

The Orthodox Hegel

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Development Further Developed

By

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PREFACE

The present book recapitulates while developing further and with more systematic focus the material of our four previous studies exploring Hegel's account of "the method" of philosophy, one, principally, of absorbing while transforming, in a genuine *praxis*, which Hegel calls "the whole task of philosophy", religion and its objects, typically mind, cosmos and spirit. These studies, *New Hegelian Essays* (2012), *From Narrative to Necessity* (2012), *Reason's Developing Self-Revelation* (2013) and *Hegel's Philosophy of Universal Reconciliation* (2013), have all been issued by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Hegel wrote from within this ongoing tradition and movement of the spirit, of *Geist*, become absolute, in his view, in a historical Christianity¹ not abstractly separate from experience as "the real author of *growth* and *advance* in philosophy"². In calling Christianity "the absolute religion" he implies, by his own principles, that it is not a religion merely, since religion, like art as prior to it, is a transient form of that Absolute Spirit self-accomplished or perfected in philosophy. As such it might, alternatively, be called "religion itself" (de Lubac), but included now in philosophy viewed as supreme *Gottesdienst*. The last is first, so to say, or *vice versa*. He shows, that is to say, how philosophy, as final wisdom, absorbs and perfects ("accomplishes") theology and religion as being, he says, its whole object.³ They share, that is, the fate of the Object as such in

¹ Here we must bear in mind that his account of history itself is undeviatingly dialectical, the play of absolute mind setting itself up with its "own result" in view. It is germane, I consider, to view this account as suggested by or even as an interpretative development of the *Letter to the Romans*, 9-11, by Paul of Tarsus. Cf. his Preface to the *Philosophy of History* lectures, regrettably omitted from some translations.

² Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (hereafter "Enc."), "Introduction", paragraph 12. This is the Introduction to the whole tripartite *Encyclopaedia* and not only to the Logic (first part), as the layout of the Wallace translation (OUP) used here might suggest.

³ For systematic exposition of this view see Georges van Riet's "The Problem of God in Hegel", read in Latin at a Thomistic Congress held at Rome half a century ago before appearing in French in the *Révue de métaphysique et morale* (Louvain) and in U.S. English translation in *Philosophy Today*, vol. XI, 1967.

the development of his dialectic (*Enc.* 194-212), absorption, namely, in the Absolute Idea.

It belongs equally to this view, therefore, that history has not merely reached its end, as it has recently been claimed to have done in successful capitalism, which should now go on and on. This inversion of the Marxist view is manifestly magical, a fantasy. Rather, any idea of a temporal process becoming absolute implies, it will be shown, the speculative absorption of history itself, along, as we just said, with the object as such. History is indistinguishable from that dialectical method which is itself the Idea, establishing as it does the “ideality” (*Enc.* 95) of the finite as such. Movement become absolute is the “vanishing of vanishing”, of becoming, like Hegelian being, in its own notion. In general, Hegel claims, “no speculative principle can be correctly expressed by any such prepositional form”, even given that such self-referential refutation must “give rise to reasonable objection” as promoting the unity, in our predication, over the difference of the “inherent unrest” that this unity is.

The contrary view, stressing the *exoteric* primacy of objective religion, as presented in particular in C.S. Lewis’s apologetic writings, is discussed in the Postscript to this present book. It was also discussed in the opening chapter, “No Regress from the Hegelian Wood”⁴, of the first of these five books. An immediate ancestor of the view, with its call for a regress, was Chesterton’s powerfully argued *Orthodoxy* of 1908, mediating that whole abstractly *supernaturalist* account within which religion, contrary to its infinite quality as spirit, gets objectified, the outward at the expense of the inward, as if these were not both the same. In such thought, namely, the rationality or, at least, reasonableness of faith itself, “thinking with assent”⁵, is set *against* any absorption of it into speculative reason. The Outside of history, in a word, is opposed, as it were victoriously, to the Inside of speculation in mind’s own self-consciousness. In this sense religion is the opposite of the mystical, which, nonetheless, it expressly honours as “the way”.

That is to say, here, in Lewis or Chesterton, the exoteric is *abstractly* separated from the esoteric. The truth is, rather, that since “religion is for all men” (Hegel) it is also for philosophers, while it is belongs to religion’s spirit that not only all men collectively but religion in itself should and does aspire to its self-transcendence in the perfection of wisdom and contemplation which is truly wisdom, *sophia*, and should love and honour it (*philo-sophia*) as spirit transcending all literal or written or even vocal

⁴ This recalls Lewis’s title, *The Pilgrim’s Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Christianity, Reason and Romanticism*, of 1933.

⁵ Cf. *From Narrative to Necessity*, Chapter One.

representation since, as Hegel shortly says, in speculative self-contradiction, “all predications are false”.⁶ This is philosophy (*consolatrix*) speaking. That is, in short, Christianity, or perfected philosophy, is “democratic” as calling all men and women to an aristocracy of spirit, an entering on the narrow path, which, in proportion as it is looked for, will be found. The esoteric is made thus an exoteric goal, as the modern and post-Hegelian democratic movements illustrate. Spirit, thus revealing what was ever its nature, is shed abroad, poured out on all flesh. There are no “experts”, as the prophets (Joel, Jeremiah) had foreseen, unless of course we should vote for them. No one, that is, is to be fobbed off with parables against his better judgment. Like time itself, as Hegel says, these are useful for the spirit for only so “long” as spirit needs them though, in a sense, we all need them, as “poetry is necessary for life” or music “the food of love”.

Against this “silver” of objectification we have set and defended the opposite, “golden” task of “understanding spiritual things spiritually” (St. Paul), whereby such spiritual things become the whole matter of (“first”) philosophy and wisdom, making the latter, therefore, holy in the sense of absolute (*sancta sophia*). The task of philosophy, thus viewed, is one of alignment with Absolute Mind seen as one with its self-thought. This is both its form and its matter. Thus in true self-expression as I, as subject, Hegel reasons, we cannot merely mean (*meinen*), as it were in private opinion, saying what is just mine (*meine*) but must “legislate for the universe” or, rather, in sober truth *be* it, since “I” cannot but name the “universal of universals”, where all are one in supra-organic union of spirit.⁷ The word “theology”, *theologia* in Aristotle’s Greek, cannot therefore be naming anything else or other than this task of the spirit, wisdom. The “religious” dilemma of “above” or “below” is here transcended or absorbed, since wisdom is necessarily “according to the whole”, *kat’holon*, catholic. It follows that “religion itself” transcends its religious moment, “brings to nought the things which are”, in a word, as its own mystical tradition ever exemplifies.⁸

In his *Surprised by Joy*, Chapter Fourteen, “Checkmate”, Lewis relates how he progressed, regressed rather (in his own special, affirmative sense of that term) from Hegelian theism (the Absolute) to a belief in God “as a

⁶ Regarding this topic, see our critical remarks on John Finnis’s handling of “contradiction in performance” in the final “Scientific Postscript” to this present book.

⁷ This is most clearly set forth, as interpreting Hegel, in Chapter Two, “Immortality”, of J.M.E. McTaggart’s *Studies in the Hegelian Cosmology* (Cambridge 1901).

⁸ For Hegel on mysticism, cf. *Enc.* 82 and add.

person” with whom one could be in relation. This distinction is prior to and independent of his coming to confess Christ as divine or “Son of God”. On this restrictedly philosophical plane Lewis wants to claim that Hegel’s absolute idealism only adds “mystifications to the simple, workable, theistic idealism of Berkeley”. The verbal coincidence with Marx’s verdict on Hegel (though Marx had no use for Berkeley) as mystifying is striking and, I judge, thus far a bad sign. There is, he says here, “no possibility of being in a personal relation” even with Berkeley’s God, however, as there is with what he mocks himself for having dismissively called “the god of popular religion”.⁹

Hegel’s position, by contrast, is that the God philosophy reveals is the same as this God of popular religion, that it perfects the popular representation of this same absolute Idea, accomplishing it as knowledge and absolute knowledge, as what he calls *the* Concept, which includes everything as its “moments”. This is the same God understood in or according to spirit. “It is the lesson of Christianity that God is spirit”. As to being in a relation to him, we have nothing *else* so fundamentally to relate ourselves to as *this* relation that annihilates both self and relation, in what we call identity¹⁰. Hence we encounter God, the absolute concept, in our neighbour as in ourselves, as both same and other. We love “as” self, as following the “commandment”, what *is* self, viz. the other, and this is the sole foundation for the commandment’s “naturalness”. That is, the normative here is *ipso facto* “factual”, and, still more, *vice versa*, a position at least approached in the adage “Become what you are”.¹¹ As theory is praxis, the highest (Aristotle), so praxis is theory (Marx). That is, I am you. This “second” commandment states or itself shows, rather, if we accept it, that the abstractly individual self is purely phenomenal, as in Hegel’s thought, where there is no absolute inter-subjectivity between finite subjects but Subjectivity itself, the Idea, of which each is a “moment” and finally ideal or self-transcending.¹² So we cannot ourselves constitute one of the terms in such a two-part relation, nor could anything.

⁹ Hegel expressly distinguishes his own “absolute idealism” from the “subjective idealism” of Berkeley, Kant or Fichte, which he calls “abstract, empty idealism”, which “merely takes reason as reason appears at first”, declaring “that everything is its own” (Hegel: *The Phenomenology of Mind*, tr. Baillie, Harper Torch, New York 1966, p.279; cp. *Enc.* 42-46).

¹⁰ Cf. Hegel, *Enc.* 50 (Part I, “The Science of Logic”).

¹¹ Compare “Do what you are doing” (*age quod agis*) or, for short, “Get on with it”. Hegel insists that speculative reason is found at the most common level of human thinking and behaviour, of the child in the “first” instance.

¹² Cf. *Enc.* 95.

For the same reason, God on his side, which is not a side but the whole, has no real relation with us, since it is only “in” him, as one with him indeed, “that we live and move and have our being”. This, Lewis had the means of knowing and surely did know, is the teaching of Thomas Aquinas as rooted in Augustine (“You were with me but I was not with you”), St. Paul and the prophets of Israel. Aquinas compares the situation with that of a man’s relation to an immobile pillar, now to the right of it, now to the left, while the pillar has no such corresponding relation, being rather, if we take the pillar now as God, the man’s *own* end in which, as “finished”, he is absorbed and, it might seem, done away with. This “ruin of the individual”, in Hegel’s vision, however, is merely the transcendence of abstract thinking. “I” is “the universal of universals” and our job, he says, consists simply in realising this, the knowing of God, in Scriptural terms, which “is eternal life”.

What this comes down to, as implying it, is that Lewis’s idea of “mere Christianity” is all too like an abstraction of Christianity from its indwelling spirit of infinite development leading into *all* truth. This is to confound the development in purification of an idea with its germ in its beginnings, as Hegel expresses this error. The ecumenical motive doubtless driving Lewis should rather drive us forward in development, as explored in this book. Ecumenical thinking, formally endorsed also by the Roman leadership at the Second Vatican *Ecumenical* Council (1962-1964), does not indeed “overthrow the nature of an opinion”¹³ It rather transforms it, as all is transformed and idealised in the Absolute Idea, which, Hegel shows, at one with traditional thought here, is the Absolute itself. That a divine idea is one with the divine essence is a thesis of Aquinas, for example.

One might say, indeed, that Lewis refused the task that Hegel both undertook and accomplished. After his apparent humiliation at the hands of Miss Anscombe, as she was then known as, at Oxford’s “Socratic Club” in 1948¹⁴, who here “only did what she thought was her duty”¹⁵, Lewis’s

¹³ The phrase is from Gregory XVI’s condemnation of “liberalism” in *Mirari vos* (c.1831).

¹⁴ Lewis had embraced a distinction of Samuel Alexander’s (*Space, Time and Deity*) corresponding to that of Aquinas between the *id quid* or object of perception and the *id quo* as species or idea, never itself perceived, whereby the former is perceived (*Summa theol.* 1, 85, 2). Will and mind intend the real, as would be impossible by a mere natural process. Thought, like truth, was transcendently “valid”, Lewis wrote in *Miracles*, an expression to which Anscombe objected. Lewis accepted this and rewrote parts of his text accordingly. For Hegel, however, transcending both sides of this dispute, objects neither lose nor gain in reality if

greatness as the “wounded Christian”, doggedly but beautifully expressing his loyalty to “the heavenly vision”, emerges more clearly as an alternative vocation to or version of this task, however:

But four babies playing a game can make a play-world that licks your real world hollow. That’s why I’m going to stand by the play-world. I’m on Aslan’s side even if there isn’t any Aslan to lead it. I’m going to live as like a Narnian as I can even if there isn’t any Narnia...¹⁶

This alternative, *qua* alternative, does not arise in Absolute Idealism. History, again, is dethroned, absorbed as, logically, it must be, in the infinite and absolute, in the Idea, as the very fiction of “Puddleglum”, Lewis’s ability to conceive him, who takes just this stand, well indicates. We are all on the side of Puddleglum, or Aslan (they are the same), inasmuch as we are not abstractly just ourselves in finite subjectivity. Here art maintains and transfigures itself precisely as absorbed into philosophy and the one defeated is equally the victor. Lewis, in fact, was too close to Hegel to see what the latter was saying, to find his way out of that maze or “wood” which he himself was. One should only add that his real target should have been the British Hegelians, minus at least McTaggart, and not Hegel himself, honest and loyal Lutheran as he, by the argument in these

their unity is “transferred to the subject”. The content is no more objective than subjective, and it “does no good to the things merely to say that they have being”. Being, rather, is the absolute, self-knowing Idea against which it is customarily distinguished. No doubt Berkeley was working towards this, which quite obviates that need for a dualism between nature and the supernatural which Lewis had assumed to be necessary. The former rather is absorbed or taken up into the latter, as the free or infinite necessity of which consciousness of miracle is a first intuition. Thus the final or eucharistic miracle is a or the “mystery of faith”, in principle imperceptible, as spiritual interpretation, rather, or the idea that is the thing, the thing the idea.

¹⁵ The late philosopher Peter Geach, Anscombe’s husband, said these words to the author in the late 1970s at Leeds. Geach, understandably, retained a preoccupation with C.S. Lewis up into his last years. He wrote in one of his last letters to me, as his former student, that he had systematically reread his “religious” and philosophical writings, adding that he found many “bad” arguments. On this one might observe that an analogy is not yet an argument, while all the same all argument is from or by analogy with the so-called “argument form”, itself an argument, with which it is “on all fours”. Cf. P.T. Geach: *Reason and Argument* (Oxford 1976) or our own “Argument Forms and Argument from Analogy”, *Acta Philosophica*, Rome, 1997, pp. 303-310.

¹⁶ Puddleglum in *The Silver Chair*, speaking to the witch in that story, as cited in A.N. Wilson’s biography, *C.S. Lewis*, London 1990, pp.226-7.

pages at least, can be seen to have been. Again, it is thought that thinks itself. There can be no further validation. Hence, “the spiritual man judges all things”. In fact, Lewis’s argument aimed at saying just this, in profound if at that time still unconscious agreement with Anscombe on the necessary right of unaided logic. A deep truth lies hidden here, which no writer has come further in unravelling than Hegel. Of course then it affects the terms in which “the existence of God” is discussed.

INTRODUCTION

We first focus here upon a consideration that constantly forces itself upon attention but is not commonly subjected to philosophical treatment, since it is difficult to form conceptions of something itself distinguished against all of which we can form concepts. I mean existence as opposite to or at least different from essence, different especially, therefore, from the essence of existence in particular, from any “existentialism”.

Every word of language, every phrase or linguistic context indifferently, names a concept. “This”, “man” and “this man” are thus three names for concepts, which are yet not thereby themselves three or of any *number* whatever. “Number” itself names a concept and ultimately all words, as naming thought(s), name *the* concept, name thought itself inasmuch as naming, the positing of an arbitrary symbol, is work of thought itself ever naming itself in and as act, *energeia*, “the inward which is quite to the fore”.¹ This is the identity in difference in which all coheres in the coherent Idea knowing only itself, self-conscious spirit or mind. The concepts themselves are acts (of mind). “Substance” names a grammatical concept or finitely logical category. “Essence as grammar”, Wittgenstein rightly suggested. Finally, however, substance, however particularised, is act, the self-conceiving concept. Substance, that is, is verb, *verbum*, as the subject is the predicate. Identity is *in* the difference thus posited in duality and this Hegel calls the falsity of all judgments. This underlies the final or speculative “stage of Positive Reason”, apprehending “the unity of determinations in their opposition”². The verb names and acts act. One act names and absorbs all other conceivable acts and this, again, is *the* Concept, conceiving itself alone, *actus actuum*, what Hegel calls Absolute Knowledge. This knowledge has no other subject, which means that there is, necessarily, no absolute other, as is further developed, logically develops itself, in Hegel’s science of logic, of which he has left two written accounts, *The Science of Logic* (1818) and the first part (1830) of the later tripartite *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, which bears the same name.

¹ Hegel, *Encyclopaedia* (hereafter *Enc.*) 143, addition (hereafter “add.”).

² *Ibid.* 82. W. Wallace’s translation amended as dictated to students by J. Kockelmans, autumn 1967.

Also names of individuals are names of concepts, included in the Concept as is proper to “the ideality of the finite”³. The Concept is the Idea’s “principle”⁴. The names themselves are, as occurring, phenomenal only. I bear my name as bestowed, as moving among phenomena while transcending them. Or, it is my or a phenomenal name. The scholastic “second intention” or *suppositio materialis*, a name in self-reference, is continuous with as included in any other intention in self-consciousness. This, ultimately, is why “self-referentiality”⁵ is not a particular logical error but the very mark of speculative logic, thought and discourse. Or we may say that it is *proper* to a name to be used in the mention and mentioned in the use.

The Speculative is the third “stage of positive Reason” (*Vernunft*), succeeding upon “Thought as *Understanding*” (*Verstand*) and Dialectical Scepticism as uniting and absorbing them. Thus the first form of logic “can at will be elicited from” Speculative Reason, from “the reason-world”, as was in fact done by Aristotle, for example.⁶

The German practice of indifferently writing a capital for a common as for a proper noun is purely a convention, just as is the English differentiation. Thus we can refer to Fido either as “Fido” or as “this dog here”. The expression “this individual” supposes previous identification, right or wrong, of an or rather the class of individuals. It is though, after all, not clear that one cannot have, or that there cannot be, a concept of any individual considered. Thus the name “God”, says Aquinas, can be equally viewed as a *nomen naturae*, equivalent to (the) godhead, or as personal or “proper”. “The deity”, like “his worship” (for judges) and so on, hovers uncertainly between the two, and this situation instances concrete universality. Thus a child, say, has leave, logically, to name properly anything whatever, the adult to restrict himself to a phrase such as “this particular instance” or thing. Childishly, no doubt, we may address, with personal pronoun, in love or anger, any concrete (or abstract) object whatever. Upon this facility hinges the whole debate between theism and atheism.

³ *Ibid.* 95.

⁴ *Ibid.* 213. It is in view of this that Hegel in the “addition” here brackets even the third of the three sections of Logic, the Concept, with the first two, being and Essence, as “dialectical” and hence nothing permanent but leading up to as “dynamic elements of the idea”.

⁵ Cf., for the sense of this term, the discussion of a paper by John Finnis in the section “Scientific Postscript”, below, concluding this work.

⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, *Encyclopaedia* (hereafter “*Enc.*”), 82.

*

Nonetheless, judgments of existence are possible. Further, even if all existents are individuals yet not all individuals exist, unless we stipulate that a dead ancestor, or Hamlet, is not an individual. Contrariwise, there certainly seem to be individual acts of thought or conception, unless we go on to deny the real existence of individuals abstracted from their universality in the Idea, as Hegel does. That is to say, he finds existence itself to be a purely momentary or finite category of thought. It may equally be argued that all judgments are judgments of existence. There occurs a formal identification of two suppositis in one concept, of which one says that it *is*. Hegel, however, imports the distinction between “mere” correctness and truth, which we would here abstract from, into logic itself (cf. EL 166-171).

The existence of the subject is all the same a different matter. Thus it is not, strictly, as Hegel points out, something that can be caused, since this would require the subject to exist before or without existing, in order to be said to be caused. The prime instance of this is talk of persons having been born or of persons, “reincarnation” apart, before they were born or, more simply, of “before Abraham was”. This last evangelical utterance is completed, as addressing just this error, with “I am”, in speculative disregard of the grammatical principle of “sequence of tenses”.

This is the objection, concerning caused subjective existence, that Peter Geach tried to meet, at the same time as defining creating as against mere making, when he wrote, concerning the notion of any created entity, that it will be true of it that

There is just one A; and God brought it about that (Ex)(x is an A) and for no x did God bring it about that x is an A; and c is an A.⁷

This may make logically perspicuous what is said when, say, creation (of self or another indifferently) is asserted. Positively, it is the denial of antecedent matter. But if I make myself an object thus, as in Geach’s formula, it is no longer I that is referred to, as it is in “I feel sick” or “I will not let you down”. The first person of the future tense changes the sense, therefore, of that tense. So no one can apply the formula about the object c to himself, without some modification at least. Even if I substitute “I am” for “c is” (an A), wishing to state that God created me, I say no more in kind than if I say I am a chess-player as well as Johnny is a chess-player. We both might be two non-existent, merely lexical dragons. Existential

⁷ P.T. Geach, *God and the Soul*, p.83.

import is thus a myth. Hume was so far right against Descartes. “I” names subjectivity and not the thinking subject in pure individuality. It is, says Hegel, the universal of universals and only for just that reason individual and also particular simultaneously. This consideration, of course, invalidates Geach’s whole formulation inasmuch as it depends upon the, we here see, unwarranted “existential quantifier”. Existence has no essence, true, but neither has essence any existence. Both are, rather, superseded in the Idea. Alternatively, we can reduce ex-istence to its etymological root as meaning a standing out (*ex-sistere*) from the rest. In this case, though, it denotes any abstracted concept and thus, as Hegel says, “Existence adds nothing to the things”.

So, ultimately no one and nothing ever causes anything or anyone, as bringing them about or even bringing “it” about that they are. The whole causal universe is a self-contradictory phenomenon and is nothing other than this false appearance, a falsity that is the essence of the finite. Nothing “lies behind” it, as if “in itself”, to stand beside or limit the absolute. The scholastic *plura entia sed non plus entis*, that the creation posits “more beings but not more being”, does no more than pose the problem of this contradictory presentation of the abstract understanding (*Verstand*) in its own terms. It is, though, a wilful presentation, a self-veiling (so as to unveil, re-veal) from within even, of the Idea itself, so that, or rather *in* that, truth emerges as “its own result”, as self-authenticating, as, in Hegel’s phrase, “the method”. The absolute *is* this method, since it cannot logically tolerate any means to an end not “yet” realised. The Idea, that is, is result of itself, as falsity is the necessary foil of truth. Otherwise the Idea, impossibly, would be contingent, sheer “facticity”, still passive to something *else*. The falsity is presupposed to the true, as evil to the good, Hegel claims, and this is the very opposite of that “logical Manichaeism” of which Geach, with whatever right, accuses Frege. Evil and falsity, for Hegel as for Aquinas, are of themselves in a good and true subject, *semper in subjecto*, are never themselves absolute.

Thus when Hegel says there is evil in God as well as good he means that the former is necessarily presupposed to the latter, as, differently, we have just seen, the latter is to the former. This leads him on to say, “unspiritually” (his own word), that good and evil are “the same”. Just as we, at the phenomenal level, form erroneous beliefs here and there, for which, at the same level, we are even responsible, so, as the ground of their phenomenality, absolute mind “intends objects in an initially

inadequate way via our finite minds” (T.L. Sprigge⁸, citing Royce’s account of what McTaggart calls our systematic misperception). But what are or could be finite minds is our question here?⁹

We begin by wanting to ask: who or what first “gave” us ourselves, as in geometry we speak of “the given”, the axioms, before attempting any proof whatever. If each man is his own self there is no essence of that self as such, since this objectifies the subject, in self-contradiction. Hence abstractly individual subjectivity, represented by a “term”, must be transcended in thought and thus “cancelled” (Hegel’s term) as objectifying abstraction. Subjectivity transcends it in the Idea. The “I who is” is thus no longer I since he has his other within himself and becomes it, is indeed that becoming, ceaselessly, from which alone mind, spirit, the dialectic and its method flow as themselves originating it. This is the original *exitus* and *reditus*, the physical representing the logical rather than set in contrast to it, as the logical is itself the final truth of the physical, the natural (*physis*). Mind in itself, that is, has no “phenomenology”, since its phenomenology is by definition just what is not “had” or, simply, is not. In any “phenomenology of mind” (Hegel’s title), therefore, we ascend out of phenomenology, as Hegel himself demonstrated. So, he will finally state, in dying as our own act we ascend out of life and hence “become universal self-consciousness”.¹⁰ This is what the senses *represent*, as themselves representations of non- or supra-sensual spirit, according to the analysis of sense-consciousness in the initial section of *The Phenomenology of Mind*. The implication is that nothing is lost or left behind, or that what is left behind is nothing, that death, in a word, *is* spiritual resurrection. The “Way of the Cross” as represented in religion (Hegel’s subject here) is not, insofar as it is anything, an abstracted means merely.

So in proposing this approach to the question, just raised, of the self one attempts a new language, but only incidentally. Thus one must counter G.E.M. Anscombe’s assertion that the self is not a proper subject for

⁸ Timothy L. S. Sprigge, “The Absolute”, in *Dictionary of Ontology and Metaphysics* (ed. Burkhardt & Smith), Munich 1991, p.2.

⁹ Compare here Hegel’s account of the Kantian antinomies as showing, not some deficiency of reason, but that “the body of cosmical fact, the specific statements descriptive of which run into contradiction, cannot be a self-subsistent reality, but only an appearance” (*Enc.* 48).

¹⁰ Cf. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind* (tr. Baillie), Harper Torchbooks, New York 1966, pp.780-781: “the pure or non-actual Spirit of bare thought has become actual” in “spiritual resurrection”. It is “the particular existence” that “becomes universal self-consciousness”, sublating our factuality as logic itself declares.

philosophical investigation, not “an important philosophical topic”.¹¹ By contrast, Hegel sees what is termed mysticism as rooted in the same speculative discourse, in “the Reason-world” (EL82 add.). Self is inadequately treated, is not considered, when regarded as mere condition or point of departure for experience. This Kantian view had, however, the merit of showing that self is not just another contingency, as in what we might call the thoughtless attitude. There is however a thought behind such thoughtlessness, namely the intuition that I am not my self exclusively, that such an object cannot be meant, though we “try”, says Hegel, to mean it. I, rather, is (am!) the universal of universals and, as such, not counted among names or even, philosophically, among pronouns. “I” used in a simple future tense, for example, typically affects and thus controls the whole sense of the verb, as do claims about subjective feelings and thoughts. Wittgenstein, too, can seem to have tried to eliminate this truth in his denial of a private language. This, Hegel would have retorted, is a point about the finitude of language and not about thought or subjectivity as such. It does not exclude solipsism, as Wittgenstein himself realised. The solipsist does not understand why everyone else, as he supposes, is not a solipsist too. The only solution open, this shows, is to see that self is absolute, in which all coincide, is itself, we might say, “neither one nor many” or, equivalently, both of these. “I am you”, so you are I. This is the original basis of love, derived by Thomas Aquinas, only reputedly realist, from “the analogy of being”. Each is to his being in a similar, “properly proportional” (Cajetan) way, Hegel’s “identity in difference”. But we are not here dealing with the instantiation of a concept, not even that of analogy, which is itself analogous. It is in this situation, as we have outlined it, that Hegel states that “all judgments are false”, an apparent self-contradiction in performance, which, however, he possesses the means for disarming.

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So on idealist premises, as Hume pointed out, we have no reason to admit a private self that endures through the succession of experiences we call our own, relying on memory. Yet it is indeed our memory, not someone else’s, we rely on, though our assurance here merely begs the question. Where otherwise is the unity of experience or, indeed, anything to talk about, language being constitutionally drawn from the pit (Hegel) of our

¹¹ Elizabeth Anscombe, “Twenty Opinions Common among Modern Anglo-American Philosophers”, in the *Acts of the International Congress of Moral Theology*, Rome, April 1986, *Città Nuova Editrice*, pp.49-51.

memory? Hegel compares this pit to a pyramid. Who lies buried, mummified, within there? Or if, with Augustine, we find God in the memory, then how can it be ours exclusively? Psychologists postulate archetypes, a “collective unconscious”. There is nothing unconscious about it, however. “All nature is akin and the soul has learned everything” (Plato, *Meno*). Do not ask whose soul? Plato is speaking of soul, spirit, mind, of which nature is the product. This is what relates or identifies every part of it to or with every otherwise other part, making it “akin”, all of a piece, as one Word, in the ancient usage. This is the presupposition of “science” too, that nature, inclusive of even whatever relative chaos there is in it, is rational, “akin”, to be connected, in a word, systematic.

Self, however, belongs with consciousness. That is, self is self-knowing, even if, with Aquinas, we say it is only known in its knowing of other things. Every self has to have “its own other”. Hegel’s dialectic purports to show this. An innate idea I never experienced would be chimerical, Locke thought. Yet, writes Hegel, “the principles in question, though innate, need not on that account have the form of ideas or conceptions of something we are aware of” (EL67). At issue, in part here, is what sense Hegel gives to consciousness when he speaks of self-consciousness especially, which is developed and, he insists, mediated, by “development, education, training”. This, once possessed, he says, is impervious even to death, a passage giving the lie, implicitly at least, to those maintaining that Hegel has nothing to say at all about immortality. Knowledge, for him synonymous with self-consciousness, is not essentially felt, though it can be (*Enc.* 159). Hence the nineteenth century purveyors of “ontologism”, as they called their Hegelian precipitate, were true to Hegel, whom they followed, in asserting that the idea, even the knowledge, of God, the absolute universal, is present to Mind as such or even is mind.¹²

The self may suffer from amnesia. Yet this is itself a form of consciousness. Memory is not then a necessary condition for such consciousness, while the self remains also in sleep. Indeed, some spiritual “masters” enjoin an active “dark night of memory”, but so as to

¹² This system, ontologism, was introduced in the Catholic world specifically and is arguably what immediately provoked the Roman authorities to resurrect thirteenth century Thomism (1879) as being “all the philosophy a Catholic needs to know” (Kleutgen), having condemned or set aside Hegelian ontologism as “not safe for teaching” (1860). As a movement specifically, then, such “neo-scholasticism” was “semi-political” (Karl Rahner, d.1984. See our “Neo-Scholasticism” in *Dictionary of Metaphysics and Ontology*, Munich 1991, pp. 610-612).

“remember” only God or, as viewed in philosophy, thought or the thought, the Idea, itself. This is not properly remembered, however, inasmuch as it cannot be “membered” in the first place, having no parts. Yet, as we noted above, it is present to mind as constituting it. It is mind, finally identified by Hegel as freedom or as the Concept, thought, that is ever at home with itself in its other. This, of course, implies just as well that the other, as its other, is at home with mind. It is this alone that enables mind, at a conclusion of the dialectic that is in no sense temporal, to go forth from itself in external procession *as* Nature, from which it returns, in recapitulating Nature, as Spirit.¹³ So there are two processions, two “otherings” of self, just as noted in Aquinas’s account, but now further specified. Yet the second is not so much additional as it is an analogy of the first or, from our phenomenal or “natural” and finite point of view, out of which the whole use and sense of language is built up, the first is only ever spoken of at all by and in analogy with the second.

The procession of Nature then, the “free” going forth¹⁴ of mind, is a representation, a *Vorstellung*, of the internal process. Yet it has its reality as being a genuine moment thereof. The Word that was with God (*Gospel of John*), the “internal word” of the or any concept (Aquinas), “was made flesh... among us” and is thus flesh, “not by a conversion of the godhead into flesh” but by a “taking of the manhood into God” (“Athanasian” Creed), corresponding in truth to the Concept’s own initiative or act (*energeia*). In first treating this Word as Son or as the eternal procession within God, after establishing that there are and must be “processions in God”, St. Thomas confronts the objection that, as he has himself demonstrated, God, the Infinite, precisely as infinite, must be absolutely simple. His answer is that an or the word, definite in its indefiniteness or infinity (the Latin language abetting), which is self-expression, must, when it is a perfect act, act as such here, be identical with or in no way less than the one uttering it. It, word, *verbum*, is itself active, is indeed act, as verb or “action word”. Since, also, infinity is, as all, one, a unity, the only conclusion to draw is that Word and Father, Father and Son in theology, must be identical though distinct in this perfect and not merely abstract simplicity, reasoning that will be extended and completed in the consideration of Spirit, “holy” in theology but actually Reason itself, identical with its one unchanging act of self-knowing, in which all is held. The real and the mental, that is, as abstract “modes” of being, are ultimately identical, neither being a reduction to the other.

¹³ Compare Plato, “All nature is akin and the soul has learned everything” (*Meno*).

¹⁴ Cf. *Enc.* 158: “This truth of necessity, therefore, is *Freedom...*”, together with the addition.

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So if memory is not a necessary condition for the continuity of self in what may its continuity consist? The mere fact of sleep, which may last for years, does not destroy this continuity, such that the one who sleeps awakes, but rather shows that the continuity does not consist in any form of consciousness as we normally use the term, though this is not how Hegel speaks of “self-consciousness”. “I live yet not I”, wrote the Apostle Paul, “but Christ lives in me”, here substituting for consciousness a principle of unfeelt faith, as it was and may still be called. There is only an “analogy” of faith with feeling or consciousness, or it may even be seen as their opposite, as a principle of non-feeling, close to hope in this, hence a virtue, a power or habit of the mind. It has a closer analogy, however, even an identity as form of it, with knowing, with intellectual process or thinking, where nothing is felt. Yet both Descartes and Hegel treat thought and feeling under the one head of consciousness, as being knowledge knowing itself, as it must in order to be knowledge in its concept. The apparent infinite regress in knowing that one knows that one knows and so on clearly has significance, either as an objection to the thesis or as something that can be turned to its account. For McTaggart it is a property of persons alone, as showing that only they can sustain their concrete individuality within the perfect unity of all persons in identity which he calls “heaven” or the true state of things or, rather, not of things but of just and only such persons, making appeal to Hegel’s statement that universality is the principle of personality, as I, again (and not the mere monolingual “I”, “*ich*”, etc.) is the “universal of universals”. The derivation of this from formal logic is worked out in the section of the *Encyclopaedia* dealing with “The Subjective Notion”.

Here universality, particularity and individual flow into or, more truly, are identified with one another. The question as to the continuity of the individual, abstractly considered, thus dissolves. This consequence of Hegelian thought has been misused, whether in Bolshevism, where licence was taken to consider today’s friend as tomorrow’s enemy, out of a pseudo-practical teleology, no account being taken of a need to show any connection between such “rationality” and elementary justice, say, or, in Nazism, where this same aim (*telos*) is simply to break down any sense of individual worth at all, in final acknowledgement of the denial of *praxis* as the good, since this denial, of will by will, becomes itself the good or

aim.¹⁵ Thus, in Vonnegut's novelistic account (*Slaughterhouse 5*), though probably a true memory, the American prisoner who gets two teeth knocked out by the brainwashed guard and asks "Why me?" receives the contemptuous answer, "Why you? Why anybody?" The freedom afforded by these movements turns out to be a freedom to go nowhere. One is "free among the dead" (*Psalms* 87), adrift in an infinitely empty space. This is essentially the psychopathic condition, which, Maritain has noted, can grip whole nations¹⁶ as well as it can an individual. This is in itself confirmatory of Hegelian logic, though Maritain did not perhaps notice this.

In exercising justice or kindness toward an individual rather, as religion teaches, we are exercising it upon all or, rather, upon Christ, as eventually "all in all". Thus, anyhow, has been and is interpreted the need to concretise any or the universal. "Go you and do likewise". It is in this sense that Hegel understands his "principle of kind" and not, context shows, in the sense of an abstract universality. Here we have the roots of an infinite substitutability or "coinherence", among "the companions of the coinherence" (Charles Williams), which Hegel, however, identifies with Mind itself, in which individuals cohere and more than cohere, even more than *coinhere*, with "in" as metaphor for identity. "I am you" (Schrödinger, Kolak).

The cult of "the present moment" thus falls short of the Hegelian vision, as itself depending upon the abstractly conscious individual. What's the time? This question applies neither when you are asleep nor on the sun (where it is never five o'clock). This simple fact already shows the inseparability of time and space or, rather, place. This, also, is why memory, its concept, is not reducible to the time series. I can acknowledge memory now without acknowledging time. "I remembered my God and I groaned".

What is it then that anyone thinks when he thinks "I"? We might say it is not so very different from the divine or absolute answer in *Exodus*, "I

¹⁵ This is the conclusion of Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). The constitutive place this work, at first sight oddly, gives to "anti-Semitism" (oddly, because this has been represented as a uniquely "Nazi" phenomenon), seen as persecution of the Jewish people specifically, links it with Hegel's speculatively self-contradictory thesis of "absolute religion" (particularised in Christianity in destructive absorption of Judaism), thus making of totalitarianism, judged mistakenly by Arendt to be a unique or "absolute evil", a necessary "moment", since it occurred, in the dialectical interpretation of history as essentially phenomenal. The work thus reflects and recalls the section "Absolute Freedom and Terror" in Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Mind*, or as well say it recalls the French Revolution as in truth a phase of mind.

¹⁶ J. Maritain, *Christianity and Democracy*, Geoffrey Bles, London 1944.

am he who is”, the gender-reference apart, or, a variant, “I will be what I will be”, illustrating the irrelevance of tense. From the universal viewpoint, however, treating this, as no doubt Israel understood it, as an abstractly individual utterance, of “God alone”, we might, with Catherine of Siena, represent ourselves as hearing this identification of subject and object, of God and being. “I am he who is, you are she who is not”. “He” would not have done as well, if the gender-opposition is recognised as necessary to thought’s own dialectic, as at *Enc.* 220, the “Affinity of the Sexes”.

So the use of this abstractly individual form, of “I”, leaves us with the Hegelian identification of Being and Non-Being at the start of logic, from which its further development will distance us, in greater intimacy with it, in the progression of dialectical concepts towards the Idea of perfect unity.

Everyone refers to himself or herself as “I”, not however as he might refer to, or rather describe himself as, say, “man” or even “this silly creature” (Margery Kempe). No two men can give “I” the same reference. It has rather to be discovered, revealed, that two is one and hence that self’s other is self, as that repulsion is attraction and difference is identity. What you do to others you do to me, and I to you. When I am seen to be you the second and third persons are no longer taken as objects, about which one can make “objectual” statements, any more than one can for the first person future. Hence, in Hegel’s account of logic, as within cognition itself, will is first set over knowledge (in being treated after it), Good over Being, as immediate ante-room to the Idea in a unilinear Advance. The thesis-antithesis-synthesis model of earlier sections has been left behind. Here philosophy has become, is revealed to be, pure theology, whether we dub that theology theistic or atheistic. It follows upon physics, philosophy of nature, as *meta physica*, the philosophy of mind or spirit. Here what is put as “after” philosophy of nature is also “first” philosophy or philosophy of logic, *logica docens*. Similarly this succeeds upon as found to be first underlying *logica utens* or “formal” logic. Thus the scholastic world had already identified the polarities held in balance in Hegel’s system..

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In this self-reference I do not make of myself an object, since then I am no longer myself, but refer rather to a man I happen to be, who might, for example, be mad. Thus Hamlet refers to himself in his apology, his disclaimer of responsibility, for Ophelia’s death before her brother Laertes. This discloses the wisdom of the blanket directive not to judge, upon which Hegel comments that “all judgments are false”, entitled by this stage to treat theory (the “highest praxis”) and praxis as one. “The fool

sees not the same tree as a wise man sees” (Blake), just as, says Hegel, the experience of a Goethe is not that of any Tom or Dick. “I am the captain of my soul” is the air breathed here. Yet governments have nothing to fear, for in this utter difference all are made one, each has left his shadow-self, his ego, behind, in the pit of the non-existent and this, Hegel says, is freedom of the spirit, every man having his own white stone which is yet, in common with all, white. Individual and universal become, are, each other. Hence the possibility of syllogism in all its figures, based upon the distinction of “every” from a mere “all” or of a universal from a merely “general” will (of the greatest number), giving the possibility of the triumph of each man over “the world”, precisely what democracy, its spirit, would protect and enable.

What is it to be this I that is a thinking thing or is conscious? Descartes scarcely raised this question, once having attained to the fact in his exultant Second Meditation. This I, he seems to mean, is always or essentially thinking, *cogitans*. This is the opposite of Aquinas when in realist mood: *anima mea non est ego*. My soul is not I. In fact, though, it is and so “I live and yet not I”. This is the spiritual meaning of resurrection, of standing up from the dust. Dust is not. We “know not what we shall be”, whatever the sense in which “we know what we are”, a text (from *I John*) that McTaggart greatly admired. This is the difficulty about immortality and the future life, as religion often presents it. It is present actuality revealed, rather, in the subversion of temporality and its vanity, which would yet be retained if one were to say that the resurrection had already occurred, yesterday perhaps. The third day, rather, leaves behind both the day and its other, the emptiness of Holy Saturday, rising out of the passing, the procession, of days, “this petty pace”. Macbeth sought freedom from it, from finitude, in death and Hegel in fact affirms that the truth of death is entry into spirit. Hence he affirms the need to die truly and completely, not as a slave. This is confidence, this is philosophy itself raised up, thus redeeming or “accomplishing” religion, where “a veil” still hangs over things, just as “when Moses is read”. Philosophy, however, remains esoteric, not “for all”, as “religion” is exoteric, “for all men”, Hegel cautions. Yet religion is set towards that spiritualisation of all, that “God shall be all in all”, that philosophy finally or in itself is, the procession namely of spirit, which the printed page (or spoken voice) only elicits, words leading to Word or *self*-revelation.

Why am I numbered, why do I find myself, among actual consciousnesses?

O cursed spite,
that ever I was born
to set it right.

The fictional character here “stands for” each and every possible consciousness, in a universal *self*-consciousness that cannot possibly be “born”. So mothers may indeed *as well* tell their children they found them under a cabbage-leaf, a leaf wide enough to shelter them as well, which they never “leave”. The moment of the “process of kind”, that is, like the sexes themselves, “runs away”, sublated in the final, ever realised Idea and End, which each one is as being “neither one nor many”, prefigured earlier in the *Logic*, in logic, as self-repulsion in universal attraction. Hence, in wondering about myself I and philosophy begin as one to be and my abstract particularity is sublated, a vanishing shadow in a vanishing of this vanishing, as Hegel himself puts it. “*Since* Being and Nothing vanish in Becoming... the latter must vanish also”.¹⁷ How is it that the world has become, quite recently, a world for me? Why am just I that child born of my parents at that time and place? Can I intelligibly say that there just happens to have come to be a consciousness in such and such an ambience such that I am aware of it and it is mine? The “I”, with all its difficulties, has then been just shunted into a subordinate clause.

It is not possible that this unity of knowledge, freedom and choice which you call your own should have sprung into being from nothingness at a given moment not so long ago; rather, this knowledge, freedom and choice are essentially eternal and unchangeable and numerically one in all men, nay in all sensitive beings... you... are all in all... not merely a piece of the entire existence.¹⁸

I am to myself something which is, but which is not an object of experience. In fact the word “something” goes too far, as Hume showed. I, like the world, am made an object, while we may, in fact, treat the world in the same way as we are treating ourselves, as subject (though what is a fact?). Then, though, it is not the world seen in that photograph taken by astronauts of our globe from somewhere beside or on the moon, a beautiful, blue, heavy-looking object. It is required, rather, that there be no such thing, no “thing” at all, save for that moment it, *thing*, its category, exercises in the dialectic.

Certainly my mind is of the same nature, as we say, as all other human minds at some point. Indeed it is individuated in just the way that they are and that is its universality. Yet we still want to say, do we not, that all this could have been so without *my* being there at all. The world need not

¹⁷ *Enc. 89, Zus.* (stress added).

¹⁸ E. Schrödinger, as quoted in Daniel Kolak, *I am You*, Springer, New York, 2002, Preface.

include my awareness of it, this is to say, which is the condition merely for true knowledge by anyone anywhere, “surely”, as we want to add under our breath. But then this would be true equally of the collectivity and then we would have a world without reason’s thinking, we suppose. But what is the world without the reason, as Gottlob Frege once rhetorically asked? Yet we can’t just generalise thus, but must universalise individuality itself, as we have been urging all along. By this, one man counts for as much or as little as a hundred billion men, and only by this, whereby man is no longer man in any recognisable biological or life-sense. Ideas of an infinite multitude, in antinomy, are thus shown up as a mere representation of the individual, of mind. Numbers are finally not considered *in divinis* (Aquinas), i.e. absolutely. Indeed, “it is useless to count” (Hegel). This is precisely what the counting child learns by his attempt to count “to the end”. The “spurious” infinite, in what Hegel calls its badness, is (finite) representation or figure of the reality rather than sheer error, except in the general sense that all our immediate perception, even of life itself, is “misperception” (McTaggart).

What is clear is that one cannot be given to oneself, as it were prior to one’s actual being. Or rather, one can indeed, but not temporally or as receiving *before* one is there to receive. One’s receiving is the creative act itself, the actual union that the growth of self-consciousness is realising. Self-consciousness, again, is sheer apprehension, in its plenitude, merely represented as the life-process. In other words what results is the result’s own result, *ad infinitum*. This is the meaning of *causa sui*, the sublation of cause, namely, as of result. If end is as such realised then end is beginning, as being, with which science begins, is science’s end, the Idea. In the Idea one finds full reason for existence, one’s own or another’s indifferently. Yet inasmuch as being is, rather, the Idea being is not being or, rather, is itself non-being. This is the ground-posit of (Hegel’s) logic.

All I have been calling my own is then common, universal. One or the many indifferently, this unity itself, is “as having nothing yet having all things”. What religion represents as the most difficult and glorious of achievements is in actuality just this, actuality. Only being can give rise to, as only being can limit, being. Infinite and hence pure act is the ground of this. To know it, however, one has to forget oneself entirely or, more truly, deny one’s self, in deed as in thought. All is thought, as or since thought is all. “The soul is all things” (Aristotle), which is to say it is no thing, knows itself only *in* the knowing of its other (Aquinas) or in self-alienation *ipso facto* returning to self (Hegel).

CHAPTER ONE

HEGEL “THE NEW THEOLOGIAN”

This book is written in the conviction that it is Hegel rather than St. Simeon of old who should rather now be titled “the new theologian”. For this reason, for the newness as illustrated below, it is he who more than any other can fittingly be taken as the successor to the torch-bearing Thomas Aquinas, himself succeeding to the whole wisdom of past ages, as Hegel too has absorbed the best of the period in between him and “the dumb ox of Sicily”, explicitly or implicitly. Both therefore are pre-conceived in Aristotle, by the Idea, as well as are the two great apostolic theologians, Paul and John. Thus Hegel is indeed “the new Aristotle”, left like him to long or less long periods of forgetfulness and incomprehension. For, as Plato said, again, “All nature is akin and the soul has learned everything” (*Meno*). This applies also to the nature of a thought as itself nature and a nature, insofar as it too *appears*, such that it is within this appearance that pagan and Christian are categorised. So, all thoughts are akin, are thought. Thought appears as manifested, as express Word, as nature. Add to this though the intrinsic finitude of time, *as also*, however, of the categories of potency and act, of possibility and of actuality as falling short of the absolute actuality of the Idea, as a supposed actuality that is not actual, not Realised End: Here the last is the true first.

Without more ado then I proceed to make good once more this for many no doubt still astonishing and undesirable claim, in the conviction that the newest is the oldest, as “Inward and Outward are identified” (Hegel, *Encyclopaedia*, §138).

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It is important, first, to notice that Hegel writes that the Absolute Idea holds all determination (*alle Bestimmtheit*) within it and not merely all

determinations (this would be *Bestimmtheiten*)¹, though this will then be true too. As not abstractly individual but just in its individuality the universal of universals, since it is of necessity infinite, the Idea knows and actively thinks all possibility and every possibility, the first of which is possibility itself. It can be no slave to prior modalities.

It was probably the import of Possibility which induced Kant to regard it along with necessity and actuality as Modalities, “since these categories do not in the least increase the notion as object, but only express its relation to the faculty of knowledge”. For Possibility... was formerly called the Inward, only that it is now taken to mean the external inward, lifted out of reality... and is thus, sure enough, supposed only as a bare modality, an abstraction which comes short and, in more concrete terms, belongs only to subjective thought. ... The rule for it merely is that a thing must not be self-contradictory. Thus everything is possible... Everything however is as impossible as it is possible...²

It is indeed this impossibility alone that pushes the dialectic on to the Idea. Impossibility and possibility are thus equally contained in the Idea as its method, which it itself is. It is thus meaningless to speak of them, since everything is conceivable and therefore possible, even or especially the impossible. Contradiction, however, as contained in the Idea is not contradiction as the understanding abstractly grasps it but the mark of a false because finite reality.³ Since it is itself Idea this act, self-consciousness itself, foundational to all activity, includes its own positing. Therefore it is that there are other self-determinations also. They are of infinite character, within or as constituting the Idea itself, as, therefore, “its own other”, identical in their difference with it as they are, therefore, with one another.⁴ These possibilities are, just as such, strictly necessary. Yet this, however, is true also of all the finite possibilities, as it is also true that they necessarily are not, while the greatest necessity lies in the Idea’s choice as necessarily absolute choice. That is, freedom is the ultimate necessity. Hence we ourselves, as finite subjects, are never freer than when we reason to necessary conclusions, whether these be theoretical or themselves free actions, these actions themselves conclusions to, intrinsic results of, practical syllogisms. In either case, since it is really one case,

¹ G.W.F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik* (here, WL or the “Greater Logic”), final chapter, “Die absolute Idee”. Suhrkamp, Werke, vol. 6, Frankfurt 1969 (1972), p.549.

² *Enc.* 143.

³ See Note 4 above.

⁴ Cp. Daniel Kolak, *op. cit.*