragmatic activities does underwrite the more controversial direction of sense-dependence asserted by objective idealism: the dependence of concepts of an ontological metavocabulary, such as <u>object</u>, <u>property</u>, <u>fact</u>, and <u>law</u> on concepts of a pragmatic metavocabulary, such as <u>referring</u>, <u>describing</u>, <u>asserting</u>, and <u>inferring</u>. For that sense dependence reflects the dependence of the first set of concepts on the *practices expressed by* the second set of concepts.

So the *sui generis* asymmetric dependence relation asserted by conceptual idealism is not to be assimilated either to reference-dependence or to sense-dependence, for two reasons. First, the semantic relations it addresses are not between referents and referents or senses and senses, but between senses and referents. Second, the dependence it asserts is not in the first instance a *semantic* dependence at all. It is rather the mode of dependence of the semantic relation between senses and referents on the pragmatic activity of subjects, who manipulate senses through all the phases and aspects of experience in order to determine the relation between representing senses and the referents they represent. If we view how it stands between thought in the sense of episodes of thinking and the thinkable facts that are thought about from the retrospective vantage point afforded by a recollective vindication of some endorsed constellation of doxastic commitments concerning what is actual and subjunctively robust commitments concerning relations of consequence and incompatibility (which is Hegel's dynamic analog of sensuous immediacy and conceptual articulation each make their distinctive contributions to judgment), we can regard that intentional nexus either from the objective side of what is known or from the subjective side of the knowing of it. The currently endorsed commitments are presented as constituting genuine knowledge, which is to say that things are in themselves what they are for consciousness. One constellation of conceptual contents takes two forms: on the objective side, as facts and their implicit alethic modal involvements, and on the subjective side as judgments and their implicit deontic normative involvements. The recollective vindication of this culminating (so far) stage of the development of what Hegel calls "the Concept" explains how representing senses came to *track* the represented referents *nomologically*, and also by the same process how represented referents came to *govern* the representing senses *normatively*. The first is matter of alethic modal relations, of the kind characteristic of the represented objective world. The second is a matter of deontic normative practices, of the kind characteristic of the representing subjects's activity. They are both systematic

dependences, but neither of the reference-dependence nor of the sense-dependence semantic variety, even when reference and sense are understood on the Hegelian rather than the Fregean model. They concern rather the semantogenic alethic relations and deontic processes that *institute* the semantic relations between senses and their referents. The recollective reconstruction of experience exhibits the progressive achievement of, on the one hand, an alethic modal tracking relation supporting subjunctively robust inferences from how things are for consciousness to how they are in themselves, and on the other hand, deontic normative practices whereby how things are in themselves serves as a normative standard for assessments of the correctness of the deontic commitments that constitute how they are for consciousness.

Conceptual idealism, in asserting the distinctive kind of explanatory and conceptual priority of pragmatics over semantics that is embodied in taking the recollective dimension of experience to provide the framework within which to understand the institution of semantic relations between representing senses and represented referents, thereby asserts a practical priority of, and asymmetric dependence relation between, norm-governed experiential practices made explicit by the use of deontic vocabulary and nomological tracking relations made explicit by the use of alethic vocabulary. The fact that the ampliative, critical, and recollective rational task-responsibilities normatively govern the manipulation of conceptual contents (senses) in the process of experience constitutes the experiencing subject's practically treating how things are in themselves as providing a normative standard for assessing the correctness of how things are for consciousness. (The reciprocal sense-dependence asserted by the thesis of objective idealism is a reflection of this fact.) And it is that norm-governed process that selectively institutes, shapes, and refines the nomological tracking of how things are in themselves by how things are for consciousness, of referents by senses. Hylomorphic *conceptual realism*, which makes intelligible the possibility of genuine knowledge by understanding conceptual content as actualizable in

two forms, an objective form articulated by alethic modal relations of necessary consequence and noncompossibility and a subjective form articulated by deontic normative relations of necessary consequence and noncompossibility, and *objective idealism*, which asserts the reciprocal sense-dependence of concepts articulating the ontological structure of the objective world and concepts articulating the pragmatic structure of subjective discursive practices, both exhibit the intentional nexus in terms that are *symmetric* as between its objective and its subjective poles. The *conceptual idealism* that digs deeper to explain these less radical Hegelian theses breaks this symmetry. It asserts a both a practical and a conceptual priority of norm-governed discursive practices over alethic modal relations in understanding what it is for there to be an objective world that is at once the cause of sense and the goal of intellect (the first a nomological matter, the second a normative one).

In vindicating one constellation of senses as veridical, conferring on them the normative status of expressing explicitly how things have all along implicitly really been as what was represented by the representing senses that were its more-or-less adequate appearances, which is the status of serving as a normative standard for assessing the correctness of all such appearances, a recollective reconstruction of experience *selects* the alethic relations of senses tracking referents that matter semantically. This sense in which recollection *produces* what things are in themselves, the represented referents semantically implicit in the representing senses, is *noncausal* production, because talk of causation is couched in an alethic modal vocabulary. I have described it as "*sui generis*" because of the way in which it is distinguished from the semantic relations of reference-dependence (of which causal dependence is a principal species) and sense-dependence. There is however, as we will discover, in reading the *Reason* chapter, an analogous sort of production that arises in considering exercises of intentional agency. The analogy there is not, as one might be led to expect by popular misunderstandings that assimilate Hegel's idealism to Berkeleyan subjective idealism, the sense in which a

practical agent produces a *deed*. Rather, it is the sense in which the agent recollectively produces an *intention* as what the deed makes explicit. The deed is indeed causally reference-dependent on the intention, as the knowing is causally reference-dependent on what is known. But the cause that is in each case *found* by the agent-knower is in the *sui generis* sense *made* "produced as the product" of the vindicatory retrospective recollective process. They are both, the cognitive and the practical species of recollective producings, instances of the distinctive kind of constrained *making* that is *finding* out how things always already anyway were. We readers of the *Phenomenology*, the phenomenological consciousness looking over the shoulder of different shapes of phenomenal consciousness at the meta-experiences by which its self-conception is transformed, will not be in a position fully to appreciate this genus until we consider self-consciousness and (so) agency: the distinction that action essentially involves as well as the distinction that consciousness essentially involves. So we won't fully understand this expressive model of making the implicit explicit on the cognitive side until we understand it on the practical side. What we are looking for is the cognitive analog of understanding the sense in which an intentional doing can be intelligible as the expression of an implicit intention, so that the acting consciousness can see itself in the actual deed it performs.

It is this analogy between knowing and doing in virtue of which understanding consciousness taking its object to have the structure of infinity finds itself in its object, and thereby *to* it consciousness shows up (*we* can see) as a form of *self*-consciousness. Although "it is only *for us* that this truth exists, not yet for consciousness," in fact the final form of understanding consciousness is distinguished from the previous shapes of consciousness for which their truth was a Thing, an 'other' than themselves, expresses just this, that not only is consciousness of a thing only possible for a self-consciousness, but that self-consciousness alone is the truth of those shapes.[191] At this final stage, "what

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[191] [164].

is, for the Understanding, an object in a sensuous covering, is *for us* in its essential form as a pure Notion."[192] For that reason we can see that "the Understanding experiences only *itself*," not something experienced as other than itself.[193]

Since this Notion of infinity is an object for consciousness, the latter is consciousness of a difference that is no less immediately cancelled; consciousness is for its own self, it is a distinguishing of that which contains no difference, or self-consciousness.[194]

What does this mean? In what sense is the distinction between the subject of knowledge and the object of knowledge now considered to be not a distinction? What sort of difference is being denied? The three theses into which I have divided the idealism being recommended here, conceptual realism, objective idealism, and conceptual idealism, offer a succession of ever-deeper answers to this question. Each offers a sense in which the intentional nexus is understood as a distinctive kind of unity that in different senses cancels the distinction between its necessarily related poles, in virtue of their necessarily being bound into the sort of unity they are.

The first thesis tells us that among the differences being denied is a *strong difference of intelligibility* between what is known and the knowing of it, of exactly the sort that in the *Introduction* was diagnosed as leading to the impossibility of satisfying the Genuine Knowledge constraint, and hence to semantically enforced epistemological skepticism. Conceptual realism says that when the understanding consciousness looks out at what to it is the in-itself, it sees something already in conceptual shape, a world that is conceptually contentful just as its own thinking is. Consciousness's own thinkings confront a thinkable world. When all goes well epistemically, its representings and what they represent share the same conceptual content: how things are *for* consciousness just *is* how they are *in themselves*. There is no gulf of intelligibility separating intrinsically

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[192] [165].
[193] Ibid.
[194] [164].

intelligible thinkings from intrinsically *un*intelligible (or at least *not* intrinsically intelligible) things thought *about*. Consciousness is conceptually structured, and the world it knows about is conceptually structured. This is one sense in which it no longer sees anything alien when it pushes aside the curtain of appearance and contemplates things as they are in themselves. According to the hylomorphic conception, mind and world alike consist of thinkables. Those thinkable contents just show up in two different forms: an objective one in which the relations of noncompossibility or exclusive difference and necessary consequence articulating the conceptual contents are alethic modal ones, and a subjective one in which the relations of noncompossibility or exclusive difference and necessary consequence articulating the conceptual contents are deontic normative ones.

Objective idealism goes further, showcasing the particularly intimate connection between these two forms conceptual content can take. That connection manifests itself in the fact that at the metalevel, the concepts used to express explicitly key features of the modal ontological structure of the objective world and the concepts used to express explicitly key features of the deontic normative structure of discursive practices and processes are reciprocally sense-dependent. What it means to say that the world consists of facts about the possession of properties by objects and lawful connections among them has to be understood in terms of concepts making explicit what one is *doing* in asserting declarative sentences by referring to objects with singular terms and classifying them by applying predicates, and in endorsing subjunctively robust inferences between what those sentences express. In this sense, neither form conceptual content can take, objective and subjective, is intelligible considered all on its own, apart from its relation to the other. In this sense, too, there is no gulf separating them. They mutually presuppose one another—not in a causal reference-dependence sense, but in the rational sense-dependence sense. The task of understanding the most basic ontological structure

of the world turns consciousness back to the terms it uses to make explicit its own discursive activity.

In a final further step, conceptual idealism asserts that when, as self-conscious in the sense of being conscious of itself *as* conscious, consciousness distinguishes between its certainty and truth, between what things are for it and what they are in themselves, between appearance and reality, representings and representeds, it is neither alienating itself from itself, nor acknowledging a confrontation with something alien to it. Its finding out how things really is a distinctive kind of active recollective *making* of that distinction, which is essential to consciousness as such, through its experience. The world as it is in itself *as* distinct from how it is for consciousness is not a brute other but in that distinctive sense the product of its own recollective activity in experience. In this sense it finds only what it has made—and not only made findable. In this sense, it sees itself in the objects of its knowledge, even insofar as they transcend that knowledge.

Understanding the object of knowledge conceptually, as Begriff, means reconstruing representational relations within a model of practices of explicitly expressing the implicit. The focus is not on the object as something simply there, but on what Hegel calls the "coming-to-be of the object," its emergence into explicitness. By contrast to representational thinking

Speculative [begreifendes] thinking behaves in a different way. Since the Notion [Begriff] is the object's own self, which presents itself as the *coming-to-be* [Werden] *of the object*, it is not a passive Subject inertly supporting the Accidents; it is, on the contrary, the self-moving Notion which takes its determinations back into itself. In this movement the passive Subject itself perishes; it enters into the differences and the content, and constitutes the determinateness, i.e. the differentiated content and its

movement, instead of remaining inertly over against it…[A]nd only this movement itself becomes the object.[195]

In a move foreshadowed by understanding the modal relations of necessity and noncompossibility articulating the conceptual contentfulness in virtue of which objective states of affairs are not understood representationally, as denizens of some other ontological realm, but expressively, as *implicit in* how things actually are, conceptual idealism presents how things are in themselves as *implicit in* how they are for consciousness—in a sense of "implicit" operationalized by recollective recovery of the reality exhibited as implicit in a rationally reconstructed sequence of partial expressions of it in appearance.

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[195] [60].