

HEGEL'S CONCEPT OF EXPERIENCE

MARTIN HEIDEGGER

WORKS

General Editor J. Glenn Gray  
Colorado College

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*Also by Martin Heidegger*

BEING AND TIME

DISCOURSE ON THINKING  
(*Gelassenheit*)

WHAT IS CALLED THINKING?

IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

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MARTIN HEIDEGGER, 1889-

HEGEL'S CONCEPT  
OF EXPERIENCE

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With a section from Hegel's

*Phenomenology of Spirit*

in the

KENLEY ROYCE DOVE

translation



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HEGEL'S CONCEPT OF EXPERIENCE

*Heidegger:*

“Science of the *Experience of Consciousness*”—this is the title Hegel gave to his *Phenomenology of Spirit* when it was published in 1807. The word “experience” appears in bold face, in the middle between the two other nouns. “Experience” states what “Phenomenology” is. What is in Hegel’s mind when he uses the word “experience” with such emphasis? We find the answer in the opening passage that follows after the preface. In the original edition, that passage runs:

*Hegel:*

### INTRODUCTION\*

1. It is a natural assumption that, in philosophy, one must first come to an understanding concerning the nature of knowledge before taking up the real subject matter, namely, the actual knowledge of what truly is. Knowledge, in turn, tends to be regarded as the instrument with which one takes hold of the absolute or as the medium through which one discovers it. The concern that there may be various kinds of knowledge, of which one might be better

\* From the *Phenomenology of Spirit* translated by Kenley Royce Dove. Quoted by permission.—The numerals at the beginnings of paragraphs have been added to simplify identification of the specific passage to which Heidegger’s comments have reference. They do not appear in Hegel’s original work nor, of course, in Mr. Dove’s translation. (Ed.)

suited than another for attaining the end in view, seems moreover legitimate, for by making an erroneous choice among them one will thus grasp clouds of error instead of the heaven of truth; and when knowledge is taken to be a faculty of a determinate kind and scope, the concern once again seems legitimate that error will be grasped instead of truth unless the nature and limits of this faculty are still more precisely determined. Indeed, this concern will surely transform itself into 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 that there is a strict line of demarcation separating knowledge and the absolute. For if 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. 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 in-

strument'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 limetwig, 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.

2. If concern about falling into error makes one in the meanwhile distrustful of science, which takes up its work and actually knows without any such hesitations, then one



should not overlook the possibility of reversing this procedure by placing distrust in this very distrust and becoming concerned about another question: Is not this fear of erring already the error itself? As a matter of fact, this fear presupposes something, indeed a great deal, as truth; its hesitations and inferences are based on an assumption whose claim to truth is yet to be examined. To be more specific, it 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.

3. This conclusion follows from the presupposition that the absolute alone is true or that the true alone is absolute. To reject it, one might draw a distinction between knowledge of the absolute, which is the aim of science, and a knowledge which, though it indeed does not know the absolute, might be capable of yet another truth. But we are beginning to see that such talking back and forth will only lead to an obscure distinction between an absolute truth

and a truth of some other sort, and that "absolute," "knowledge," etc., are words presupposing a significance which has yet to be discovered.

4. One could, of course, simply condemn all such useless notions as accidental and arbitrary and cast them out together with all talk about knowledge as an instrument to take hold of the absolute or as a medium through which we discover the truth, and so on—since all these notions of a knowledge separated from the absolute and an absolute separated from knowledge will no doubt lead to some such talk about the conditions of knowledge. It would also be possible to spurn in like fashion the excuses which those who are incapable of science derive from such presumed conditions, excuses designed to avoid the toil of science and to give at the same time the impression of earnest and zealous effort. And, rejecting these notions straightway, one could, instead of bothering to find answers to all this, even regard as deceptive the use of words bound up with these notions, words like "absolute," "knowledge," as well as "objective" and "subjective" and innumerable others whose meaning is assumed to be familiar to everyone. For to give the impression, partly that their meaning is universally familiar and partly too that one himself possesses their Concept, does seem rather like an attempt to avoid the fundamental task, namely, to give this Concept. With still better right, however, one could spare himself the effort

of even taking notice of such notions and expressions, by which science itself is to be avoided, for these constitute no more than an empty appearance of knowledge, an appearance which immediately vanishes as soon as science makes *its* appearance.

But science, in making its appearance, *is* an appearance itself; it is not yet science in its fully realized and propagated truth simply by virtue of making its appearance. Whether one thinks that *science is the* appearance because it makes its appearance *next to another kind of knowledge* or whether one calls that other untrue knowledge its mode of appearance is therefore a matter of indifference. But science must free itself from this semblance, and it can only do so by confronting the semblance itself. For science cannot simply reject an untrue form of knowledge as a merely common view of things and give assurance that it is a completely different way of knowing, to which the other knowledge is of no significance whatever. Nor can it refer to the intimation of a better knowledge within that other. By giving this *assurance* it would declare that its force resides in its *being*; but the untrue knowledge also appeals to the fact that *it is*, and gives assurance that to it science is nothing—*one* barren assurance carries as much weight as another. Still less can science refer to the intimation of something better which is said to be present in untrue knowledge, pointing the way toward science; for, in the first place, this would involve once again reference to a

mere being and, secondly, this reference would be to itself, but as it exists in untrue knowledge, i.e., to a bad mode of its own being, and to its appearance rather than to what it is in and for itself. These, then, are the reasons for proposing to undertake a description of knowledge as it appears, a presentation of knowledge as a phenomenon.

5. In view of the fact that this presentation has for its object only phenomenal knowledge, the presentation itself seems to be unscientific, for, unlike free science, it does not seem to move in a Shape peculiar to itself. But it can be regarded, from this point of view, as the pathway of the natural consciousness which is striving toward true knowledge, or as the path of the soul which is making its way through the sequence of its own transformations as through waystations prescribed to it by its very nature, that it may, by purifying itself, lift itself to the level of Spirit and attain cognizance of what it is in itself through the completed experience of its own self.

6. 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 way of doubt, or,

more properly, as the way of despair. For what happens here is not what is usually understood by "doubt," i.e., entertaining a disbelief in this or that presumed truth only to return to that same "truth" once the "doubt" has been appropriately dissipated, so that in the end matters stand pretty much as in the beginning. On the contrary, this road is the conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal knowledge, a knowledge for which that is most real which is, in truth, only the unrealized Concept. And therefore this thoroughgoing skepticism is not that device with which an earnest zealot may imagine himself made ready for truth and armed for science: The *resolve* not to found science on authority, surrendering oneself to the thoughts of others, but rather to examine everything for oneself and follow only one's own conviction, or, better yet, to produce everything by oneself and hold one's own act alone as true. Instead, the sequence of Shapes through which consciousness passes on this road is the detailed history of consciousness' own education to the level of science. And whereas that resolve assumes that education may be treated like a resolution, as something immediately dispensed with and done, this road, contrary to such an untruth, actually carries it through.

To follow one's own conviction is certainly more than to give oneself over to authority; but by the conversion of opinion held on authority into opinion held out of personal conviction, the content of what is held is not necessarily

altered, and truth does not necessarily take the place of error. In persisting within a system of opinion and prejudice, it matters little whether one bases himself on the authority of others or on personal conviction; the only difference is the vanity which is peculiar to the latter. But through that skepticism which directs itself to the whole compass of phenomenal consciousness, Spirit becomes able, for the first time, to examine what truth is. For this skepticism brings about a despair over notions, thoughts and opinions which are called natural, and it is of no consequence whether these notions are said to be one's own or others'. But when consciousness engages in the examination *straightway*, it is still filled and burdened with these "natural" notions and that is why it is, in fact, incapable of what it wants to undertake.

7. The *complete system* of the forms of unreal consciousness will present itself through the necessity of the progression and interrelatedness of the forms. To make this comprehensible, it may be noted, in a general and preliminary way, that 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 one of the Shapes of incomplete consciousness which, as such, belongs to the system of these Shapes and will become manifest in the course of the road itself. It is, namely, 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, and in the negation the transition is made by which the progression through the complete sequence of Shapes takes place of its own accord.

8. For knowledge, however, the *goal* is fixed just as necessarily as the sequence of the progression. It is that point where knowledge no longer has need to go out beyond itself, where it finds itself and where the Concept corresponds to the object and the object to the Concept. The progression toward this goal is consequently without halt and at no earlier stage is satisfaction to be found. Although what is limited to a natural life is by itself powerless to transcend its immediate existence, it is driven out by another power—and thus to be uprooted is its *death*. But

since consciousness is for itself its own *Concept*, it immediately transcends what is limited, and, because this limitedness is its own, it transcends its self. With the positing of something individual, the beyond is also established for consciousness, even when it is only *next to* what is limited, as in spatial intuition. Consciousness therefore suffers violence at its own hands, a violence through which it destroys for itself any limited satisfaction.

Under the influence of this violence, anxiety may well retreat from the truth and try to conserve what is in danger of being lost. But it can find no rest. Should it wish to remain in thoughtless indolence, thought will trouble the thoughtlessness and its restlessness will disturb that indolence. Or, should it take refuge as a sentimentality which claims to find everything *good in its kind*, this claim will suffer equal violence at the hands of reason, which finds a thing wanting precisely in so far as it is a kind. Or, finally, fear of the truth may hide, from itself as well as from others, behind the illusion that, despite everything, one is somehow more subtle than any mere thoughts, be they one's own or from others—as if passionate zeal for truth itself made it so difficult, if not impossible, to find any truth other than the subtleties peculiar to vanity. This is the vanity which understands how every truth may be rendered vain that it may return to itself and feast upon this its own understanding. And this understanding, which knows how all thoughts may be incessantly dissolved and



bereft of all content, finding instead no more than the barren "I," is a satisfaction which must be left to itself, for it flees the universal and seeks only being-for-itself.

9. In addition to the foregoing preliminary and general remarks concerning the manner and necessity of the progression, it may also be helpful to mention something about the *method* of carrying out the inquiry. For if this presentation is viewed as a description of the way *science* is related to *phenomenal* knowledge, and as an *investigation* and critical *examination* into *the reality of knowledge*, it does not seem possible for it even to take place without some presupposition which will serve as the fundamental standard of measurement. For an examination consists in applying an accepted standard and in deciding, on the basis of final agreement or disagreement with the standard, whether what is being tested is correct or incorrect. Thus the standard as such, and science too, were it the standard, is accepted as the essence or the *in-itself*. But here, where science will make its first appearance, neither science nor anything else has justified itself as the *essence* or as the *in-itself*; and without some such basic principle it seems that an examination cannot take place.

10. This contradiction and its removal will present themselves more distinctly if, as a first step, the abstract de-

terminations of knowledge and truth are called to mind as they exist in consciousness. Consciousness *distinguishes* from itself something to which it at the same time *relates* itself; or, as this is expressed: this something is something *for consciousness*. The determinate side of this process of relating, or the *being* of something *for a consciousness*, is *knowledge*. From this being for an other, however, we distinguish the *being-in-itself*; that which is related to knowledge is at the same time distinguished from it and is posited as *existing* outside this relationship too. The side of this in-itself [existing outside the relationship] is *truth*. Exactly what might be involved in these determinations need not further concern us here. Inasmuch as phenomenal knowledge is our object, so at the outset the determinations of this object are taken as they immediately present themselves; and they present themselves very much as they have been taken.

11. When we investigate the truth of knowledge, it seems that we are investigating what knowledge is *in itself*. But since knowledge is *our* object in this investigation, it is *for us*. Therefore the *in-itself* of the object resulting from our investigation would not be the *in-itself* of knowledge but rather its being *for us*. What we would affirm as its essence would not really be its truth but only our knowledge of it. The essence or the standard would lie in us, and that which

was to be compared with this standard and decided upon as a result of this comparison would not necessarily have to recognize that standard.

12. But this distinction, or this semblance of a distinction [between what is *in-itself* and what is *for us*], is overcome, together with the attendant presupposition, by the nature of the object which we are investigating. Since consciousness provides itself with its own standard, the investigation will be a comparison of consciousness with its own self; for the distinction just made falls in it. In consciousness, one moment is *for an other*; in other words, consciousness in general has the determination of the moment of knowledge in it. At the same time, this other is to consciousness not only something *for it*; it is also something outside this relationship or *in itself*: the moment of truth. Therefore, 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.

If we call *knowledge* the *Concept*, and call the essence or the *true* that-which-is or the object, then the examination will consist in looking to see whether the Concept corresponds to the object. But if we call the *essence* or the *in-itself of the object* the *Concept*, and if, on the other hand, we understand by the *object* the object *as object*, i.e., as it is *for an other*, then the examination will consist in our looking to see whether the object corresponds to its

Concept. It is not difficult to see that these two presentations coincide; it is, however, essential to hold fast to the following fact throughout the entire course of the investigation: These two moments, *Concept and object, being-for-another and being-in-its-self*, fall within that same knowledge which we are investigating, and we consequently do not need to bring along standards or to apply *our* preconceived ideas and thoughts during this investigation; and, through leaving them out, we will reach the point of observing the subject matter as it is *in* and *for itself*.

13. But a contribution by us becomes superfluous not only in connection with the side of the investigation just outlined—that Concept and object, the measure and what is to be examined, are present in consciousness itself. We are also spared the effort of comparing these two moments. Indeed, it is not even necessary for us to undertake the actual *examination*. And therefore, since consciousness examines itself, what remains for us, on this side of the investigation too, is simply the pure act of *observation*. For consciousness is, on the one hand, consciousness of the object and, on the other, consciousness of its self; it is consciousness of what to 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.

To be sure, the object seems to be for consciousness only as consciousness knows it; consciousness seems, as it were, unable to get behind the object in order to see it, *not* as it is *for consciousness*, but as it is *in itself*. Therefore consciousness also seems unable to examine its own knowledge by comparing it with the object. But 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. It is upon this differentiation, which exists and is present at hand, that the examination 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. 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 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.

14. 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*. In this connection, there is a moment in the just mentioned process which must be further articulated that a new light may be cast on the scientific aspect of the following presentation. Consciousness knows *something*, and this object is the essence or the *in-itself*. But this object is also the *in-itself* for consciousness; and hence the ambiguity of this truth comes into play. We see that consciousness now has two objects; one is the first *in-itself* and the second is the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself*. The latter seems at first to be merely the reflection of consciousness into its self, a representation, not of an object, but only of its knowledge of the first object. But, as already indicated, the first object comes to be altered for consciousness in this very process; it ceases to be the *in-itself* and becomes to consciousness an object which is the *in-itself* only *for it*. And therefore it follows that this, the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself*, is the true, which is to say that this true is the *essence* or

consciousness' new *object*. This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object.

15. 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 *an other* 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. 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.

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. 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*.

16. The experience which consciousness makes of itself can, according to the Concept of experience, comprehend in itself nothing less than the whole system of consciousness or the whole realm of the truth of Spirit. The Concept of experience thus entails that the moments of truth present themselves, not as abstract, pure moments, but in the peculiar determinateness of being as they are for consciousness, or as this consciousness itself appears in its relationship to them. Presenting themselves in this way, the moments of the whole are *Shapes of Consciousness*. And in driving itself toward its true existence, consciousness will reach a point at which it casts off the semblance of being burdened by something alien to it, something which is only *for* it and which exists as an other. In other words, at that point where its appearance becomes equal to its essence, consciousness' presentation of itself will therefore converge with this very same point in the authentic science of Spirit. And, finally, when consciousness itself grasps this its essence, it will indicate the nature of absolute knowledge itself.

\* \* \*

*Heidegger:*

THE FIRST SECTION states the business of philosophy. Philosophy "looks at what is present insofar as it is present, and so (looks at) what already prevails in it from itself," θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν καὶ τὰ τούτῳ ὑπάρχοντα καθ' αὐτό (Aristotle, *Met.* Γ 1, 1003 a 21). "Prevails" refers to what emerges and appears in unconcealedness. Philosophy contemplates what is present, in its presence. Contemplation regards what is present, and strives to regard it only as such. Philosophy looks—at what is present, with regard to how it looks. There is nothing esoteric about this manner of looking. Θεωρία is what calls all knowledge to its sober senses. Hegel, in the language of his thought, says: philosophy "is the actual knowledge of what truly is." Meanwhile, it has turned out that what truly is, is the real, whose reality is Spirit. And the essential nature of Spirit resides in self-consciousness.

In his lecture course on the history of modern philosophy (WW XV, 328), after speaking of Bacon and Jacob Boehme, Hegel says: "Only now do we in fact arrive at the philosophy of the modern world, and we begin it with Descartes. With him, we in fact enter into an independent philosophy which knows that it is the independent product of reason, and that the consciousness of self, self-consciousness, is an essential moment of truth. Here, we may say, we are at home; here, like the sailor at the end of his long voyage on the stormy seas, we may cry 'Land'! . . . In this

new period the principle is thinking, thinking proceeding from itself. . . .”

Thinking seeks its *fundamentum absolutum* in its own unshakable certainty of what it has thought. The land in which philosophy has since then made itself at home is the unconditional self-certainty of knowledge; and it is conquered and fully surveyed only step by step. The land is fully taken over when the *fundamentum absolutum* is thought of as the Absolute itself. The Absolute, for Hegel, is Spirit: that which is present and by itself in the certainty of unconditional self-knowledge. Real knowledge of beings as beings now means the absolute knowledge of the Absolute in its absoluteness.

This same modern philosophy, however, which is established in the land of self-consciousness, requires of itself, in keeping with the climate of its country, an *a priori* certainty of its own principle. It wants to gain an understanding beforehand of the knowledge by which it knows absolutely. Knowledge here unexpectedly appears as a means whose proper use must be the concern of knowledge. For one thing, it becomes necessary to recognize and select, among the various modes of mental representation, precisely that mode which alone is suited to absolute knowledge. Descartes took care of this. For another thing, once the mode of absolute knowledge has been selected, its nature and its limits have to be surveyed. Kant took care of that. But as soon as knowledge, as a means to seize the Absolute, is

taken under careful consideration, the conviction must arise that, relative to the Absolute, any means—which must, *qua* means, be relative—remains inadequate to the Absolute and necessarily fails before it. If knowledge is a means, then every attempt to know the Absolute becomes an absurd undertaking, whether the means here assumes the character of an instrument or that of a medium. If an instrument, we actively manipulate knowledge as an instrument; if a medium, we passively suffer knowledge, as the medium through which the light of truth is to reach us.

Still, we could try to overcome this difficulty of a means which precisely does not mediate, by an examination of the means which would distinguish what it changes in the Absolute, and what it leaves unchanged, when it seizes the Absolute or allows it to pass through. But if we eliminate the change caused by the means, that is, if we do not employ the means, then it does not mediate to us the rest of the unchanged Absolute either. At bottom, however, the examination of the means does not know what it is doing. It must examine the adequacy of knowledge with respect to the Absolute by measuring knowledge against the Absolute. It must already know the Absolute, and know it as the Absolute, else any attempt at critical distinction will fall into a void. Furthermore, it now turns out also that the examination is more concerned with discussing the instrument than with knowing the Absolute. But if knowledge still were to be concerned with using the instrument in

order to bring the Absolute as such closer to man, that purpose would be bound to become a mockery in the face of the Absolute. What good is all this critical ado about knowledge, if knowledge from the start tries to escape from the immediate relation of the Absolute to the knower, in order first to settle the business of critique? The critical examination of the instrument disregards the Absolute, and does so against its own better immediate knowledge. The Absolute, however, does not even mock critical endeavor; to do so, it would have to share with it the assumption that knowledge is a means, and that it, the Absolute itself, is still so far removed from knowledge that knowledge has to make an effort first to capture the Absolute. But in that case the Absolute would not be the Absolute.

Only in passing, and burying his observation in a subclause, however, Hegel remarks that the Absolute is, "in and for itself, already close to us of its own accord." This closeness to us (*παρουσία*) is in itself already the way in which the light of truth, the Absolute itself, casts its ray upon us. Knowledge of the Absolute stands in the full light of that ray, reflects it, gives it back, and thus is in its nature the ray itself, not a mere medium through which the ray must first find its way. The first step which knowledge of the Absolute must take is to accept and receive the Absolute in its absoluteness, that is, in being-with-us. This being-present-to-us, this *parousia*, this Advent, is part and parcel of the Absolute in and for itself. If philosophy as the knowl-

edge of the Absolute is in earnest about its own nature as such knowledge, then it is already real knowledge which represents what the real itself is in its truth. At the beginning and throughout the first section, it seems that Hegel is trying to meet the current critical demands, that knowledge must be examined. Actually, his concern is to point out the Absolute in its Advent with us. This pointer merely refers us back specifically to that relation with the Absolute in which we are already. Thus Hegel seems to surrender all the critical achievements of modern philosophy. Does he not thereby reject, in general, all critical examination, and favor a relapse into arbitrary assertions and assumptions? Far from it. Hegel is on the contrary only preparing the examination. The first step of this preparation consists in our discarding the common notion of knowing. But if knowing is not a means, then the examination, too, can no longer consist in an assessment of the mediating capacity of knowledge. Perhaps it is already enough of an examination for us to find out what knowledge is, seeing that from the start it cannot be a means. Not only the object of our examination, knowledge, but also the examination itself exhibits a different nature.

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*Hegel:*

2. If concern about falling into error makes one in the meanwhile distrustful of science, which takes up its

course, subjective in the sense of being bent only on its own self. The subject has its being in the representing relation to the object; but by virtue of being this relation it also relates to itself in the mode of representation. Representing presents the object of representing it to the subject, and in this representation the subject itself presents itself as subject. Presentation is the basic characteristic of knowledge in the sense of the subject's self-consciousness. Presentation is a natural mode of presence (*παρουσία*). As such, that is, as a being present, it is the Being of the beings that are as subjects. Self-certainty—which is self-conditioned, that is, unconditional self-knowledge—is the mode of being (*ουσία*) of subjects. To be a subject, that is, to be in the subject-object relation, is what constitutes the subjectness of the subject. Subjectness consists in unconditional self-knowledge. The nature of the subject is constituted in the mode of self-knowledge, so that the subject, in order to have being as a subject, is concerned solely with this constitution, with knowledge. The subjectness of the subject as absolute self-certainty is "science." Being (*τὸ ὄν*) *qua* being (*ᾗ ὄν*) exists insofar as it is the mode of the unconditional self-knowledge of knowledge. This is why philosophy—the presentation that represents beings as beings—is itself science.

Unconditional self-awareness, being the subjectness of the subject, is the absoluteness of the Absolute. Philosophy is absolute knowledge. Philosophy is science because it wills the will of the Absolute, wills the Absolute in its absolute-

edge of the Absolute is in earnest about its own nature as such knowledge, then it is already real knowledge which represents what the real itself is in its truth. At the beginning and throughout the first section, it seems that Hegel is trying to meet the current critical demands, that knowledge must be examined. Actually, his concern is to point out the Absolute in its Advent with us. This pointer merely refers us back specifically to that relation with the Absolute in which we are already. Thus Hegel seems to surrender all the critical achievements of modern philosophy. Does he not thereby reject, in general, all critical examination, and favor a relapse into arbitrary assertions and assumptions? Far from it. Hegel is on the contrary only preparing the examination. The first step of this preparation consists in our discarding the common notion of knowing. But if knowing is not a means, then the examination, too, can no longer consist in an assessment of the mediating capacity of knowledge. Perhaps it is already enough of an examination for us to find out what knowledge is, seeing that from the start it cannot be a means. Not only the object of our examination, knowledge, but also the examination itself exhibits a different nature.

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*Hegel:*

2. If concern about falling into error makes one in the meanwhile distrustful of science, which takes up its



work and actually knows without any such hesitations, then one should not overlook the possibility of reversing this procedure by placing distrust in this very distrust and becoming concerned about another question. Is not this fear of erring already the error itself? As a matter of fact, this fear presupposes something, indeed a great deal, as truth; its hesitations and inferences are based on an assumption whose claim to truth is yet to be examined. To be more specific, it 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.

*Heidegger:*

THE SECOND SECTION touches upon the core of the criticism to which science has, to this day, subjected every philosophical critique of knowledge. Hegel no longer uses the term "philosophy" in any of the sections that follow. He speaks of science. For modern philosophy has meanwhile fully

attained its nature by taking complete possession of the *terra firma* on which it was the first to set foot. That land is the self-certainty of mental representation in respect of itself and of what it represents. To take complete possession of this land means to know the self-certainty of self-consciousness in its unconditional nature, and to be in this knowledge *qua* knowledge generally. Philosophy now is unconditional knowledge within the knowledge of self-certainty. Philosophy has made itself completely at home within knowledge as such. Philosophy's entire nature is the result of the unconditional self-knowledge of knowledge. Philosophy is *the science par excellence*. This term does not mean that philosophy has modeled itself on the other sciences, and is the perfect and ideal realization of that model. When the term "science" takes the place of the term "philosophy" in absolute metaphysics, it draws its meaning from the nature of the subject's self-certainty which knows itself as unconditional. This subject now is what truly—and here that means with certainty—lies before me, the *subiectum*, the *ὑποκείμενον*, which philosophy since its beginnings has had to recognize as what is present. Philosophy has become science because it remains philosophy. Its task is to look at beings as beings. Since Leibniz, however, beings appear to thinking in such a way that each and every *ens, qua ens*, is a *res cogitans* and in that sense a subject. That this is so is due, not to the thinker's point of view, but to the Being of beings. The subject is not, of

course, subjective in the sense of being bent only on its own self. The subject has its being in the representing relation to the object; but by virtue of being this relation it also relates to itself in the mode of representation. Representing presents the object of representing it to the subject, and in this representation the subject itself presents itself as subject. Presentation is the basic characteristic of knowledge in the sense of the subject's self-consciousness. Presentation is a natural mode of presence (*παρουσία*). As such, that is, as a being present, it is the Being of the beings that are as subjects. Self-certainty—which is self-conditioned, that is, unconditional self-knowledge—is the mode of being (*ουσία*) of subjects. To be a subject, that is, to be in the subject-object relation, is what constitutes the subjectness of the subject. Subjectness consists in unconditional self-knowledge. The nature of the subject is constituted in the mode of self-knowledge, so that the subject, in order to have being as a subject, is concerned solely with this constitution, with knowledge. The subjectness of the subject as absolute self-certainty is “science.” Being (*τὸ ὄν*) *qua* being (*τῆ ὄν*) exists insofar as it is the mode of the unconditional self-knowledge of knowledge. This is why philosophy—the presentation that represents beings as beings—is itself science.

Unconditional self-awareness, being the subjectness of the subject, is the absoluteness of the Absolute. Philosophy is absolute knowledge. Philosophy is science because it wills the will of the Absolute, wills the Absolute in its absolute-

ness. Willing in this way, philosophy wants to look at beings as beings. By willing in this way, philosophy wills its own nature. Philosophy is the science. The word "is" in this sentence does in no way mean that philosophy carries the quality of being scientific along with it as a predicate; rather, it means: philosophy *is* as absolute knowledge, and is only such that it belongs to the absoluteness of the Absolute and, in its own way, achieves that absoluteness. Philosophy, as absolute knowledge, is science—but not because it strives to make its methods exact and its results compelling, and thereby to identify itself with what in fact is its inferior, by nature and in rank: scientific research.

Philosophy is science in that, absolutely knowing, it stays with its task. "Such hesitations," of the kind that traditional critical dissection has raised against knowledge, are alien to philosophy. Hegel deliberately says "such hesitations." He does not assert that science could go to work unhesitatingly, and throw examination to the winds. Absolute knowledge is rather more thoughtful in respect of knowledge of the Absolute than the questionable, thought-provoking sort of traditional criticism can ever be. The common critical concern in respect of a knowledge of the Absolute is, to be sure, fearful of error. But it could err only within a relation that has unhesitatingly been posited in advance as true, insofar as knowledge, taken as a means, becomes error itself. The seemingly critical fear of error is itself the error. How so?

As soon as knowledge is taken to be a means (instrument or medium)—and for how long has this been done already, and why?—it is regarded as something that occurs by itself between the Absolute and the knowing subject. Knowledge exists separated from the Absolute, but also from us who manipulate it. Thus totally separated from one another, the Absolute stands on one side, the knowing subjects on the other. But what is an Absolute that stands on one side, what is the Absolute that stands on any side whatever? In any case it is not the Absolute.

At the same time, however, dissecting criticism regards knowledge as something real, if not indeed as the primary and decisive reality. It thus invokes something which is true, that is, something which this criticism, too, regards as certain, although its certainty is still supposed to subsist separate from the unconditional self-certainty of all that is certain. This *ens creatum* in the sense of the *ego cogito*, which as *ens certum* is supposed to be certain independently of the Absolute, must then *ex post facto* be secured through the backdoor by means of a proof of the existence of God—just as Descartes had to do. Critical concern wants to reach something absolute, of course; but it would like to get by without the Absolute. It even appears to think in accordance with the Absolute when it removes the Absolute, for the time being, to where it is inaccessible, and thus seemingly places it as high as possible. But criticism, allegedly concerned that the Absolute be held in high esteem, under-

estimates the Absolute. It drags the Absolute down into the confines of its own hesitancies and means. It tries to drive the Absolute out of its *parousia*, just as if the absoluteness of the Absolute could be introduced any time later on. The seemingly critical fear of rash error is really the uncritical evasion of the truth which is already gathered there. If, on the other hand, science faces and explicitly accepts its own nature, it has thereby alone performed its self-examination. This examination requires the knowledge that science, as absolute knowledge, stands in the *parousia* of the Absolute. But all of this rests on what is said in the next section.

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*Hegel:*

3. This conclusion follows from the presupposition that the absolute alone is true or that the true alone is absolute. To reject it, one might draw a distinction between knowledge of the absolute, which is the aim of science, and a knowledge which, though it indeed does not know the absolute, might be capable of yet another truth. But we are beginning to see that such talking back and forth will only lead to an obscure distinction between an absolute truth and a truth of some other sort, and that "absolute," "knowledge," etc., are words presupposing a significance which has yet to be discovered.

*Heidegger:*

THE THIRD SECTION says: The Absolute alone is true. The true alone is absolute. These statements are set down without grounds being offered. No grounds can be offered, because no grounding can reach their ground. It never reaches their ground because, being an effort to offer grounds, it constantly moves away from their ground. The statements are ungrounded, but not arbitrary in the sense of random assertions. The statements cannot be grounded. They have stated that which itself provides ground first of all. There speaks in them the will of the Absolute whose very nature it is to will to be with us.

Ever since modern philosophy has set foot on what for it is *terra firma*, truth has held sway as certainty. True is that which is known in unconditional self-awareness. Earlier, truth had been regarded as the *adequatio rei et intellectus*. Truth is a property of representation. But, being certainty, truth now is intellectual representation itself, insofar as the intellect represents itself, and assures itself of itself as representation. The state of being known, which has assured itself of its own knowledge, and has done so in its own eyes and within itself, has by that very act retreated also from all particularized representations of objects. It adheres no longer to objects in order to possess the true by that adherence. Knowledge detaches itself from the relation to objects. Mental representation, knowing itself as its own provider, detaches itself (*absolvere*) from its need to find sufficient

certainty for itself in the one-sided representation of the object. The detachment allows this mode of representation to persist, in such a way that the representation no longer depends exclusively on its object. This self-detachment of self-certainty from its relation to the object is its absolution. It is characteristic of this absolution that it applies to any relation if it only refers straightway to the object. The absolution is what it is only because it completes itself in every respect, that is, absolves itself wholly. In absolving its absolution, the self-certainty of representation attains security, which for it means the freedom of its nature. It frees, acquits itself of the one-sided dependence upon its objects, and of the sheer representing of these. Unconditional self-certainty thus is its own absolution. The unity of *absolving* (detachment from the relation), *its completion* (the achievement of full detachment), and *absolution* (the freeing acquittal on the strength of full detachment) are what characterizes the absoluteness of the Absolute. All these elements of absoluteness have the character of representation. In them there is the *parousia* of the Absolute. The true, in the sense of unconditional self-certainty, is the Absolute alone. The absoluteness here described, of mental self-representation, is alone what is true.

Yet any explanation, however elaborate, leaves these statements empty. In fact, it even increases the misunderstanding; for what the statements identify is the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The phenomenology of the spirit is



in its presentation. This is why Hegel puts the statements down baldly, despite the risk of seeming arbitrary. Still, he makes the statements, in order to prepare us for what science, as absolute knowledge, wills. Science, in its way, wills only what the Absolute wills; and the will of the Absolute, in and for itself, is to be with us. That is to say now: because the Absolute has this will, and because we are the knowers, there is for us only absolute truth. Therefore, anyone who still says that there exist other kinds of truth besides that absolute knowledge which philosophy arrogates to itself without examination, does not know what he is saying. As soon as he states a truth, he has already represented the Absolute. But as long as we, seemingly prompted by concern and prudence, make the distinction between an absolute truth and other truths, we are adrift in an obscure distinction; with this distinction obscurity is made the principle of criticism and the criterion by which science is judged. Yet it is incumbent upon science alone to establish the meaning of the words "the Absolute," "knowledge," "truth," "objective," and "subjective." To do so, however, science must have entered from its very start into the *parousia* of the Absolute—it must be with its absoluteness. Else it would not be science. If this is right, then it is against the very nature of science even to become involved with any doubts and considerations that remain outside the realm and beneath the level of truth. If science thus keeps clear of unfitting critical doubts, it will nonetheless remain

under the suspicion that it asserts itself absolutely as absolute knowledge, but fails to produce its credentials. It thus violates most flagrantly that very claim of certainty which it pretends to meet to pure perfection. Science, therefore, must present itself before that tribunal which alone can decide of what the examination of science is to consist. That tribunal can only be the *parousia* of the Absolute. Accordingly, the task is once again to make plain the absoluteness of the Absolute.

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*Hegel:*

4. One could, of course, simply condemn all such useless notions as accidental and arbitrary and cast them out together with all talk about knowledge as an instrument to take hold of the absolute or as a medium through which we discover the truth, and so on—since all these notions of a knowledge separated from the absolute and an absolute separated from knowledge will no doubt lead to some such talk about the conditions of knowledge. It would also be possible to spurn in like fashion the excuses which those who are incapable of science derive from such presumed conditions, excuses designed to avoid the toil of science and to give at the same time the impression of earnest and zealous effort. And, rejecting these notions straightway,

one could, instead of bothering to find answers to all this, even regard as deceptive the use of words bound up with these notions, words like "absolute," "knowledge," as well as "objective" and "subjective" and innumerable others whose meaning is assumed to be familiar to everyone. For to give the impression, partly that their meaning is universally familiar and partly too that one himself possesses their Concept, does seem rather like an attempt to avoid the fundamental task, namely, to give this Concept. With still better right, however, one could spare himself the effort of even taking notice of such notions and expressions, by which science itself is to be avoided, for these constitute no more than an empty appearance of knowledge, an appearance which immediately vanishes as soon as science makes *its* appearance.

But science, in making its appearance, *is* an appearance itself; it is not yet science in its fully realized and propagated truth simply by virtue of making its appearance. Whether one thinks that *science* is *the* appearance because it makes its appearance *next to another kind of knowledge* or whether one calls that other untrue knowledge its mode of appearance is therefore a matter of indifference. But science must free itself from this semblance, and it can only do so by confronting the semblance itself. For science cannot simply reject an untrue form of knowledge as a merely common

view of things and give assurance that it is a completely different way of knowing, to which the other knowledge is of no significance whatever. Nor can it refer to the intimation of a better knowledge within that other. By giving this *assurance* it would declare that its force resides in its *being*; but the untrue knowledge also appeals to the fact that *it is*, and gives assurance that to it science is nothing—one barren assurance carries as much weight as another. Still less can science refer to the intimation of something better which is said to be present in untrue knowledge, pointing the way toward science; for, in the first place, this would involve once again reference to a mere being and, secondly, this reference would be to itself, but as it exists in untrue knowledge, i.e., to a bad mode of its own being, and to its appearance rather than to what it is in and for itself. These, then, are the reasons for proposing to undertake a description of knowledge as it appears, a presentation of knowledge as a phenomenon.

*Heidegger:*

THE FOURTH SECTION points to what is required of us, the knowers, by the will prevailing in the *parousia* of the Absolute, the will of the Absolute in and for itself to be with us. Current critical analysis of philosophical knowledge assumes without further inquiry that this knowledge is a means, and

thus reveals both its ignorance of absolute knowledge and its incapacity to achieve it. The incapacity to perceive and accept, before all else, the *parousia* of the Absolute is the incapacity for science. The overzealous effort concerning points of doubt and tests is an evasion of the toil of science to involve itself in such an acceptance. The Absolute does not allow us to take the step into the *parousia* of the Absolute without an effort on our part. What makes this step so curiously difficult is not, as is often assumed, that we must first enter into the *parousia* from somewhere outside, but rather that we, within and therefore from within the *parousia*, must bring forth our relation to the *parousia*, and bring it before the *parousia*. Accordingly, the toil of science consists not only in that the knower, sticking to his last, labors to take that step. Rather, the toil of science arises from its relation to the *parousia*.

The absoluteness of the Absolute—an absolution that being absolvent absolves itself—is the labor of unconditional self-certainty grasping itself. It is the toils of enduring that torn state which is the in-finite relation in which the nature of the Absolute fulfills itself. There is an early note of Hegel: "Better a mended stocking than a torn one; not so self-consciousness." When Hegel speaks of the labor of the Concept, he does not mean the hard work of the minds of scholars, but the struggle of the Absolute itself, wresting and bringing itself forth into the absoluteness of self-comprehension on the strength of unconditional self-certainty.

This toil and effort of the Absolute, so understood, can yet be combined with that effortlessness which marks the *parousia* insofar as it is the relation of Being that dwells with us. The Absolute belongs to this relation simply as the Absolute. The toil of science corresponds to the toil in the Absolute to bring forth its presence and its appearance in this presence. The toiling of the one is determined by the toil of the other. The zealous bustle of critical examination, however, shirks the most difficult part of the toil of science: to keep in mind that the knowledge which is to be critically examined is absolute knowledge, which means, is philosophy. The common dealings of the usual criticism with philosophical knowledge are like the procedures of a man who would represent an oak, but disregards the fact that it is a tree.

We might therefore be tempted to regard as fraudulent the critical deportment which pretends to examine something which it does not even propose to itself for examination in the first place. Such deportment creates the illusion that it is already in possession of the essential concepts, while in reality everything depends on first establishing the concepts of the Absolute, of knowledge, of truth, of the objective and the subjective. Such critical concern simply does not touch the issue of which it is constantly talking. This sort of examination is "an empty appearance of knowledge." How would it be if science saved itself the trouble of a confrontation with such criticism, since science itself

must exert every effort to maintain itself in its own nature? How would it be if science were to be content simply to make its own appearance, without any critical *pourparlers*? At this point, however, in the middle of the section, Hegel raises the decisive "But":

"But science, in making its appearance, is an appearance itself." Science emerges just like any other knowledge. It may, of course, assure us that it is absolute knowledge before which all other notions must vanish. But by puffing itself up in this fashion, science puts itself on the very same level as the empty appearances of knowledge. These are just as capable of offering a mere assurance that they are there; the one assurance is as sterile as the other. Mere assurances will never make the living sap of real knowledge flow. However, there are perhaps other ways in which science might distinguish itself from the empty appearance of knowledge. It could point out that it, itself, is that knowledge which untrue knowledge unwittingly seeks within itself. Science could introduce itself as the truth of which untruth contains an intimation. But then, science would only lapse again into mere assurances. Besides, it would then claim that it emerges in a manner which is not very becoming to science as absolute knowledge. There is a vast difference between remaining a merely intimated truth, and being the true, in and for itself.

What is the situation when science makes its entrance? When it makes its entrance, it must appear. But the ques-

tion arises what that appearance is in which alone science can appear. To appear means, first, to emerge side by side with other things, in the mode of self-assertion. To appear means, further, to come forth, to occur, and in occurring also to point to other things that do not yet come forth. To appear means to presage something which itself has not yet appeared or never will appear. These modes of appearing remain inappropriate to science's making its entrance; for in these modes, science can never display itself, as itself, and so establish itself completely. On the other hand, neither can science arrive on the scene at one fell swoop as absolute knowledge. It must bring itself forth into its truth, but also must bring forth this truth itself. In every phase in which science comes forth, science *itself* steps forth as absolute science; and it steps forth absolutely. The only mode of appearance appropriate to science, therefore, must be that in which science presents itself in bringing itself forth and thus establishing itself as knowledge that appears. Science can make its entrance only in this way, that it performs the presentation of knowledge as a phenomenon. This performance must—and only this performance can—make clear what that appearance is in which science makes its entrance truly as itself.

In its appearance, science presents itself in the fullness of its nature. The empty appearance of knowledge does not vanish when it is rejected or merely disregarded. Indeed, knowledge purely as a phenomenon is not supposed to



vanish but to enter fully into its appearance. It then appears as untrue knowledge, that is, as knowledge which is not yet true within the truth of absolute knowledge. The presentation of phenomenal knowledge must turn against the semblance of knowledge which results from the empty appearance in which science brings itself forth, but must do so in a conciliatory manner that causes even the mere semblance to light up with the rays of pure radiance. Otherwise, if mere semblance is simply rejected as false, it has not been apprehended even in its mere semblance. To be sure, even the step-by-step entrance science makes never consists in science merely overcoming semblance. If it did, truth would remain in the bondage of untruth. The appearance of science has its necessity in that radiance which even illusion needs to be mere semblance.

Hegel's statement—"But science, in making its appearance, *is* an appearance itself"—is put ambiguously, for a lofty purpose. Science is not merely an appearance in the sense in which the empty appearing of untrue knowledge, too, is an appearance—simply by appearing at all. Rather, science is in itself already appearance in the unique sense that, being absolute knowledge, it is that ray by virtue of which the Absolute, the light of truth itself, shines upon us. To appear by virtue of the radiance of that ray means: presence in the full brilliance of self-presenting representation. The appearance is authentic presence itself: the *parousia* of the Absolute. In keeping with its absoluteness,

the Absolute is with us of its own accord. In its will to be with us, the Absolute is being present. In itself, thus bringing itself forward, the Absolute is for itself. For the sake of the will of the *parousia* alone, the presentation of knowledge as a phenomenon is necessary. The presentation is bound to remain turned toward the will of the Absolute. The presentation is itself a willing, that is, not just a wishing and striving but the action itself, if it pulls itself together within its nature. The moment we recognize this necessity, we must consider what this presentation is, in order to know in what way it is, so that we may be able to *be* in that same way—that is, able to carry out the presentation.

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*Hegel:*

5. In view of the fact that this presentation has for its object only phenomenal knowledge, the presentation itself seems to be unscientific, for, unlike free science, it does not seem to move in a Shape peculiar to itself. But it can be regarded, from this point of view, as the pathway of the natural consciousness which is striving toward true knowledge, or as the path of the soul which is making its way through the sequence of its own transformations as through waystations prescribed to it by its very nature, that it may, by purifying itself, lift itself to the level of Spirit and attain cognizance of

what it is in itself through the completed experience of its own self.

*Heidegger:*

THE FIFTH SECTION initiates that consideration. Science itself, in presenting phenomenal knowledge, must by means of that presentation and in the course of it achieve its own complete appearance. Thus, it does not make a blustering entrance just anywhere. Its entrance consists in its identifying itself step by step as what it is. Where is the stage on which this identification takes place? Where else but before the eyes of natural representation. This representation follows phenomenal knowledge step by step through the multifariousness of its appearances, and thus follows through all the waystations in which merely phenomenal knowledge divests itself of semblance until it finally presents itself as true knowledge. The presentation of merely phenomenal knowledge escorts natural representation up to the gates of absolute knowledge. The presentation of merely phenomenal knowledge is the path of natural consciousness toward science. And because the semblance of untruth falls away more and more along the way, this path is a path of the soul's purification into Spirit. The presentation of merely phenomenal knowledge is an *itinerarium mentis in Deum*.

What could be more welcome to natural consciousness, and more useful to philosophy, than a description of the journey along this path? Since the path so described runs

parallel to the appearances, the phenomena, it is a path of experience. Empiricism, which pursues data, deserves to be preferred by all forms of knowledge over mere construction and deduction. The presentation of phenomenal knowledge, phenomenology, lets itself be guided by the phenomena. It follows the path of experience. It ushers natural representation step by step into the domain of the science of philosophy.

This is indeed how matters stand with the presentation of phenomenal knowledge, if we look at it with the eyes of natural representation. Natural representation remains always referred to what it believes to have before it at the given moment. But can any relative belief ever behold absolute knowledge? No. That which presents itself before natural consciousness under the name of a merely phenomenal knowledge, which in turn will supposedly lead to true knowledge, is mere semblance. Yet even philosophy believes to this day that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is an *itinerarium*, the description of a journey, which will lead everyday consciousness to a scientific knowledge of philosophy. However, what the *Phenomenology of Spirit* so understood appears to be is not what it is in essence. But this error is not accidental. It follows in the train of the book's essence, overtakes and thus conceals it. Taken by itself, the impression is misleading. The natural representation, which has here crept into philosophy, takes phenomenal knowledge for a merely appearing knowledge behind which a non-

appearing knowledge holds itself in concealment. But the presentation is by no means the presentation of merely phenomenal knowledge as distinguished from true knowledge, the true knowledge to which the presentation is still to lead us. Rather, the presentation is merely the presentation of phenomenal knowledge in its appearance. This "merely" does not say that the presentation is not yet science—it says that it is not yet science in all respects. The appearance of phenomenal knowledge is the truth of knowledge. The presentation of phenomenal knowledge, in its appearance, is itself science. From the moment in which the presentation begins it already is science. Hegel says: "In view of the fact that this presentation has for its object only phenomenal knowledge, the presentation itself seems to be unscientific. . . . But it can be regarded. . . ." Hegel does not speak of merely phenomenal knowledge, nor does he say that the presentation is only developing into science, nor does he assert that the presentation, if it is to be grasped in its essence, cannot be understood in any other way than as an *itinerarium*.

However, the presentation does not by any means guide natural representation through the museum of the shapes of consciousness, in order to send it off at the end of the tour, through a special door, into absolute knowledge. Rather, with its first step if not before then, the presentation dismisses natural consciousness as that consciousness which in its very character remains wholly incapable of following the

presentation. The presentation of phenomenal knowledge is not a path that natural consciousness can tread. Nor is it a path which with each step gains distance from natural consciousness, and then somewhere or other along the way ends up in absolute knowledge. But the presentation is a path nonetheless; it nonetheless runs constantly to and fro in an “in-between” that prevails between natural consciousness and knowledge.

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*Hegel:*

6. 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 way of doubt, or, more properly, as the way of despair. For what happens here is not what is usually understood by “doubt,” i.e., entertaining a disbelief in this or that presumed truth only to return to that same “truth” once the “doubt” has been appropriately dissipated, so that in the end matters stand pretty much as in the beginning. On the contrary, this road is the conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal

knowledge, a knowledge for which that is most real which is, in truth, only the unrealized Concept. And therefore this thoroughgoing skepticism is not that device with which an earnest zealot may imagine himself made ready for truth and armed for science: The *resolve* not to found science on authority, surrendering oneself to the thoughts of others, but rather to examine everything for oneself and follow only one's own conviction, or, better yet, to produce everything by oneself and hold one's own act alone as true. Instead, the sequence of Shapes through which consciousness passes on this road is the detailed history of consciousness' own education to the level of science. And whereas that resolve assumes that education may be treated like a resolution, as something immediately dispensed with and done, this road, contrary to such an untruth, actually carries it through.

To follow one's own conviction is certainly more than to give oneself over to authority; but by the conversion of opinion held on authority into opinion held out of personal conviction, the content of what is held is not necessarily altered, and truth does not necessarily take the place of error. In persisting within a system of opinion and prejudice, it matters little whether one bases himself on the authority of others or on personal conviction; the only difference is the vanity which is peculiar to the latter. But through that skepticism

which directs itself to the whole compass of phenomenal consciousness, Spirit becomes able, for the first time, to examine what truth is. For this skepticism brings about a despair over notions, thoughts and opinions which are called natural, and it is of no consequence whether these notions are said to be one's own or others'. But when consciousness engages in the examination *straightway*, it is still filled and burdened with these "natural" notions and that is why it is, in fact, incapable of what it wants to undertake.

*Heidegger:*

THE SIXTH SECTION begins to indicate the path of the presentation, and to clear up the "in-between" within which presentation necessarily moves to bring phenomenal knowledge to light as phenomenal. Accordingly, the section opens with a distinction which emerges from section to section in various aspects, while it remains hidden how these aspects belong together, and what constitutes the grounds of their unity. Our first task is to focus on the distinction between natural consciousness and real knowledge.

Hegel uses the terms "consciousness" and "knowledge" to designate the same. The two explicate each other. To be conscious means to be in the state of knowledge. Knowledge itself proposes, presents, and so determines the mode of "being" in being conscious. In that state are especially: that which is known—that is, what the knower immediately



represents—and the knower himself who represents, as well as the representing which is his manner of conduct. To know, however, means: *vidi*, I have seen, I have caught sight of something, gained insight into something. The perfect “I have seen” is the present “I know,”\* and in this presence that which has been seen is present. Seeing is understood here as having something before us in mental representation. This representation presents, regardless whether what is present is perceived by the senses, or is non-sensibly in our thought or will or feelings. To represent is to sight from the start, to catch sight of what is seen; it is *idea*, but in the sense of *perceptio*. *Perceptio* takes up something that is present, as such, explores it, scrutinizes it, makes sure of it. Representation prevails in all the modes of consciousness. It is neither mere contemplation nor yet a thinking in the sense of conceptual judgment. Representation gathers (*co-agitat*) from the start into an “I have seen.” In this gathering, what has been seen is being present. *Conscientia* is the gathering into presence of the kind in which that is present which is represented. Representing, as the mode of having caught sight of something, harvests and brings the sight, the image, into presence. Representation is the in-gathering of the image which prevails in knowledge understood as having sighted the image: imagination. To be conscious means to be present in the in-gathering of what is

\* The Greek *oīda*, *I know*, is the perfect tense of the not actually extant Greek *εἶδω*, *I see*. (Ed.)

represented. This is the mode in which that which is represented, that which represents, and the act of representing have being, and are as they belong together.

The term "being conscious" speaks of "being." But this word "being" must come to mean more to us than a mere sound. It says: being present in the mode of the gathering of what has been sighted. But the word "being" which we used also means, by long accustomed usage, the being itself that is in such a mode. The other term for this being that is in the mode of knowing is "subject"—that which underlies and hence precedes everything else, is always already present, and thus accompanies all consciousness: "subject" is that itself which, in its representing, puts things before us, that which refers to itself what it has put before us and so puts it aside. To put before us is to present in the mode of representation. The Being of the subject which precedes everything that is represented, insofar as it reflects the subject-object relation within itself, is called subjectness. Subjectness *is* presence in the mode of representation. To be present in the state of representedness means that something presents itself in knowledge as knowledge; it appears in the sense of emerging into an unconcealedness: something that is there. Consciousness, being conscious, as such is that which appears in itself. Appearance is the direct presence of consciousness or knowledge, in this way, that the stage of the appearance is formed *within* and by the appearance itself as its arena. It may by now have become clearer what

the title "Presentation of phenomenal knowledge" means. It does not mean the presentation of something that emerges so far only in mere semblance. It means this alone: to represent knowledge which itself is nothing other than that which appears, in its appearance. The presentation presents together with knowledge the being-conscious-of-it, and this consciousness as the actual, real knowledge.

The reality of this consciousness, the subjectness of the subject, is the appearance itself. But like the Being of all beings in all metaphysics, the Being of this being, which is appearance, enters into representation only insofar as beings present themselves as beings ( $\delta\nu \hat{\eta} \acute{\omicron}\nu$ ). But now the  $\acute{\omicron}\nu$  is the *ens qua ens perceptu*. It is present in the presentation through the *cogitationes* that are as *conscientia*. What must now be presented is the subject as subject, phenomena as phenomena. The presentation of phenomenal knowledge is the ontology of the real consciousness as reality.

The presentation is a path, but not the road from pre-philosophic representation to philosophy. Philosophy itself is the path, the course of presenting representation. The movement of this course will have to be determined in terms of that which the presentation follows: in terms of phenomenal consciousness as such, that is, of real knowledge which is the truth of natural knowledge.

Hegel, therefore, can begin his characterization of the nature of presentation in no other way than with a sentence that puts real knowledge as such into bold relief. "Natural

consciousness will show itself to be merely the Concept of knowledge, or unreal knowledge.”

Natural knowledge is contrasted with real knowledge. The natural, then, is not the real, and the real is not natural. One would have thought that the two are the Same. Natural is what stems from nature, belongs to it, and corresponds to it. Nature itself is what *is* without effort. And this is supposed not to be the real, by which we understand, after all, what is actual and is none other than the beings themselves, nature? Hegel uses the distinction between “natural” and “real” with reference to that knowledge or consciousness which in itself is what appears. The subject is present in the mode of appearance, and the object is present simultaneously with it, in its relation to the subject. The appearing subject is knowledge in its presence, natural consciousness. Yet according to Hegel’s statement, the presentation of phenomenal knowledge will prove natural consciousness to be something that is not real knowledge. Natural consciousness even turns out to be “merely the Concept of knowledge.” One might think that Hegel thinks that nature is a mere concept and thus nothing real. One might think that in the face of this vaporization of nature into a mere abstraction one ought to restore nature to its rightful place as reality. But Hegel does not deny that nature is something real; yet, he does show that it cannot be reality, the Being of beings. Thus, Hegel does by no means say that nature is merely a concept. But he does say that natural consciousness

will prove to be "merely the Concept of knowledge, or unreal knowledge." What is here called "merely the Concept of knowledge" can be determined only with reference to what Hegel understands by the expression "real knowledge."

Real is what truly is. Since Descartes the true, the *ens verum* is the *ens certum*: that which knows itself with certainty, that which is present in knowledge. But the *ens certum* is known truly only if it is known *qua ens*. Such is the case when the *esse* of the *ens* is specifically represented and the particular being is known in its Being, the real in its reality. Real knowledge is that knowledge which always and everywhere represents beings in their beingness (reality), and represents phenomena in their appearance. This is why knowledge of the reality of the real is called real knowledge. If natural knowledge proves to be unreal knowledge, it means that it turns out to be that knowledge which everywhere represents not beings *qua* beings, but in its representing merely adheres to whatever is. Whenever it seeks to find beings in their truth, it will always strive to explain beings in terms of beings. The beings in which consciousness becomes absorbed are thus for consciousness everything that it is aware of, and it therefore takes them for what is natural. Since such representation becomes itself absorbed in the beings of which it is aware, and thus remains in their environment, this knowledge is natural knowledge. But even it can become absorbed in beings, and can regard every-

thing everywhere as beings, only if, unbeknownst to itself, it already has a general representation of the beingness of beings. Natural representation of beings necessarily implies this general representation of the beingness of beings without, however, any specific knowledge of the beingness of beings or the reality of the real. In its representation of beings, natural consciousness is not aware of Being, and yet must pay heed to it. It cannot avoid including in its representation the Being of beings in general, because without the light of Being it could not even lose itself *to* beings. Under this aspect, natural consciousness is merely the representation of beingness in a general and indefinite way: "merely the Concept of knowledge," not the knowledge that achieves certainty of the reality of the real.

Hegel here uses the word "concept" in its traditional meaning according to logic, which defines the forms and rules of natural thinking. A concept is the representation of something in general; "merely the Concept" indicates that such representation does not even specifically grasp what it represents. But it is characteristic of natural consciousness not only constantly to become absorbed in the beings that it represents, but also to regard them alone as true, and thus to regard its knowledge as real knowledge. Accordingly, Hegel continues: "But since it (natural consciousness) immediately takes itself to be real knowledge, this pathway (that is, the pathway of the presentation of phenomenal knowledge in its appearance) has a negative significance for

it. . . .” Whenever real knowledge places the Being of beings into the limelight, natural knowledge looks the other way because its own truth is thereby disputed. Natural knowledge keeps to its own. Everything that comes before it is subsumed under this statement: it is and remains mine, and *is*, as such, as being mine. When Hegel calls this representing something as being mine opinion,\* he attaches to the word several meanings: the immediate focusing upon something, the trusting acceptance of what is given, and opinion in the sense of something we receive, hold, and assert as our own. Such opinion is the basic constitution of all representing in which natural consciousness has its habitat. Thus Hegel can say in this section that natural consciousness “persists within a system of opinion.”

What Hegel calls natural consciousness does by no means coincide with sensible consciousness. Natural knowledge is alive in all shapes of the Spirit, lives all of them in its own way—including especially the shape of absolute knowledge that comes about as absolute metaphysics, and that is visible only occasionally to a few thinkers. This metaphysics is so far from having collapsed in the face of nineteenth- and twentieth-century positivism that, on the contrary, modern technology with its absolute claim is nothing else than natural consciousness which, in keeping with opinions, accomplishes the unlimited self-assuring feasibility of every-

\* Heidegger's word *Meinen*, which colloquially means “having an opinion,” is related to *mein* (mine) and suggests “making something my own,” and to Old High German *minne* (love). (Tr.)

thing that is through its irresistible transformation of everything into an object for a subject. Even so, absolute metaphysics is not the cause of this thing that establishes itself, in its own way, as the confirmation of what comes to pass in the nature of technology. What is natural in consciousness does not lie in that which is sensible and perceptible by the senses, but in what arises directly in consciousness and, as such, directly enters consciousness. Natural consciousness accepts in the same way everything that is not sensible, be it the non-sensible of intellect and logic or the supra-sensible of the spiritual.

But as soon as the appearance of phenomenal knowledge comes to light, it is this emergence that counts for knowledge. Natural consciousness sees itself placed in a different light, yet without ever being able to behold this light as such. In that light, natural knowledge loses *its* truth, because that truth now proves to be that which is not-yet-true; for it is precisely appearance that constitutes the truth and reality of the phenomena. The presentation of the appearance realizes what was "merely the Concept of knowledge." It brings the real forth in its reality, and enthrones reality within the real. The phenomena are not thereby eliminated, nor are they separated from real knowledge. They are preserved within real knowledge where they have come into their own, their reality and their truth. Natural consciousness and real knowledge are indeed the Same, in that natural consciousness as what is not-yet-true, and real knowledge as



its truth, necessarily belong together. But for that very reason the two are not identical.

From the point of view of natural consciousness, the presentation of phenomenal knowledge in its appearance is an incessant challenge to what natural consciousness regards as true. Such a challenge of the truth can be understood as doubt. However, as the course of Descartes' *Meditations* shows, the way of mere doubt is of another kind. True, it puts in question many and various modes of representation, but only in order to remain at that point of departure from which the meditation set out: to learn doubting—doubting which itself is in no way being doubted. The way of doubt shows merely that doubt has already achieved its own security—a security which is considered the *fundamentum absolutum*. But the absoluteness of this Absolute is being neither doubted nor questioned, nor is its essence even mentioned. Hegel's way is different in that he knows that there can be absolute knowledge only if it, in whatever manner, begins with absoluteness. Thus it is not until Hegel's thought that natural consciousness appears in its own proper setting—while Descartes, though he sets foot into the land of modern philosophy, the *subiectum* as the *ego cogito*, actually does not see the landscape at all.

The absolute presentation of phenomenal knowledge does not allow natural consciousness ever to return to its own truth. The road of the presentation of phenomena in their appearance is "the conscious insight into the untruth of phe-

nominal knowledge, a knowledge for which that is most real which is, in truth, only the unrealized Concept." Along this road, natural consciousness loses definitively what until then was its truth, but never loses itself thereby. Rather, it establishes itself in the new truth according to its old way. From the viewpoint of the science of phenomenal knowledge, the road of the presentation is for natural consciousness the road of despair, though natural consciousness does not know it. But natural consciousness itself never despairs. Doubt that leads into despair is the business of the presentation, that is, of absolute knowledge. But even the presentation does not on this road despair of itself—it despairs of natural consciousness, because this consciousness never wants to realize what it constantly *is*—the mere concept of knowledge—and yet never ceases to arrogate to itself the truth of knowledge and to pretend being the sole standard of knowledge. The more completely the presentation follows the road of despair, the sooner science completes its own appearance.

The presentation of phenomenal knowledge submerges totally into the state of despair. It is the consummation of despair. It is, says Hegel, "thoroughgoing skepticism," skepticism in its consummation. We thus recover the original meaning of the word "skepsis"; *σκέψις* means seeing, watching, scrutinizing, to see what and how beings are as beings. Skepsis in this sense pursues the Being of beings with its gaze. Its watching has caught sight of something

before it even looked at the thing itself, and it is from this perspective that it scrutinizes it. Thinkers are innately skeptical about beings—because of this skepsis into Being.

Skepsis is always surrounded by the light of the ray with which the absoluteness of the Absolute already touches us—the Absolute that is with us, in and for itself. The “I have seen” of skepsis is that *vidi* (I have seen and now see) which has in view the reality of the real. But when that reality is the appearance of phenomenal knowledge, then appearance can accomplish its presentation only in this way, that the presentation follow the appearance and move as its attendant. In that movement, the appearance of the phenomena moves closer toward the presentation. The phenomena themselves, taking themselves for what is real, move away in this approach. This simultaneous coming and going is the movement as which consciousness itself *is*. It is in the unity of natural and real knowledge, the unity as which it confronts itself according to its own self-knowledge at any given time, and as which it assumes shape by virtue of taking a position in confrontation. Thus consciousness is in each instance a shape. Skepsis takes hold of consciousness itself, which develops into skepticism, and skepticism, in the appearance of phenomena, brings the shapes of consciousness forth and transforms one into another. Consciousness is consciousness in the mode of self-producing skepticism. Skepticism is the history of consciousness itself which is neither mere natural consciousness in itself nor mere real

knowledge for itself, but first and foremost, in and for itself, the original unity of these two. That movement, the coming of appearance and the going away of the phenomena, is the occurrence which, from one shape to the next, brings consciousness to the point where it views itself, that is, the image of its essential nature. The history of consciousness brings forth consciousness in its appearance along with the image. This history is the "history of consciousness' own *education*\* to the level of science." Hegel does not say: the formation of natural consciousness to philosophical consciousness, for he is thinking only of the appearance of appearing consciousness which has in view its complete emergence, and as such consciousness is already science itself.

Skepticism in the process of accomplishing itself is the historicity of history in the course of which consciousness works its way into the appearance of absolute knowledge. Skepticism is here no longer regarded merely as an attitude of the isolated human subject, for in that case it would remain no more than the subjective resolve never to rely on another's authority but to examine everything in person, that is, according to the mind of this particular subject. This skepticism does indeed invoke the personal insight of an *ego* and its representations, but it is not a *skepsis* into the Being of beings. The latter does not reflect the narrow

\* Hegel's term is *Bildung*—the process by which something is formed, or shaped. (Tr.)

horizon of some limited evidence. In looking out toward the appearance of phenomenal knowledge, it looks over the whole expanse of phenomenal knowledge. The isolated *ego cogito* with its representations remains captive within this limited framework. But even this framework—thought through more thoroughly than Hegel could consider it—remains perhaps only as the memory of the *esse* of the *ens certum* of the *ego cogito*, in the form of its enlargement to the reality of absolute knowledge. True, this enlargement requires and is preceded by skepsis into the large space that opens up when unconditioned subjectness appears to itself. But this preceding is at the same time the resolute and complete retreat into that truth of beings which, as absolute certainty, considers itself to be Being itself.

We have reached a point where we can no longer postpone a clarification of terminology which has meanwhile become necessary. Once Hegel had firmly established his terminology, he uses the term “beings”\* for what becomes the object of consciousness in immediate representation. This object is what is represented onesidedly only as being ob-jected, set against, without regard for the representing act and for that which represents. “Being,” as the term for beings in this sense, designates what in actual truth is not yet true and real. Hegel employs “Being” to designate the reality that is in his sense still untrue, and interprets classical philosophy accordingly. Because classical philosophy had

\* *Das Seiende.* (Tr.)

not yet set foot into the land of philosophy—self-consciousness—where the represented object first exists as such, it thinks of the real only as that which is. Hegel always understands “Being” in the narrower sense of “mere being,” because that which truly is is the *ens actu*, the real, whose *actualitas* or reality consists in the knowledge of self-knowing certainty. Only this certainty can in truth—and this now always means by virtue of the certainty of absolute knowledge—make the claim that it “is” all reality, *the* reality. Being thus here crops up again, to be sure, just when it was supposed to have vanished. But the absolute knowledge of science takes no notice thereof.

In contrast with Hegel’s usage, we use the term “Being” both for what Hegel, following Kant, calls the objective and objectivity, and also for what he represents as the truly real and calls the reality of Spirit. We do not interpret *εἶναι*, being as the Greeks understood it, from Hegel’s point of view, as the objectivity of an immediately representing subjectivity that has not yet found itself; we do not, that is, interpret it on the basis of this subjectivity, but on the basis of the Greek Ἀλήθεια, as the arrival from and in unconcealedness. But this arriving presence that occurs in the representation of consciousness as *skepsis* is a mode of being present which, just like the Greek οὐσία, arrives from a concealed area where nature is as yet unthought. The beingness of beings, which from the beginnings of Greek thought to Nietzsche’s doctrine of Eternal Recurrence took place

as the truth of beings, is for us just one—though a decisive—mode of Being which need not by any means appear only as the presence of what is present. Given Hegel's use of the word "Being," he was strictly speaking no longer entitled to designate what for him is the true reality of the real—Spirit—with a term still containing the word "being." And yet he does so everywhere, since the essence of Spirit remains "*being* self-conscious."\* This usage, to be sure, is not the consequence of an imprecise and inconsistent terminology, but rests upon the concealed way in which Being itself reveals and conceals itself.

But if we, as we consider Hegel's text, apply the word "Being" to the appearance of phenomenal knowledge, and again to the absoluteness of the Absolute, our usage may at first seem arbitrary. However, it is neither arbitrary nor a case of mere terminology, assuming it is permissible at all to join the language of thinking to a terminology, since terminology is by its nature an instrument of the sciences. The language of thinking, which has grown up in keeping with its destiny, rather summons thought of another kind of thinking into the clarity of its own thinking, in order to set that other thinking free into its own nature.

What happens when the skepsis of consciousness precedes and looks forward into the appearance of phenomenal knowledge, and brings about its presentation? In what

\* The German word for consciousness is *Bewusstsein*, literally "being-conscious." (Tr.)

way does the presentation thereby achieve its own appearance, so that it ceases to be a mere entrance? The presentation can escape that fate only if it is certain of containing within itself the whole history of the formation of consciousness, a process in which natural consciousness can find the truth of all its Shapes.

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

7. The *complete system* of the forms of unreal consciousness will present itself through the necessity of the progression and interrelatedness of the forms. To make this comprehensible, it may be noted, in a general and preliminary way, that the presentation of untrue consciousness in its untruth is not a merely *negative* movement, as natural consciousness onesidedly views it. And a mode of knowledge which makes this onesidedness its basic principle is one of the Shapes of incomplete consciousness which, as such, belongs to the system of these Shapes and will become manifest in the course of the road itself. It is, namely, 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, and in the negation the transition is made by which the progression through the complete sequence of Shapes takes place of its own accord.

*Heidegger:*

THE SEVENTH SECTION develops the inquiry into the "complete system of the forms of unreal consciousness." These are the Shapes of phenomenal knowledge, since this knowledge has not yet appeared to itself in its appearance, and thus is not yet placed in its reality. The complete emergence of the Shapes can result only from the course of this emergence. That course is the progression of appearance. It must be a necessary progression, for only then can it be sure of that cohesion which tolerates no accidental gaps. What is it that constitutes the necessity of progression in the course of the presentation? In what does the nature of the progression consist?

To find the right answer here, we must not accept the view which natural consciousness in general takes of the

presentation of phenomenal knowledge. That view is on principle one-sided; for natural representation always looks only at one side—which it does not even take for one side but for the whole—the side of its direct encounter with the object. Natural consciousness never looks to the other side, toward the Being of beings. This essential one-sidedness of natural consciousness may even enter as a specific Shape of consciousness. It must display itself within the history of its formation. It shows itself as that skepticism which in all knowing and conduct ends up with the conclusion that the knowledge supposedly attained always amounts to nothing. This skepticism, i.e., a sheer addiction to doubt, is absolute sophistry, and always results in empty nothingness.

How, in this Shape of consciousness, is the one-sidedness of natural knowledge raised to the status of a known principle? In this way, that natural consciousness always and everywhere finds only beings, only phenomena, and judges everything it meets according to these findings. Whatever is not of the kind of these findings falls victim to the ukase that “such things don’t exist.” One of the things that are not of the kind of the findings of natural consciousness which finds only beings—one of these things is Being. This is why the appearance of what appears, the reality of what is real, count for nothing within the field of vision of natural consciousness. In the judgment of natural consciousness, any step taken by the presentation of phenomenal knowledge will lead to nothing. In fact, that presentation

never gets beyond its first step which has already led it to nothing. How, and which way, is the presentation to go on from there? Any progression remains denied to it—unless it constantly allows some other Shape of phenomenal knowledge to come its way somehow, in order to find in it the supposed appearance with which it will again wind up in nothingness.

The view that natural consciousness must cherish whenever it judges the presentation of phenomenal knowledge also finds expression often enough in the allegedly philosophical objections that are raised against Hegel's philosophy. In anticipation of such objections, Hegel himself says in the present section merely that the nothingness to which the presentation of phenomenal knowledge is supposed to lead is not empty but "the nothingness of that from which it results." However, appearance results from what appears. Therefore, if the result which the progressing presentation yields for the presentation stems from where the progression started, and not from where its next step is yet to take it, then it is not surprising that the course of the presentation continues to seem strange to natural consciousness. It is thus all the more necessary from the outset to prevent this one-sided view, which natural consciousness takes of the progression of the presentation, from throwing everything into confusion.

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

8. For knowledge, however, the *goal* is fixed just as necessarily as the sequence of the progression. It is that point where knowledge no longer has need to go out beyond itself, where it finds itself and where the Concept corresponds to the object and the object to the Concept. The progression toward this goal is consequently without halt and at no earlier stage is satisfaction to be found. Although what is limited to a natural life is by itself powerless to transcend its immediate existence, it is driven out by another power—and thus to be uprooted is its *death*. But since consciousness is for itself its own *Concept*, it immediately transcends what is limited, and, because this limitedness is its own, it transcends its self. With the positing of something individual, the beyond is also established for consciousness, even when it is only *next to* what is limited, as in spatial intuition. Consciousness therefore suffers violence at its own hands, a violence through which it destroys for itself any limited satisfaction.

Under the influence of this violence, anxiety may well retreat from the truth and try to conserve what is in danger of being lost. But it can find no rest. Should it wish to remain in thoughtless indolence, thought will trouble the thoughtlessness and its restlessness will disturb that indolence. Or, should it take refuge as a sentimentality which claims to find everything *good in*

*its kind*, this claim will suffer equal violence at the hands of reason, which finds a thing wanting precisely in so far as it is a kind. Or, finally, fear of the truth may hide, from itself as well as from others, behind the illusion that, despite everything, one is somehow more subtle than any mere thoughts, be they one's own or from others—as if passionate zeal for truth itself made it so difficult, if not impossible, to find any truth other than the subtleties peculiar to vanity. This is the vanity which understands how every truth may be rendered vain that it may return to itself and feast upon this its own understanding. And this understanding, which knows how all thoughts may be incessantly dissolved and bereft of all content, finding instead no more than the barren "I," is a satisfaction which must be left to itself, for it flees the universal and seeks only being-for-itself.

*Heidegger:*

THE EIGHTH SECTION describes the characteristic moment of the historical process in which the history of the formation of consciousness comes to pass. The progression through the complete sequence of Shapes is meant to take place of its own accord. "Of its own accord" can here mean only: by virtue of the manner in which consciousness is in itself a progression. Consciousness, therefore, must now come into view. Accordingly, this section leads up to the first of the three statements about consciousness that Hegel makes in

the text before us. "Formation of consciousness" says: consciousness informs itself of its own nature, which is that it is science in the sense of absolute knowledge. This implies two things: consciousness appears to itself in its appearance—and at the same time, it establishes itself in the light of its own nature, according to the essential aspects of its manifestation, and thus organizes itself as the realm of its Shapes. Consciousness itself is neither merely natural consciousness nor merely real consciousness. Nor is it the mere coupling of the two. Rather, consciousness is the original oneness of the two. Real knowledge and natural knowledge do not, however, lie in consciousness like lifeless items. Consciousness is both of them, in that it appears to itself in the original oneness of the two, and as that oneness. The two are distinguished within consciousness. The distinction exists as the restless tension that pits the natural against the real and the real against the natural. Consciousness is in itself this tension of mutual distinction between natural and real knowledge. The movement of the historical process lies in this restlessness of consciousness, which indeed gives direction to it. Consciousness is neither put in motion by history, nor even guided in its direction by it.

In the course of its formative history, natural consciousness turns out to be "merely the Concept of knowledge." But this "merely" is quite enough. For, inasmuch as natural consciousness, in representing beings, unavoidably though not explicitly includes in its representation the beingness of

beings, natural consciousness, by itself, has transcended itself, though it is not outside itself. Natural consciousness not only takes no notice of the "Concept" (though it is in fact always just this), it even imagines that it can do without the "Concept"; while in truth any given realm of beings in which natural consciousness abides, is determined, in its extent and in the manner in which it can be mastered, exclusively by what consciousness itself is as the knowledge of the beingness of beings. But natural consciousness refuses to face the restless tension of self-transcendence that prevails within it. It flees from that tension, and in this way shackles itself to it. It takes its opinions for the truth, thus claims the truth for its own, and bears witness that what it holds to be its own is not its own. Its own opinions constantly betray the restless tension, the result of an irresistible pull into self-transcendence. The presentation of phenomenal knowledge need only let itself become involved in this tension, in order to start its course. But the irresistibility of the movement can be determined only by that to which the restless tension in itself is bound. This tension is bound to that which pulls and carries it away. And that is the reality of the real, which is only insofar as it appears to itself in its truth. Seen from the direction of the progression, the reality of the real is the goal of the course. Thought from within the tension of consciousness, the course begins with the goal. It is a movement issuing from the goal, in such a way that the goal is not left behind but,

on the contrary, arrives at its own full development precisely in the movement itself. The movement's goal is set in the very nature of knowledge—it is its nature. In its tension, consciousness sets the goal before. This is why the eighth section begins its task, the description of consciousness in motion, with the sentence: "For knowledge, however, the *goal* is fixed just as necessarily as the sequence of the progression." However, the goal is not discussed in the section, at least not in the form in which one thinks of a goal, taking it to be that toward which something is tending. If we may be permitted here to use as an expedient the language of mechanics, we might say: the progression in the history of consciousness' formation is not driven forward by the given Shape of consciousness into a still undetermined future, but is drawn by the pull of the goal which is already set. In that pull, the goal that pulls brings itself forth in its appearance, and brings the course of consciousness from the start to the plenitude of its full status.

By its skepsis, thoroughgoing skepticism has already caught sight of the goal that is so constituted, and has thereby taken it up into the center of the tension of consciousness itself. Since this center constantly begins the movement, the skepsis that prevails in the nature of knowledge has already encompassed all possible Shapes of consciousness. Accordingly, the compass of the forms of non-real knowledge is complete. The way in which the presentation represents all phenomenal knowledge in its appearance is



nothing other than the simultaneous effectuation of the skepsis that prevails in the nature of consciousness. The skepsis sustains from the outset the irresistible pull by which consciousness is violently carried beyond itself—by which, that is, natural is carried off into real knowledge. In this uprooting, natural consciousness loses what it takes to be its truth and its life. Hence, the uprooting is the death of natural consciousness. In this constant dying consciousness sacrifices itself, so that it may by the sacrifice gain its resurrection into its own nature. In this uprooting, natural consciousness is being violated. But the violation comes from consciousness itself. The violence is the prevalence of the restless tension within consciousness itself. That prevalence is the will of the Absolute, which in its absoluteness wants to be with us, in and for itself: with us who in the mode of natural consciousness always live in the midst of beings.

Now, perhaps, the statement which we call the first statement about consciousness will be plausible: "But consciousness is for itself its own *Concept*. . . ." This statement says something else than does the reference at the beginning of the sixth section: "Natural consciousness will show itself to be merely the Concept of knowledge. . . ." Now we are speaking, not of natural consciousness, but of consciousness itself, without qualifications. Now the word "Concept" is emphasized. "Concept" now means: the appearance of consciousness to itself in its truth. The nature of that truth lies in unconditional certainty. In terms of this certainty,

an object of knowledge is not yet grasped conceptually as long as it is only represented in general. Rather, in being known it must be referred back to that knowledge which corresponds to it, and must in this relation be represented with that knowledge itself. Only in this way is that which is known totally within knowledge, which has thus become a general representing (conceiving) in a comprehensive and at the same time unconditional sense. In relation to this concept in which consciousness conceives itself, natural consciousness always remains "merely the Concept." For inasmuch as it is consciousness, it has a notion of everything known. Only because consciousness is for itself its own concept can natural consciousness, as part of consciousness itself, persist, in its position of being merely the Concept of knowledge. However, we shall adequately understand the first statement about consciousness only when we not only pay attention to the distinction Hegel emphasizes, between "*Concept*" and "merely the Concept," but also give thought to what we considered in the last few paragraphs. In the sentence, "But consciousness is for itself its own *Concept*," the real stress lies on the "is." It means: it is consciousness itself that accomplishes its appearance to itself and, at the same time, constitutes the stage for the appearance, since this stage is part of its nature. Thus consciousness finds itself in its Concept.

Since Hegel's first statement about consciousness has brought the truth of consciousness into view, he is now in a

position also to clarify natural consciousness with regard to its being unreal knowledge. He refers to it also as untrue consciousness. But this does not at all mean that natural consciousness is nothing but the discard heap of what is false, deceptive, and in error. Rather, it means: natural consciousness is always not-yet-true consciousness, overpowered by the violence, the force which carries it forth into its truth. Natural consciousness feels this force and begins to fear for its own survival. Hegel, whose rationalism cannot be praised or blamed enough, speaks in the decisive passage—where he mentions the relation of natural knowledge to the Being of beings—of the “feeling of violence.”\* This feeling of the violence of the will as which the Absolute is, characterizes the manner in which natural consciousness is “merely the Concept of knowledge.” But it would be foolish to impute to Hegel the view that the natural fear which prompts consciousness to evade the Being of beings is *ipso facto, qua* natural relation to Being, also the way in which, or indeed the organ *through* which, philosophy thinks the Being of beings—just as though, whenever thought is compelled to refer back to feeling, philosophy were immediately at the mercy of mere feeling, instead of being grounded in science. This superficial view, which is professed today as widely as ever, is itself part of that vanity of the understanding which delights in the indolence of its

\* Hegel's own phrase, translated by Mr. Dove “Under the influence of this violence . . .,” is *Bei dem Gefühle dieser Gewalt.*” (Tr.)

own thoughtlessness in which it dissolves everything. At the end of the same section which, with its first statement about consciousness, looks ahead into the truth of knowledge, the untruth of knowledge appears in the form of "the barren 'I,' " which finds its sole satisfaction in limiting itself to the beings it encounters.

The "barren 'I' " is the term for the arbitrary, high-handed behavior of common opinion in philosophy. Still, that term does not designate the isolated "I" as contrasted with the community of the "We." Rather, the "barren 'I' " is precisely the subject of the many in their common opinion. The "barren 'I' " lives in the egoism of the "they," which in its fear of thoroughgoing skepticism seeks refuge in the dogmatism of opinion. It is an enduring principle of that dogmatism to close its eyes to the presentation of phenomenal knowledge and to refuse to follow the progression of the presentation. Hence, the dogmatism of current opinions must be left to its own devices. Philosophy, in making this decision, does not reject natural consciousness. Indeed, how could it, since science is after all the truth of what is not yet true, and thus *is* it, though in its truth. Only philosophy discovers natural consciousness in its naturalness and recognizes it. However, philosophy does pass natural consciousness by when natural consciousness puffs itself up as philosophy in order to erase the borderlines that separate it from philosophy, and to turn its back upon philosophy as the knowledge of the Being of

beings. But philosophy then bypasses only what has already turned its back on philosophy and turned away from it; while philosophy, in bypassing it, nonetheless concerns itself with natural consciousness, and only with it, in order to be the course in which the truth of consciousness appears.

The presentation of phenomenal knowledge is skepticism in its consummation. In accomplishing itself it works itself out in detail. The presentation produces itself as such, instead of merely entering on the scene. The way of the presentation does not go from natural to real consciousness—consciousness itself, which as this distinction between the natural and the real exists in every form of consciousness, proceeds from one Shape to the next. This progression is a course whose motion is determined by the goal, that is, by the force of the will of the Absolute. The presentation follows the appearance of phenomenal knowledge that comes its way. The natural notion of absolute knowledge—that it is a means—has now vanished. Nor can knowledge now be examined any longer, at any rate not as a means that is applied to an object. Furthermore, since the presentation produces itself, an examination seems to have become superfluous in any case. Thus, after this clarification the presentation could begin immediately. But it does not begin, assuming it has not begun already. New paragraphs of reflection follow. This fact reveals that the nature of the presentation of phenomenal knowledge has not yet been brought home to us sufficiently, and that we have not yet

established a proper relation to it. The manner in which the presentation belongs together with what is to be presented, and the question whether and in what way the two might even be the same—though without fusing into indifference—remain obscure. If the Absolute is as such already with us, how could absolute knowledge be a path to the Absolute? If we may here still speak at all of a path, then only of that path which the Absolute itself travels in that it *is* that path. Could it be that the presentation of phenomenal knowledge is this path, this course? The nature of the presentation has become even more enigmatic. Only this remains clear: the presentation does not, in separation from the Absolute, come from somewhere or other to confront the Absolute in the way in which natural consciousness conceives of knowledge.

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*Hegel:*

9. In addition to the foregoing preliminary and general remarks concerning the manner and necessity of the progression, it may also be helpful to mention something about the *method* of carrying out the inquiry. For if this presentation is viewed as a description of the way *science is related to phenomenal knowledge*, and as an *investigation and critical examination into the reality of knowledge*, it does not seem possible for it

even to take place without some presupposition which will serve as the fundamental standard of measurement. For an examination consists in applying an accepted standard and in deciding, on the basis of final agreement or disagreement with the standard, whether what is being tested is correct or incorrect. Thus the standard as such, and science too, were it the standard, is accepted as the essence or the *in-itself*. But here, where science will make its first appearance, neither science nor anything else has justified itself as the *essence* or as the *in-itself*; and without some such basic principle it seems that an examination cannot take place.

*Heidegger:*

THE NINTH SECTION nonetheless takes up again precisely this natural conception of knowledge, although it does so only in order to raise once more the question concerning the examination of absolute knowledge. The fact that knowledge is not a means is so far from invalidating the examination that, on the contrary, the examination can only now assert itself as that which is in question. When the presentation brings phenomenal knowledge forth into its appearance, it places the consciousness which is not yet true into its truth. It measures what appears by its appearance. Appearance is the standard. Where does the presentation get that standard? Science, in undertaking the examination of phenomenal knowledge, itself acts as the authority and thus the standard of the examination. Science may

derive its claim from the details of the presentation; still, at its first step, science must bring along the standard of examination as an accredited standard. On the one hand, science needs the standard to start its work; on the other hand, the standard can result only from the performance itself, assuming that absolute knowledge cannot pick up its standard just anywhere. If the presentation is to measure untrue knowledge by its truth, it must reconcile what is irreconcilable. The impossible blocks its way. How can this obstacle be removed?

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

10. This contradiction and its removal will present themselves more distinctly if, as a first step, the abstract determinations of knowledge and truth are called to mind as they exist in consciousness. Consciousness *distinguishes* from itself something to which it at the same time *relates* itself; or, as this is expressed: this something is something *for consciousness*. The determinate side of this process of relating, or the *being* of something *for a consciousness*, is *knowledge*. From this being for an other, however, we distinguish the *being-in-itself*; that which is related to knowledge is at the same time distinguished from it and is posited as *existing* outside this relationship too. The side of this in-self [existing outside the relationship] is *truth*. Exactly what might be



involved in these determinations need not further concern us here. Inasmuch as phenomenal knowledge is our object, so at the outset the determinations of this object are taken as they immediately present themselves; and they present themselves very much as they have been taken.

*Heidegger:*

THE TENTH SECTION continues the reflection in a way which shows that Hegel does not smooth over and remove the contradictions in the nature of the presentation by means of logical arguments. The seemingly irreconcilable does not lie in the nature of the presentation. It lies in the inadequate manner in which we, who keep on being dominated by the mode of representation that belongs to natural consciousness, see the presentation. The presentation aims at the appearance of knowledge. The presentation, too, is a kind of knowledge. Both fall within the same consciousness. If the question concerning the standard and the examination can take hold anywhere at all, it can turn only to consciousness to get its answer. Is consciousness, *qua* consciousness, itself something like a measure and a standard? Is consciousness as such, inherently, an examining activity? Here, consciousness itself comes more clearly under essential scrutiny. Still, it does not yet become apparent which fundamental trait in the nature of consciousness is the aim of this reflection.

Just as though nothing had been said so far about consciousness, Hegel here begins with a reference to two determinations "as they exist in consciousness." He calls them knowledge and truth. They are called "abstract determinations," since they are the result of a scrutiny of consciousness which disregards the full nature, and the unity, of the constitution of consciousness. Consciousness is understood here as it shows itself immediately—which always means onesidedly—to natural representation.

Consciousness means being conscious of something; that something is in the state of being known. But what is known exists in knowledge, and exists as knowledge. What is known is that to which consciousness relates in the mode of knowing. What stands in this relation is what is known. It is in that it is "for" consciousness. What so is, is in the mode of "being for. . . ." But "being for" is a mode of knowing. In this mode something is "for consciousness" from which it is "at the same time distinguished" insofar as it is known. But in general what is known is not merely represented in knowing; rather, the representing intends that which is known as something real that *is* in itself, hence, something that truly is. This being-in-itself of what is known is called truth. Truth, too, is one thing (something represented) and at the same time another (something that is in itself) "for the same consciousness." The two determinations of consciousness, knowledge and truth, are distinguished as "being for" and "being-in-itself." Hegel merely directs our atten-

tion to these two determinations, without going into the question "exactly what might be involved in these determinations." Yet, unbeknown to us although on purpose, Hegel has here pointed out a basic property of consciousness. The opening sentences of this section even name it in passing.

What I am conscious of is different from consciousness and distinguished by it. As itself and by virtue of itself, it is the relation of something to something else. However, that which is distinguished in this distinction (the object for the subject in the subject) remains related to that which distinguishes precisely by virtue of the distinction. In representing, consciousness separates something from itself in such a way that it relates it to itself. Consciousness in itself makes distinctions that are no distinctions. In this sense, consciousness is ambiguous in its nature. That ambiguity is the nature of representation. Because of it, the two determinations—knowledge and truth, "being for" and "being-in-itself"—occur everywhere immediately in consciousness, in such a way that they themselves are ambiguous.

Seen in the light of the two determinations, what, then, is the presentation which, as representation, remains itself a mode of consciousness? It represents phenomena in their appearance. It investigates knowledge regarding its truth. It examines knowledge for its truth. It moves within the distinguishing activity of the distinction as which consciousness itself *is*. In view of the distinction, a prospect thus opens on the essential possibility that the presentation re-

ceives its standard, and its character of being an examination, from that in which it moves. The prospect grows clearer as soon as it becomes evident what the measuring examination, seen from the viewpoint of consciousness itself, is aiming at.

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*Hegel:*

11. When we investigate the truth of knowledge, it seems that we are investigating what knowledge is *in itself*. But since knowledge is *our* object in this investigation, it is *for us*. Therefore the *in-itself* of the object resulting from our investigation would not be the *in-itself* of knowledge but rather its being *for us*. What we would affirm as its essence would not really be its truth but only our knowledge of it. The essence or the standard would lie in us, and that which was to be compared with this standard and decided upon as a result of this comparison would not necessarily have to recognize that standard.

*Heidegger:*

THE ELEVENTH SECTION asks directly what it is that the presentation of phenomenal knowledge is investigating. However, this question is posed directly only when it asks, not only what is being investigated but also who it is that does the investigating. For if that which is to be investigated

is something that is known, then it is within our knowledge for us who are investigating. With the characterization of the science, which presents phenomenal knowledge in its appearance, we suddenly become ourselves involved in the presentation. It turns out that we are involved already, since what the presentation presents is "for us." Thus there is no way to avoid the question what role the "for us" is to play in science. That question leads into a dimension which we now hardly suspect.

What is it we investigate when we examine knowledge for its truth? Truth is being-in-itself. Knowledge is being for a consciousness. When we investigate the truth of knowledge, we try to find out what knowledge in itself is. But our investigation would make knowledge our object. If we were to place knowledge before us in its being-in-itself, it would have become a being for us. We would then grasp not the truth of knowledge, but only our knowledge of knowledge. Being-for-us would remain the standard by which we measure the being-in-itself of knowledge. But why should knowledge submit to a standard which inverts that which is to be measured, and makes it into the measure itself? If the presentation of phenomenal knowledge had to follow from the consideration of the two determinations of consciousness, knowledge and truth, then the presentation would invert its own performance continually into its opposite.

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*Hegel:*

12. But this distinction, or this semblance of a distinction [between what is *in-itself* and what is *for us*], is overcome, together with the attendant presupposition, by the nature of the object which we are investigating. Since consciousness provides itself with its own standard, the investigation will be a comparison of consciousness with its own self; for the distinction just made falls in it. In consciousness, one moment is *for an other*; in other words, consciousness in general has the determination of the moment of knowledge in it. At the same time, this other is to consciousness not only something *for it*; it is also something outside this relationship or *in itself*: the moment of truth. Therefore, 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.

If we call *knowledge* the *Concept*, and call the essence or the *true* that-which-is or the object, then the examination will consist in looking to see whether the Concept corresponds to the object. But if we call the *essence* or the *in-itself of the object* the *Concept*, and if, on the other hand, we understand by the *object* the object *as object*, i.e., as it is *for an other*, then the examination will consist in our looking to see whether the object corresponds to its Concept. It is not difficult to see that these two presentations coincide; it is, how-

ever, essential to hold fast to the following fact throughout the entire course of the investigation: These two moments, *Concept and object, being-for-another and being-in-its-self*, fall within that same knowledge which we are investigating, and we consequently do not need to bring along standards or to apply *our* preconceived ideas and thoughts during this investigation; and, through leaving them out, we will reach the point of observing the subject matter as it is *in* and *for itself*.

*Heidegger:*

THE TWELFTH SECTION extricates the presentation from this newly emerged difficulty. The release is brought about by the simple reference to the nature of the object which the presentation presents. That object is consciousness itself. Its nature is what of its own accord emerges into appearance. Is it in the nature of consciousness to harbor a standard? If it is, then consciousness must of itself offer the possibility of being at once the measure and what is measured. It must be such that in this respect it is distinguished in itself but at the same time not distinct. Something of the kind became apparent in the tenth section. The essential ambiguity of consciousness, that it is the distinction of the representation, while the representation is at the same time no distinction, points to a dichotomy in the nature of consciousness. That dichotomy contains the possibility that consciousness by its very nature can be both at the same time,

the measure and what is measured. If we understand the ambiguity not as a lack of unequivocality, but as the mark of consciousness' own essential unity, then consciousness shows in its ambiguousness that the two determinations, knowledge and truth, which at first were represented as separate, belong together. It is the nature of consciousness that makes measuring possible and yields the measure.

Hegel characterizes the nature of the object of a presentation which represents phenomenal knowledge, with a second statement about consciousness. The first statement, made in the eighth section, reads: "But consciousness is for itself its own *Concept*." It is now followed by the second statement: "Consciousness provides itself with its own standard." The sentence is conspicuous for its phrasing. But though this usage strikes us as strange, it is familiar to Hegel, by virtue of what he discerns as the nature of the object. Why does he say "itself *with* its own standard" instead of saying: "Consciousness has its standard in itself"? Because it is in the nature of consciousness that there is a standard for it. That standard is not introduced from somewhere or other so that consciousness may take it up and so have it for itself. Nor is the standard first applied to consciousness from outside it. Consciousness is provided with its own standard because the quality of being a standard is implied in consciousness, because consciousness is the dichotomy of being both the measure and what is measured. But then, would it not be just as well, or even better, to say that



consciousness provides its standard in itself? But what is consciousness in itself? Consciousness is in itself when it is by itself, and it is by itself when it is specifically for itself and thus in and for itself. If consciousness were to give its standard in itself, it would mean strictly speaking: consciousness gives to itself the standard for itself. But as a rule consciousness is precisely not concerned with what it is in truth. On the other hand, truth does not drop into consciousness from the sky. Consciousness itself is already its own concept for itself. This is why it "provides itself with its own standard." This is why consciousness itself places the standard at the disposal of consciousness. The words "itself with its own" have this twofold meaning: consciousness carries the standard within its own nature. But what thus is applied to consciousness, and applicable to it and not to something else, is not something that consciousness gives directly to itself. It is provided with its own standard. It gives and yet does not give at the same time.

Inasmuch as natural consciousness represents beings as such, that which it represents is true "for it," for immediately representing consciousness. In keeping with the expression "itself with its own," Hegel uses this "for it" when he wants to say that consciousness regards as true that which it has directly represented. Consciousness, indirectly representing, is absorbed by what is represented, and does not specifically refer what is represented back to itself as the one that represents. True, consciousness does have in its

representation that which is represented, but not for itself, only "for an other." However, together with the truth that consciousness represents for it, consciousness has given "for us"—for us who are attentive to the truth of what is true—the truth of what is true, that is, the standard to be applied. By presenting phenomenal knowledge as such, we take appearance as the standard by which we measure the knowledge that regards as true what appears. In phenomenal knowledge, that which it knows is what is true. If we call this truth the object, and call concept the knowledge of it, then the critical presentation of the phenomena in respect of their appearance consists in investigating whether the knowledge—that is, what natural consciousness regards as its knowledge—corresponds to that which is true. Or conversely, if we call the knowledge under investigation the object, and the "in-itself" of what is known the concept, then the examination consists in considering whether the object corresponds to the concept. The decisive point of this explanation is this: every time we represent phenomena in their appearance, both the thing we measure and that with which we measure fall within consciousness itself. Consciousness supplies in consciousness itself the two essential moments of the examination. We who make the presentation thus derive the maxim that guides all representing of phenomena in their appearance. The maxim runs: Put aside your notions and opinions about the phenomena! Accordingly, the basic attitude of absolute knowledge is not

to assail phenomenal consciousness with a panoply of knowledge and argument, but to put all this aside. By putting it aside we attain pure observation, which brings appearance into our view. We thus succeed in "observing the subject-matter as it is *in* and *for itself*." The subject-matter is phenomenal knowledge as phenomenal. And its existence, the reality of the real, is appearance itself.

The appearing consciousness is in itself that which is to be measured, and the standard of measurement. The manner in which Hegel makes clear that both fall within consciousness itself looks like a dubious, purely verbal trick, and leaves us suspicious. Knowledge, and the truth known in knowledge, are a necessary part of consciousness. It would seem to come to the same, whether we call knowledge the "concept" and truth the "object," or the other way around. And it does indeed come to the same. But the two are not therefore identical, nor is it therefore a matter of indifference how we use the terms "concept" and "object." If truth as represented in natural consciousness is called the object, then this is the object "for it," for natural consciousness. But if knowledge as such is called the object, then knowledge *qua* phenomenal knowledge is the object "for us" who observe phenomena in respect of their appearance. If knowledge as observed by natural consciousness is termed concept, then what is thus conceived is the representation of something *as* something. The word "concept" is then understood in the sense of traditional logic.

On the other hand, if the truth represented in consciousness is called concept as the standard to be applied to the object for us, then the concept is the truth of what is true, the appearance, in which phenomenal knowledge comes to itself.

The use of the terms "object" and "concept" may at first sight seem arbitrary but is not. For us, the use is from the start bound to the nature of consciousness expressed in the first statement about consciousness: "But consciousness is for itself its own *Concept*." Wherever consciousness regards something as true, it will actualize one form of its truth. The true is the object "for it." Truth is the object "for us." Since consciousness is for itself its own concept, it provides itself with its own standard. In the phenomena there appears—not "for it" but "for us"—the appearance of the phenomena. Hegel puts this in a sentence which we now understand more clearly, adding our own emphasis: "Therefore, in what consciousness within its own self designates as the 'in-itself' or the 'true,' we [we who know absolutely] *have* the standard by which consciousness *itself* proposes to measure *its* knowledge."

Since the standard for the examination is placed at our disposal by consciousness itself, there is no need in this respect for any contribution from us. But what we have at our disposal insofar as we are consciousness ourselves, is not yet thereby explicitly at our disposal. If the presentation is ruled by the maxim of pure observation, it remains obscure just how we, simply by putting our views aside, are sup-

posed to have received something, and to possess already the standard itself. Granted that both the knowledge which is to be measured, and the standard of measurement, fall within consciousness, so that we need only to receive them—still, the measurement and its performance cannot take place without our contribution. Everything that is essential in the presentation—does it not in the end remain dependent on our own activity? What about the examination itself, without which neither the thing measured nor the measuring standard are what they are?

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

13. But a contribution by us becomes superfluous not only in connection with the side of the investigation just outlined—that Concept and object, the measure and what is to be examined, are present in consciousness itself. We are also spared the effort of comparing these two moments. Indeed, it is not even necessary for us to undertake the actual *examination*. And therefore, since consciousness examines itself, what remains for us, on this side of the investigation too, is simply the pure act of *observation*. For consciousness is, on the one hand, consciousness of the object and, on the other, consciousness of its self; it is consciousness of what to 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.

To be sure, the object seems to be for consciousness only as consciousness knows it; consciousness seems, as it were, unable to get behind the object in order to see it, *not* as it is *for consciousness*, but as it is *in itself*. Therefore consciousness also seems unable to examine its own knowledge by comparing it with the object. But 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. It is upon this differentiation, which exists and is present at hand, that the examination 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. 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 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.

*Heidegger:*

THE THIRTEENTH SECTION answers that question by making and explaining the third statement about consciousness. The statement is inconspicuous, buried in a subclause. Put as an independent sentence, it runs: "Consciousness examines itself." That is to say: Consciousness, inasmuch as it is consciousness, is the examination. The basic term of modern metaphysics—consciousness, *being* conscious—is grasped adequately in thought only if we, when thinking of this "being," include in our thinking the character of examination, specifically of an examination which is determined by the fact that knowledge is conscious.

In the examination, both what is to be measured and the measuring standard are present together. Thus their meeting in consciousness is never only the consequence of some additional act applying the one to the other. The nature of consciousness consists in the cohesion of the two. This

nature has shown itself in several respects. Natural consciousness is the immediate knowledge of the object that it regards as true. Natural consciousness is at the same time a knowing of its own knowledge of the object, even if it does not specifically refer back to that knowing. Consciousness of the object and the consciousness of knowledge are the Same, to which both, object and knowledge, are known. Object and knowledge "are for the same." One and the other are at the same time for the Same, for consciousness itself. Consciousness is for it the differentiation of each from the other. Consciousness is by its nature the comparison of the one with the other. This comparison is the examination. "Consciousness examines itself."

But consciousness is properly speaking the examination only in the sense that it learns only in a process of *becoming* whether the knowledge corresponds to the object and thus is the true object—whether the object corresponds to what knowledge actually knows. Examination exists only when such a process of becoming occurs, that is, when consciousness discovers the actual truth about whatever it had immediately taken for true; when it discovers what it then knows with certainty as soon as it represents the object in its objectivity. Accordingly, there is for consciousness still something else beyond the object and beyond its own immediate representation of the object—something which it must discover, for which it must strike out, to which it must open itself.



In the discussion of the first statement about consciousness it becomes clear that natural consciousness is "merely the Concept of knowledge." True, consciousness has a general notion of its object as object, and likewise of its knowledge as knowledge. But natural consciousness does not trouble to pay attention to this "as," because it accepts as valid only that which is immediately represented, even though it be represented always only with the help of the "as." And since natural consciousness follows its own head and never troubles with the "as," it does not, in its headstrong way, ever of its own accord go back to that which, curiously, is before it as its own background. Thus consciousness is comparison, and yet again is not. In its representation of the object, consciousness is by its nature the differentiation between "being-in-itself" and "being for it," between truth and knowledge. Consciousness is not only that differentiation which is at the same time not a differentiation, but in the same breath is a comparison of the object with its objectivity, of knowledge with its being known. Consciousness itself is the comparison—though natural consciousness, to be sure, never specifically performs that comparison.

In the nature of consciousness, knowledge and the object are split apart and yet can never part. In the nature of consciousness, again, object and concept are split apart in the "as," and yet can never part. In the nature of consciousness, this quality itself is split apart and yet can never part.

The fact that Hegel makes all these differentiations and yet levels them all down into a general distinguishing, thus keeping them from coming into their own, has its hidden reason in the very nature of metaphysics, not in the basic metaphysical stance of Hegelian philosophy. The hidden nature of metaphysics is responsible also for the fact that the level to which the differences are leveled down is determined by the discrimination between the One and the Other, which discrimination presents itself in the distinction of *ratio*, reason. Hegel conceives the distinction as the negation of the negation.

With all due caution and making the necessary reservations, we may bring up a difference with regard to the distinctions posited by Hegel—a difference we mentioned earlier in another context. Since natural consciousness goes straight to the object as a particular being, and in the same way goes straight to its knowledge of it as a being, and constantly stays with it, it could be called ontic consciousness. The term “ontic,” derived from the Greek τὸ ὄν (being), designates whatever pertains to beings. But the Greek ὄν—beings—harbors within itself a peculiar nature of beingness (οὐσία) which does not by any means remain unchanged in the course of its history. When we use the words ὄν and “beings” in thought, we first of all presuppose that we are thinking, which is to say that we are attentive to the various changes of meaning and to the meaning itself as it is established at any given time in history. When beings

appear as the object, because beingness has come to light as objectivity, and when Being is consequently regarded as non-objective, we are already basing ourselves on that ontology by which the  $\delta\nu$  has been determined as the  $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\iota\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$ , the latter as the *subiectum*, and the Being of the *subiectum* in terms of the subjectness of consciousness. Since  $\delta\nu$  designates both something that is, and the participle "being," it is possible to gather or assemble ( $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ ) the  $\delta\nu$ , as the aggregate of things that are, in terms of their "being." In fact, because of its double meaning the  $\delta\nu$ , *qua* things that are, is already gathered into beingness. It is ontological. But as the nature of the  $\delta\nu$  changes from one time to another, this gathering, the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , also changes, in keeping with that nature, and with the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  the ontology changes. Ever since the  $\delta\nu$ , that which is present, emerged as  $\phi\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , the Greek thinkers took the presence of what is present to be rooted in  $\phi\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ , the self-manifesting appearance of what is unconcealed. Accordingly, the multifariousness of what is present,  $\tau\grave{\alpha}\ \delta\omicron\nu\tau\alpha$ , is conceived as that which, in its appearance, is simply received as what is present. To receive here means to accept without further ado, and to be content with what is present. There is receiving ( $\delta\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ ), and nothing further, because it gives no further thought to the presence of what is present. It stays within the  $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ . By contrast,  $\nu\omicron\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  is that perception which specifically perceives what is present in its presence, and approaches it with that presence in mind.

In its ambiguity, *ᾔν* designates both what is present and the presence. It designates both at once, and neither as such. In keeping with this essential ambiguity of *ᾔν*, the *δόξα* of *δοκοῦντα*, that is, of *έόντα*, belongs together with the *νοεῖν* of the *εἶναι*, that is, the *έόν*. What *νοεῖν* perceives is not true being as against mere semblance. Rather, *δόξα* perceives directly what is present, but does not perceive its presence—this presence is perceived by *νοεῖν*.

If we think of the nature of metaphysics in terms of the emergence of the duality of what is present and its presence out of the self-concealing ambiguity of the *ᾔν* (and it will henceforth be necessary to think of it in this way), then the beginnings of metaphysics coincide with the beginnings of Western thought. But if we, on the contrary, conceive of the nature of metaphysics as the division between a supra-sensible and a sensible world, and regard the first as a world that truly exists, while the second only seems to exist, then metaphysics begins with Socrates and Plato. However, what begins with their thought is merely a specifically oriented interpretation of that initial duality within the *ᾔν*. With that interpretation begins a mischievous disorder (*Unwesen*) in metaphysical thinking, which, to this day, has led subsequent thinking into mistaking it for the true natural beginnings of metaphysics. However, this disorder which we must here have in mind is nothing negative, if we call to mind that even at the natural beginnings of metaphysics, the difference prevailing in the ambiguity of the *ᾔν* remains

unthought—so that this “thoughtlessness” can then constitute the nature of metaphysics. As it remains unthought, so does the λόγος of the ὄν remain without foundation. But this baselessness is what gives to onto-logy the power that is in its nature.

The history of Being conceals itself from us behind this term “ontology.” *Ontological* signifies that the gathering of beings into their beingness is being accomplished. A being that, by its nature, exists in the history of Being, enduring it in keeping with the given unconcealedness of what is, is ontological. Accordingly we may say: consciousness, in its immediate representing of beings, is ontic consciousness. For ontic consciousness, beings are the object. But the representation of the object represents the object as object, although this fact is not grasped in thought. The representation has already gathered the object into its objectivity, and thus is ontological consciousness. But because it does not think of objectivity as such, even though it already represents it, natural consciousness is ontological, and still is not yet ontological. We say that ontic consciousness is pre-ontological. Being such, natural ontic pre-ontological consciousness *is* in latent form the differentiation between the ontically true and ontological truth. Since consciousness, or *being* conscious, means *being* this differentiation, consciousness is by its nature the comparison of what is ontically with what is ontologically represented. As that comparison,

it is subject to examination. The representing of consciousness in itself is a natural self-testing.

Thus, consciousness itself is never natural consciousness only in this way, that it remains cut off, so to speak, from what its object is in truth, and from what its knowledge is in certainty. Natural consciousness is at rest in its own nature. It is in one of that nature's modes. But it is not itself its own nature. Rather, it is in the nature of consciousness that it does never on its own attain nature, and thus does never attain what goes on constantly behind its back. Nonetheless, being that consciousness which is naturally pre-ontological, it is already under way on the way toward its truth. But on the way, it is already constantly turning back, and remains "for it." Ordinary opinion is not concerned to find out what is really hidden and hides itself behind the things which it regards as true. It objects to the attention with which the *skepsis* tries to see in truth what it is that, as truth, is behind the things that are true. Someday, the *skepsis* might even come to see that that which for philosophical opinion remains "behind" is in truth "before." The truth of natural consciousness—which this consciousness can never find out because it is its own background—is itself, that is, in truth, the foreground of the light which from the first surrounds every mode of knowledge and consciousness, as a "having seen."

But philosophy itself struggles at times against *skepsis*. It

prefers to keep to the accustomed opinions of natural consciousness. It does admit, of course, that the object *qua* object must surely have objectivity. But for philosophy, objectivity is only that which is non-objective. Philosophy keeps to ordinary opinion and tries to reassure it that it is actually in the right; for, says philosophy, this non-objective element can be represented only in the representations of ordinary consciousness, which representations are therefore inadequate and a mere toying with symbols; and such assurances go down easily with natural consciousness, and even convey to it the impression that they are critical philosophy, seeing they take a skeptical attitude toward ontology. But skepticism of this kind is merely the semblance of skepticism, and thus a flight from thinking into the system of opinion.

However, if skepticism accomplishes itself in thoroughgoing skepticism, then thinking progresses within the framework of metaphysics as the comparison of the ontic with the pre-ontological consciousness, which comparison is performed by ontological consciousness. The latter does not divorce itself from natural consciousness, but turns back into the nature of consciousness as the original unity of ontic and pre-ontological representation. When the comparison occurs, the examination is in progress; and in this occurrence, consciousness appears to itself, within the realm of appearance. It is present to itself. It *is*. Consciousness is by coming into its own truth, i.e., it is by becoming.

This becoming *is*, in that the examination proceeds which is a comparison. The examination can proceed at all only by preceding itself. The *skepsis* looks ahead of itself with foresight and with circumspection. It looks ahead toward what knowledge and its object are in their truth. The sixth section already indicated that natural consciousness loses its truth on the road of the examination. If its presumed truth is scrutinized for its truth, it turns out that knowledge does not correspond to its object, because it will not respond to the object's objectivity. In order to do justice to the truth of the object, consciousness must change knowledge such as it has been so far. But even while knowledge is changing its knowledge of the object, the object itself, too, has changed.

Now objectivity is the object; and what is now called object can no longer be determined on the basis of previous opinion concerning objects. Those opinions, however, are still at work even when objectivity is proposed only in terms of the previous object with the merely negative and ever more negative pretense that it is the non-objective. Philosophy occupies itself with being the glorification of the thoughtless inadequacy inherent in ordinary opinion.

In the examining comparison which looks ahead into the appearance of phenomenal knowledge, not only does natural knowledge of the object, supposedly the one and only true knowledge, fail to stand up, but the object itself loses its standing as the standard of examination. In the



examination, which constitutes the nature of consciousness itself, neither that which is examined nor the standard stands up under examination. Both fail before that which has meanwhile arisen in the course of the examination itself.

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

14. 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*. In this connection, there is a moment in the just mentioned process which must be further articulated that a new light may be cast on the scientific aspect of the following presentation. 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 conscious-

ness in this very process; it ceases to be the in-itself and becomes to consciousness an object which is the *in-itself* only *for it*. And therefore it follows that this, the *being-for-consciousness of this in-itself*, is the true, which is to say that this true is the *essence* or consciousness' new *object*. This new object contains the annihilation of the first; it is the experience constituted through that first object.

*Heidegger:*

THE FOURTEENTH SECTION opens with the sentence: "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." What is it that Hegel names with the word "experience"? He names the Being of beings. Beings have meanwhile become the subjects, and therewith have become objects and objective. To be, by a long tradition, means to be present. The mode in which consciousness—that which exists by being known—is present, is the appearance. Consciousness, by being what it is, is phenomenal knowledge. The term "experience" in Hegel names that which appears, insofar as it appears, the  $\delta\nu \eta \delta\nu$ . The  $\eta$  is implied in thought in the word "experience." In virtue of the  $\eta$  (*qua*, as), beings are thought of in their beingness. Experience is now no longer the term for a kind of knowledge. Experience now is the word of

Being, since Being is apprehended by way of beings *qua* beings. Experience designates the subject's subjectness. Experience expresses what "*being*" in the term "being conscious" means—in such a way that only by this "being" does it become clear and binding what the word "conscious" leaves still to be thought.

The strange word "experience" enters into our reflection as the name of the Being of beings for this reason: it has come due. True, this use of it falls totally outside of ordinary usage, and of philosophical usage as well. But it falls to us as the result of the very thing to which Hegel's thought remains attached. The justification of this usage, which is essentially different from a mere manner of speaking, lies in what Hegel, with the preceding paragraphs, has brought to light concerning the nature of consciousness. The three statements about consciousness outline the basic structure of that nature:

"But consciousness is its own *Concept*."

"Consciousness provides itself with its own standard."

"Consciousness examines itself."

The second statement is an explication of the first, in this respect: it says that "its own Concept," in which consciousness conceives of itself in its truth, is the standard of this process of self-conceiving and that this standard, together with what it measures, falls within consciousness.

The third statement points to the original unity of that which is measured and the standard of measurement—that unity as which consciousness has its being, in that it itself *is* the examining comparison from which both emerge together with the appearance of what appears. The nature of appearance is: experience. This word must from now on retain the meaning which it received by the reference to the nature of consciousness.

But the foregoing reflection, with the three statements about consciousness, has brought out something that needed to be mentioned all along, because it is in its way unavoidable. Hegel himself does not state it until the section in which the decisive word “experience” occurs. The verbs of all three statements are ambiguous—the “is” in the first, the “provides” in the second, and the “examines” in the third.

Consciousness is its own concept, and at the same time it is not. It is its own concept in the way of becoming: the concept comes to be in consciousness and consciousness finds itself in the concept.

Consciousness provides itself with its own standard, and at the same time it does not. It does, in that the truth of consciousness comes from consciousness itself, which comes to its appearance as absolute certainty. It does not, in that it again and again withholds the standard—which, as the object that in each instance is untrue, never does hold up; consciousness, so to speak, does not come clean with it.

Consciousness examines itself, and yet again it does not.

It examines itself in that the comparison of objectivity and object is that in virtue of which consciousness is what it is. And it does not examine itself in that natural consciousness obstinately holds to its own opinion and offers its own truth, unexamined, as the absolute truth.

By this ambiguity, consciousness betrays the fundamental character of its nature: that of already being something which all the same it is not yet. Consciousness in the sense of "being conscious" means that this "being" resides in the "not yet" of the "already," such that the "already" is present in the "not yet." To be, be present, is in itself a self-direction toward the "already." It makes its way toward the "already," and makes its own way. The being of consciousness consists in its being in motion, on the way. The being which Hegel thinks as experience has the character of movement. In Hegel's sentence stating the nature of experience, "This *dialectical* movement . . ." [the first words] is really what is called experience, understood here in the light of what the science of phenomenal knowledge presents. It would be the worst possible misreading of the text to assume that Hegel characterizes the presentation as a kind of experience merely in order to stress that it must keep to the phenomena and take care not to degenerate into an empty construction. Experience as we must think of it here does not belong to the presentation as a mark of the specific nature of presentation; rather, presentation belongs to the nature of experience. Experience is the appearance of what

appears as such. The presentation of appearance is part of the appearance and belongs to it because it is the movement by which consciousness realizes its own reality.

Hegel calls this movement emphatically "dialectical." This term is used only here, and is not explained in what went before nor in what follows. Accordingly we shall try to understand the dialectical in the light of the results of our reflections so far on the nature of consciousness. One might be tempted to offer an explanation of the dialectical in terms of the unity of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis; or in terms of the negation of the negation. However, anything that is in any way a thesis has its being in consciousness, and consciousness, too, is the ground of negativity insofar as negativity is understood in terms of negation. The character of consciousness, however, is supposed to be determined only through the unfolding of its nature. In the same way, we may leave aside the problem whether dialectic is merely a method of knowing, or whether it is part of objective reality as something that is real itself. This problem is a pseudo-problem as long as it remains undetermined what constitutes the reality of the real, in what way this reality resides in the being of consciousness, and how matters stand with that kind of being. Discussions about dialectic are like an attempt to explain a surging fountain in terms of the stagnant waters of the sewer. The fountain may still be a long way off. But we must try to point in its direction with Hegel's help.

Consciousness is *qua* consciousness its own movement, for it is the comparison between ontic pre-ontological knowledge and ontological knowledge. The first lays claim to the second. The second claims to be the truth of the first. Between (*δια*) the one and the other, there is the uttering of these claims, a *λέγειν*. In that dialogue, consciousness assigns its truth to itself. The *διαλέγειν* is a *διαλέγεσθαι*. But the dialogue does not come to a stop in *one* Shape of consciousness. Being a dialogue, it moves through (*δια*) the whole realm of the Shapes of consciousness. In this movement, it gathers itself up into the truth of its nature. Thoroughgoing gathering (*διαλέγειν*) is a self-gathering (*διαλέγεσθαι*).

Consciousness is consciousness by being the dialogue between natural and real knowledge, the dialogue that accomplishes the gathering of the nature of consciousness through all its Shapes. Inasmuch as the formation of consciousness occurs *both* as the self-gathering dialogue *and* simultaneously as the self-uttering gathering, the movement of consciousness is dialectical.

It is only the dialogue-character of ontic-ontological consciousness that allows us to bring out the thesis-character of mental representation; this is why the characterization of dialectic as the unity of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis remains always correct, but also remains always only derivative. The same holds for the interpretation of dialectic as in-finite negativity. That negativity is based on the

thoroughgoing self-gathering of the dialogue-Shapes of consciousness into the absolute concept as that which consciousness, in its accomplished truth, *is*. The thesis- and positional character and the negating negation presuppose the originally dialectical appearance of consciousness, but never from the constitution of its nature. Dialectic can neither be explained logically in terms of positing and negating representation, nor be determined ontically as a special activity and form of movement within real consciousness. Dialectic is a mode of appearance and as such belongs to that Being which, as the beingness of beings, unfolds out of being present. Hegel does not conceive experience dialectically; he thinks of dialectic in terms of the nature of experience. Experience is the beingness of beings, whose determination, *qua subiectum*, is determined in terms of subjectness.

The decisive moment in the nature of experience consists in this, that consciousness receives from it the new true object. What matters here is the genesis of the new object as the genesis of truth; it does not matter that an object is acknowledged as something confronting consciousness. Indeed, we must now no longer think of the object as something confronting mental representation; we must think of it as that which, in contrast with the old (in the sense of not-yet-true) object, originates as the truth of consciousness. Experience is the manner in which consciousness, insofar as it is, goes forth toward its concept, which is what conscious-



ness in truth is. The forthgoing outreach reaches the appearance of truth in what appears as true. As it reaches the truth, it arrives where appearance appears to itself. Experience is the process of reaching forth, reaching, arriving. *Experience is a mode of being present, that is, of Being.* Through experience, appearing consciousness is present to itself as it appears in its own present being. Experience gathers consciousness into the gathering of its nature.

Experience is the mode of being present of presences that *are* by presenting themselves. The new object that, at any given moment in the history of consciousness-formation, originates for consciousness is not just anything that is true, or any particular being, but is the truth of what is true, the Being of beings, the appearance of appearance—experience. The new object, according to the final sentence of the fourteenth section, is none other than experience itself.

The *essentia* of the *ens* in its *esse* is the presence. But presence has being in the mode of presentation. However, since the *ens*, the *subiectum*, has meantime become the *res cogitans*, the presentation in itself is at the same time representing—it is a representation. What Hegel has in mind with the word “experience” first makes clear what the *res cogitans*, as the *subiectum co-agitans*, is. Experience is the presentation of the absolute subject that has its being in the representation, and so absolves itself. Experience is the subjectness of the absolute subject. Experience, the presentation of the absolute representation, is the *parousia* of the

Absolute. Experience is the absoluteness of the Absolute, its appearance in absolving appearance to itself. Everything depends on our thinking of experience, as we speak of it here, as the Being of consciousness. But Being means being present. Being present manifests itself as appearance. Appearance now is appearance of knowledge. Being, as that which experience *is*, implies representation (in the sense of making present) as the characteristic of appearance. Even when Hegel uses the word "experience" in its customary sense of empirical knowledge, he is above all else concerned with the aspect of presence. He then means by experience "attention to the immediate present as such" (cf. the Preface to *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hoffmeister edition, p. 14). Quite deliberately, Hegel says not just that experience is attention to what is present, but that it is attentiveness to what is present in its presence—i.e., "as such."

Experience is concerned with what is present, in its presence. But consciousness, since it *is* in its self-examination, goes forth toward its presence in order to arrive in it. It is part and parcel of the appearance of phenomenal knowledge that it represent itself in its presence, i.e., to present itself. Presentation is not just the counterpart of experience, which could just as well be absent. Accordingly, our thought grasps experience in its full nature—as the beingness of beings in the sense of the absolute subject—only when it comes to light in what way the presentation of phenomenal knowledge is a part of appearance as such. The final step

into the nature of experience as the existence of the Absolute is taken in the second section from the end.

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

15. 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 *an other* 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. 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 experience constituted by consciousness is raised to the level of a scientific progression.

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. 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*.

*Heidegger:*

THE FIFTEENTH SECTION takes its start from the notion which natural consciousness has of what is called experience. This runs counter to what Hegel understands by the term. That is to say: experience conceived metaphysically remains inaccessible to natural consciousness. It is the beingness of beings, and therefore cannot be found anywhere as an existing article in the inventory of beings. When we have a good experience with an object, for instance with a tool we are using, we have it with that object to which the object is applied with which we have the experience. When we have a bad experience with a person, we have it on specific occasions, in the situation and under circumstances in which that person should have proved himself. Our ex-

perience with an object does not concern the object itself, but another object which we introduce, with which we become involved. In ordinary experience (*experiri\**), we see the object that is to be examined in the light of the conditions in which it is placed by other objects. These other objects indicate the conditions of our object. When we have to change our earlier notions of the object under examination, what is new in the change comes to us from the newly introduced objects. The untruth of the old object shows up through the new object which we simply represent in our minds, in order to place it, with that representation in mind, into the relation of comparison with the old familiar object with which we want to have the experience. But in the experience by virtue of which consciousness itself exists, things proceed exactly the other way around.

When we represent in our minds the objectness of an object, the truth of something true, our experience is had with the old object, in this way: the old object is precisely what gives rise to the new object, to objectness. On the strength of the old object and arising from it, the new object assumes its status. What matters, therefore, is not only to refrain from wandering away to some other object that is close at hand, but first of all to focus specifically on the old object. Natural consciousness represents its object, as well as its own act of representation, immediately as a particular entity, paying no heed to Being which is implic-

\* To try out, to examine, to inquire. (Tr.)

itly represented. Therefore, if natural consciousness is to become aware of the Being of beings, it must not just stay with particular beings but go back to what it implicitly represents in the representation of a particular being. To the extent to which the appearance of phenomena becomes apparent, consciousness has in a certain sense already abandoned the ordinary manner of representation, and has returned, has turned about, from the phenomenon to the appearance.

When appearance appears to itself, there prevails an "inversion of consciousness itself." This inversion is the basic characteristic of the experience of consciousness. Indeed, it is "our contribution." That which on the occasion of this inversion presents itself to consciousness is not "for consciousness," that is, not for natural consciousness. What presents itself in the inversion does not exist "for the consciousness which we observe," but "for us" who are the observers. Who is meant by "we"?

"We" are those who, in the inversion of natural consciousness, leave that consciousness to its own views but at the same time specifically keep the appearance of the phenomena in sight. This seeing which is focused specifically on appearance is the kind of on-looking by which *skepsis* proceeds—that *skepsis* which has reached out to the absoluteness of the Absolute, and has got hold of it in advance. That which becomes apparent in thoroughgoing skepticism shows itself "for us," that is, for those who, with the being-

ness of beings in mind, are already provided with Being. In the inversion of consciousness as it prevails in *skepsis*, consciousness gets hold of appearance itself. True, the concept of whatever shows itself to a consciousness so provided does belong to consciousness itself, and exists "for it." But the manner in which what appears shows itself—namely, as appearance—is the aspect of the phenomena, their *εἶδος* which forms, places in view, and shapes everything that appears—the *μορφή*, the *forma*. Hegel calls it "the formal aspect." This aspect is never "for it," for natural, directly representing consciousness. To the extent to which the formal aspect exists for consciousness, it exists for it always only as object, never as objectness. The formal aspect, the beingness of beings, exists "for us" who, in the inversion, do not look straight at the phenomena but at the appearance of the phenomena. The inversion of consciousness, which is an inversion of mental representation, does not turn off from direct representation into some byway; rather, within the framework of natural representation, it pays attention to the source which enables direct representation to perceive something as present.

With the inversion of consciousness we pay attention to something which no natural consciousness ever discovers. We see what "occurs behind its back." The inversion, too, is a part of it: the inversion makes it possible to present the phenomena. It is only the inversion that turns experience around, and makes it presentable. Through the



inversion, the experience of consciousness is "raised to the level of a scientific progression." The presentation presents the Being of beings. It is the science of the  $\delta\nu \eta \delta\nu$ . The inversion, in which we turn to look at what appears as something that appears, causes us to look in terms of that progression with which science proceeds. The view that skepticism takes of the Being of beings brings them back to themselves, so that they show themselves *qua* beings, in the "*qua*." The inversion causes the  $\eta$  to occur with specific reference to the  $\delta\nu$ . Thus the decisive element of the experience through which consciousness appears to itself in its appearance lies in the inversion. But that inversion is "our contribution."

But did not Hegel intend all his reflections in the preceding sections, especially the twelfth, to show that in the presentation of phenomenal knowledge we must put aside precisely our notions and thoughts, so that we would be left with the "pure act of observation"? Did he not in the thirteenth section state explicitly that consciousness examines itself and that therefore "a contribution by us" becomes superfluous? By omitting all contributions, we are to reach the point where that which appears shows itself of its own accord in its appearance. But omission takes doing. If ever not to do something is an action, it is this, not to add a contribution. This action is of necessity the making of a contribution. For it is only because the skepticism of thoroughgoing skepticism anticipates the Being of beings

that beings can appear freely of their own accord and make their appearance manifest. The contribution of the inversion of consciousness consists in letting phenomena appear as such. This contribution does not impose upon experience anything that would be alien to it. Rather, it merely brings forth from experience itself something that resides within experience as the Being of being conscious, of consciousness; and consciousness, according to the first statement about it, is its own Concept. Consequently, that contribution can never cancel out the pure observation that is necessary for the presentation. Rather, pure observation begins with and by virtue of the contribution. Therefore, observation remains in the contribution.

In the preceding section Hegel said that experience is the movement which "consciousness exercises on its self." This exercise is the prevalence of that force as which the will of the Absolute wills the Absolute to be present with us in its absoluteness. The will as which the Absolute exists prevails in the mode of experience. Experience is the reaching out and attaining in which appearance appears to itself. In being this attainment (presence), experience marks the nature of the will—a nature which, together with the nature of experience, conceals itself in the nature of Being. Experience as we must here think of it is neither a mode of knowing nor a mode of willing as commonly conceived. Experience is the prevalence of the will of the Absolute to be with us, that is, to appear for us as what appears, the phe-

nomena. For us, the phenomena present themselves in their appearance, since we contribute the inversion. The contribution accordingly wills the will of the Absolute. The contribution itself is what is willed by the absoluteness of the Absolute. The inversion of consciousness does not add to the Absolute any self-seeking contribution on our part. It restores us to our nature which consists in our being in the *parousia* of the Absolute. For us, this means: to present the *parousia*. The presentation of experience is willed by the very nature of experience, as something that belongs to it. The contribution makes apparent that we who are the observers are akin to the absoluteness of the Absolute, and in what way we are akin.

Experience is the Being of beings. Beings have meanwhile appeared in the character of consciousness, and *exist* in representation as the phenomena. However, if presentation is part of the nature of experience; if presentation is grounded in the inversion; and if the inversion as our contribution is the fulfillment of the relation of our nature of the absoluteness of the Absolute—*then our nature is itself part of the parousia of the Absolute*. The inversion is the looking of *skepsis* into absoluteness. It inverts everything that appears in its appearance. By providing itself with appearance beforehand, it overtakes everything that appears, as such encompasses it, and opens up the compass of the space where appearance appears to itself. In this space and across it the presentation takes its course, steadily and

skeptically proceeding. In the inversion, the presentation has the absoluteness of the Absolute before it, and thus has the Absolute with itself. The inversion opens up and circumscribes the space of the historical formation of consciousness. In this manner, it ensures the completeness and progress of the experience of consciousness. Experience moves by progressing, by returning to itself in the progress, by unfolding, in that return, into the presence of consciousness, and by becoming constant as that presence. The constant presence of consciousness, having passed through all stages, is the Being of the Absolute. Through the inversion, phenomenal consciousness shows itself in its appearance and only in it. The phenomena exteriorize themselves in their appearance. By this exteriorization, consciousness goes out to the extreme reaches of its Being. But it does not thereby relinquish itself or its nature, nor does the Absolute through the exteriorization drop into the void of its own weakness. Rather, the exteriorization is the holding together of appearance in all its fullness, on the strength of that will whereby the *parousia* of the Absolute prevails. The exteriorization of the Absolute is its re-collection into the progression of the appearance of its absoluteness. The exteriorization is so far from being an estrangement into abstraction that, on the contrary, it is the very means by which appearance comes to be at home within the phenomena, as phenomena.

It is, to be sure, an altogether different question whether

and in what way subjectness is a peculiar destiny in the nature of Being, whereby the unconcealedness of Being (not the truth of particular beings) *withdraws*, thus determining an epoch of its own. Within subjectness, every being becomes as such an object. All beings are beings by virtue and in virtue of this stabilization. If, in the era of subjectness that is the ground of the nature of technology, nature *qua* Being is placed in opposition to consciousness, then this nature is only the sum total of particular beings taken as the object of that modern technological objectification which lays hands indiscriminately on the estate of things and men.

Only the inversion of consciousness opens up the "in-between" ( $\delta\iota\alpha$ ) within which then the dialogue between natural consciousness and absolute knowledge finds its own language. At the same time, the inversion, focusing skeptically on the absoluteness of the Absolute, opens up the whole domain through ( $\delta\iota\alpha$ ) which consciousness gathers its history into accomplished truth and in this manner forms itself. The inversion of consciousness elucidates the twofold  $\delta\iota\alpha$  of the twofold  $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ . Beforehand and in principle, the inversion forms the natural arena for the dialectic of the movement in which experience accomplishes itself as the Being of consciousness.

The inversion of consciousness performs the seeing of *skepsis*, which sees because it has already provided itself with absoluteness and thus, by means of absoluteness, is in possession of it. The having-seen of that *skepsis* (*vidi*) is the

knowledge of absoluteness. The inversion of consciousness is the core of the knowledge which is unfolded in the presentation of phenomenal knowledge. Thus, the presentation is the progression of consciousness until it appears to itself within appearance. It is the "road toward science." Presentation, so conceived as the road toward science, is itself a science; for the road into which it moves is movement in the sense of experience. The power that prevails within experience, and as experience, is the will of the Absolute which wills itself in its *parousia*. In this will lies the road's necessity.

In a single sentence, set off against the running text as a separate paragraph, Hegel sums up the result of his reflection in the fourteenth and fifteenth sections on the nature of experience. This sentence thus gathers all of the earlier sections together in the decisive thought. It runs:

"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*."

If the emphasized words are placed side by side, they add up to the title Hegel gave at first to his *Phenomenology of Spirit*: "Science of the Experience of Consciousness." In literary terms, the preceding sections contain the explication of this title. Experience is the appearance of phenomenal

knowledge, as such. The science of the experience of consciousness presents phenomena as phenomena. Phenomena are the *ὄν*, the particular beings, in the sense of consciousness. The skepsis of presentation *θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν καὶ τὰ τοῦτω ὑπάρχοντα καθ' αὐτό*—"it looks at what is (in appearance) present as such (thus present), and so (looks at) what already prevails in it (the phenomena in their appearance), from itself."

The presentation provides itself with the power of the will as which the Absolute wills its own presence (*parousia*). Aristotle uses the term *ἐπιστήμη τις* for the way he described the observing of beings as beings—a particular way in which our seeing and apprehending attends to present beings as present beings. *Ἐπιστήμη*, as a mode of attending to what is constantly present, is itself a form of human presence at what is unconcealedly present. We mislead ourselves by translating *ἐπιστήμη* with "science" and thus understanding by the word whatever happens to be known as "science" at any given moment in history. But if we here translate *ἐπιστήμη* with "science," that reading is valid only if we understand knowing in the sense of "having-seen," and think of "having-seen" in terms of that seeing which faces the aspect of what is present *qua* what is present, that is, focusing on the presence itself. It is indeed no accident that, if knowledge is conceived this way, Aristotle's *ἐπιστήμη τις* retains its natural relatedness to what Hegel calls "science," whose specific knowledge, how-

ever, has changed with the change in the presence of what is present. If we understand the term "science" only in this sense, then what are otherwise called the sciences are science of the second order. The sciences are in ground and origin philosophy, but are philosophy in such a way that they abandon their own grounds and install themselves, in their own fashion, in the domain that philosophy has thrown open to them. And that is the domain of *τέχνη*.

The science Aristotle has described—the science that observes beings as beings—he calls First Philosophy. But first philosophy does not only contemplate beings in their beingness; it also contemplates that being which corresponds to beingness in all purity: the supreme being. This being, *τὸ θεῖον*, the divine, is also with a curious ambiguity called "Being." First philosophy, *qua* ontology, is also the theology of what truly is. It should more accurately be called theology. The science of beings as such is in itself ontological.

Hegel, accordingly, speaks of the presentation of phenomenal knowledge not as the science of the experience of consciousness, but rather as "science." It is only a part of science in general. This is why, above the title, "Science of the Experience of Consciousness," we find the explicit "Part One." The science of the experience of consciousness points of itself to the other part of science. That other part does no more rank below the first than theology, in First Philosophy, ranks below ontology. But neither does it take



precedence. Nor are the two on an identical level. The two, each in its way, are the Same. The mention of a first and a second part remains extraneous; but it is not accidental, because, from Plato and Aristotle on and up to Nietzsche, the ground of the unity of the onto-theological nature of metaphysics has remained so utterly concealed that no one even asks for it. Instead, depending on the shifting points of view, now ontology and now theology is called the first and real science within First Philosophy. For Hegel, the science of the experience of consciousness—that is, the ontology of what truly is in its Existence—points to the other part of science as “the authentic science.”

\* \* \*

*Hegel:*

16. The experience which consciousness makes of itself can, according to the Concept of experience, comprehend in itself nothing less than the whole system of consciousness or the whole realm of the truth of Spirit. The Concept of experience thus entails that the moments of truth present themselves, not as abstract, pure moments, but in the peculiar determinateness of being as they are for consciousness, or as this consciousness itself appears in its relationship to them. Presenting themselves in this way, the moments of the whole are *Shapes of Consciousness*. And in driving itself toward

its true existence, consciousness will reach a point at which it casts off the semblance of being burdened by something alien to it, something which is only *for* it and which exists as an other. In other words, at that point where its appearance becomes equal to its essence, consciousness' presentation of itself will therefore converge with this very same point in the authentic science of Spirit. And, finally, when consciousness itself grasps this its essence, it will indicate the nature of absolute knowledge itself.

*Heidegger:*

THE SIXTEENTH SECTION, with which the passage closes, opens the prospect upon that connection. But the connection becomes visible only if we keep in view that experience is the beingness of beings—the beings which are present as consciousness, in the Shapes of consciousness. As early as the Greek thinkers, ever since the *ὄν* arose as the *φύσις*, the presence of what is present, the *οὐσία* of the *ὄν* is *φαίνεσθαι*: appearance showing itself. The multifariousness of present beings (*τὰ ὄντα*) is, accordingly, conceived as that which is simply received and accepted in its appearance: *τὰ δοκούντα*. The *δόξα*, without any mediation, takes up and accepts what is present. *Νοεῖν*, on the other hand, is that kind of apprehending which accepts beings insofar as they are present, and examines them in terms of their presence. Since *ὄν*, “what is present,” ambiguously

means the present beings as well as their presence, therefore *ὄν* is by its nature related with equal fundamental necessity both to *νοεῖν* and to *δόξα*.

The Being of what is known in certainty, too, has the basic character of presence. It *is* as appearance. But as regards the presence of knowledge, that is, of the *subiectum* in the sense of *res cogitans*, appearance is no longer the self-revelation of the *idea* as *εἶδος*, but of the *idea* as *perceptio*. Appearance now is presence in the mode of presentation within the realm of representation. The appearance of phenomenal knowledge is the immediate presence of consciousness. This presence, however, *is* in the mode of experience. Experience lets the Absolute, the Spirit, enter the full-blown "whole realm of the truth of Spirit" as it has unfolded itself. But the moments of its truth are the Shapes of consciousness which, in the progression of experience, have divested themselves of all things that for natural consciousness seemed to be the only truth at every stage of its development in the history of natural consciousness; they exist, while they are, only for it. But once experience has been accomplished, the appearance of the phenomena has come to light in all purity, and in that light the Absolute *is* absolutely by itself, it now is itself. In this pure light there prevails that power which drives consciousness into the movement of experience. The power of the Absolute that prevails in experience "drives consciousness toward its true existence." Existence here signifies pres-

ence in the mode of self-appearance. At this point, the pure appearance of the Absolute coincides with its essence.

The *parousia* is that presence in which the Absolute is with us and at the same time, as the Absolute, by itself. Therefore, the presentation of appearance, too, at this point coincides with "the authentic science of the Spirit." The science of phenomenal knowledge leads to and falls within authentic science. Authentic science offers a presentation of how the Absolute is present to itself in its absoluteness. The authentic science is the "Science of Logic." The term is traditional. Logic is supposed to be knowledge of the Concept. But the Concept, whereby consciousness is its own concept, now designates the absolute self-conception of the Absolute in its own absolute grip of itself. The logic of this concept is the ontological theology of the Absolute. Unlike the science of the experience of consciousness, it presents not the *parousia* of the Absolute, but absoluteness in its *parousia* to itself.

In the title "Science of the *Experience* of Consciousness," the word "experience" occupies the emphatic position in the middle. It mediates between consciousness and science. What the title indicates under this aspect is in accord with the matter itself. Experience, as the being of consciousness, is in itself the inversion by which consciousness presents itself in its appearance. That is to say: in making the presentation, experience is science. But natural representation understands the title immediately and only in the sense that the

object of science is experience, and this experience in turn is the experience of consciousness. Yet, this is the title of the very work that performs the inversion of consciousness by presenting it. What is inverted by the inversion, however, is natural consciousness. Thus the title will not be understood as long as we read it according to the habits of natural consciousness. The two genitives, "of the Experience" and "of Consciousness," indicate not a *genitivus obiectivus* but a *genitivus subiectivus*. Consciousness, not science, is the subject that is in the mode of experience. And experience is the subject of science. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the *genitivus obiectivus* retains its meaning, though only because the *genitivus subiectivus* is valid. Strictly understood, neither takes precedence over the other. Both designate the subject-object relation of the absolute subject, in its subjectness. In view of this relation, which has its natural being in experience, we must place ourselves at the center of the mediating middle word and think through the title simultaneously backward and forward.

In either reading, the genitives indicate that relation of which the inversion makes use without ever giving thought to it specifically: the relation of Being to particular beings as the relation of particular beings to Being. The dialectical movement establishes itself in that domain which has been opened up by the inversion, but which is also concealed by it precisely *qua* openness of that relation. The skeptical

dialogue between natural and absolute consciousness looks over this domain as it looks ahead toward the absoluteness of the Absolute. Dialectical skepsis is the nature of speculative philosophy. The genitives that make their appearance in the title are neither exclusively subjective nor exclusively objective, and least of all a combination of the two. They belong to the dialectical-speculative genitive. This genitive shows itself in the title only because it prevails from the outset throughout that language which the experience of consciousness comes to speak as it achieves its own presentation.

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The title chosen at first, "Science of the *Experience* of Consciousness," is dropped while the work is in press. But the passage that explains it does remain. Another title is substituted, which runs: "Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit." The passage which remained, and which nowhere speaks of a Phenomenology of Spirit, thus becomes the proper explication of the new title, which appears also in the full title under which the work is published in 1807: *System of Science Part One, The Phenomenology of Spirit*. When, shortly after Hegel's death, the work was reissued as the second volume of his Collected Works (1832), the title had been reduced to *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The inconspicuous disappearance of the article "the" veils a

decisive change in Hegel's thinking and in his manner of communicating it. In terms of content, the change concerns the system; in point of time, it begins soon after the publication of *Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit*; and it is probably prompted and reinforced by his move to a teaching position at the Nuremberg *Gymnasium*. That teaching experience at a secondary school has in turn left its mark on his university teaching which he resumed later.

At the time of first publication of *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the overall title "System of Science" is, from a dialectical-speculative point of view, ambiguous. It does not mean: the sciences set out in groups according to a reasoned order. Nor does it mean: a systematic presentation of philosophy as science. "System of Science" means: science is in itself the absolute organization of the absoluteness of the Absolute. The subjectness of the subject *is* in such a way that, knowing itself, it fits itself into the completeness of its structure. This self-fitting is the mode of Being in which subjectness *is*. "System" is the coming together of the Absolute that gathers itself into its absoluteness and, by virtue of this gathering, is made constant in its own presence. Science is the subject of the system, not its object. But it is subject in this way, that science, belonging to subjectness, is co-constitutive of the absoluteness of the Absolute. At the time of first publication of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, science is for Hegel the onto-theological knowledge of what truly is insofar as it is. It develops to the full in two direc-

tions—the “Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit” and the “Science of Logic.” Hegel’s “Science of Logic,” at that time, is absolute theology, not ontology. Ontology, on the contrary, has developed as the “Science of the *Experience of Consciousness*.” Phenomenology is the “first science,” logic is the authentic science within first philosophy understood as the truth of beings as such. That truth is what constitutes the nature of metaphysics. But Hegel, like Kant before him and Schelling (in his late works) after him, never did overcome the long-established power of the didactic systems of academic metaphysics. Nietzsche raises his voice against those systems only because his thinking must stay within the authentic onto-theological system of metaphysics.

Why did Hegel abandon his original title “Science of the *Experience of Consciousness*”? We do not know. But we may surmise. Did he shy away from the word “experience” which he himself had placed at the center with such emphasis? The word now is the term for the Being of beings. For Kant, it is the term which designates the only possible theoretical knowledge of what is. Did it seem too daring, after all, to hark back to the original meaning of the verb “to experience” which probably echoed in Hegel’s mind as his thought proceeded: “to experience” as a reaching out and attaining, and attaining as the mode of being present, of *είναι*, of Being? Did it seem too daring to raise this ancient note and make of it the keynote of the language in



which his work speaks, speaks even where the word "experience" does not appear? It does appear in all the essential passages of its progress—in the transitions. It does, though, recede in the last of the main sections which presents the appearance of consciousness as Spirit. The Preface, on the other hand, written after the work had been completed, still speaks of the "system of the experience of Spirit."

The heading "Science of the *Experience* of Consciousness" disappears nonetheless. But with it, the word "consciousness," too, disappears from the title, even though consciousness, as self-consciousness, constitutes the natural domain of the absoluteness of the Absolute, even though consciousness is the land of modern metaphysics, the land which has by now assumed full possession of itself and has surveyed itself fully.

The heading "Science of the *Experience* of Consciousness" gives way to the new "Science of the Phenomenology of Spirit." The new heading is structured in exact correspondence to the old. Again, we must understand the genitives as dialectical-speculative. In the place of the word "experience" there now appears the term "phenomenology," already then current in academic philosophy. *The nature of experience is the nature of phenomenology.* The *φαίνεσθαι*, the self-appearance of the absolute subject which is called "Spirit," gathers itself in the mode of a dialogue between ontic and ontological consciousness. The

“-logy” in phenomenology is the λέγεσθαι in the sense of the ambiguous διαλέγεσθαι characterizing the movement whereby the experience of being conscious, or consciousness, is the Being of consciousness. Phenomenology is the self-gathering of the conversation of the dialogue between Spirit and its *parousia*. Phenomenology here is the term for the existence of Spirit. Spirit is the subject of phenomenology, not its object. The word here does not mean a special discipline within philosophy; still less is it a term for some special sort of inquiry whose purpose is to describe data. But since the self-gathering of the Absolute into its *parousia* does, by its nature, demand presentation, therefore the character of being science is in the very nature of phenomenology—not because phenomenology is being represented by the mind, but because it is the existence, the presence of the Spirit. The abridged title *Phenomenology of Spirit*, properly understood, does not therefore succumb to vagueness. It forces our thinking to its ultimate concentration. “*Phenomenology of Spirit*” means: the *parousia* of the Absolute at work. A decade after the publication of *Phenomenology of Spirit*, “phenomenology” has declined to become a narrowly circumscribed part of philosophy in the scholastic system of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* (1817). As in the eighteenth century, the term “phenomenology” once again designates a discipline. That discipline stands between anthropology and psychology.

What, then, is the phenomenology of Spirit if it is the

experience of consciousness? It is thoroughgoing skepticism.\* Experience is the dialogue between natural consciousness and absolute knowledge. Natural consciousness is the *Zeitgeist*, the Spirit as it exists, historically at any given time. But that Spirit is not an ideology. As subjectness, it is the reality of the real. The historical spirits are recalled to themselves, by themselves, at each given moment. Absolute knowledge, however, is the presentation of the appearance of the Spirit as it exists. It performs "the organization" of Being's constitution in the spiritual realm. The dialogue takes place and assembles in that domain which it reaches only in its own course, so that, in traversing that domain, it may establish itself there and, having thus arrived, remain in it. The course of the dialogue, reaching and arriving, is the way of despair, the way by which consciousness at each moment loses what in it is not yet true and sacrifices it to the real appearance of the truth. In the consummation of the dialogue of "thoroughgoing skepticism," the words are uttered: "It is finished!" They are uttered at that point of the way where consciousness itself dies its own death, the death into which it is rapt by the force of the Absolute. Hegel, at the close of his work, calls phenomenology of Spirit "the Golgotha of absolute Spirit."

The science of phenomenology of Spirit is the theology of the Absolute, in respect of the Absolute's *parousia* in the

\* Hegel's term is "*der sich vollbringende Skeptizismus*." (Tr.)

dialectical-speculative crucifixion. This is where the Absolute meets death. God is dead. And this means everything except "there is no God." The "science of logic," however, is the science of the Absolute as it is originally present with itself in its self-knowledge as the absolute Concept. It is the theology of the absoluteness of the Absolute, before Creation. Both theologies are equally ontologies, both are secular. They have in mind the world's worldliness, "world" here meaning the whole of beings, which beings have the character of subjectness. The world, so understood, determines its beings in such a way that they are present in the representation that represents the Absolute. The science of absolute knowledge, however, is the secular theology of the world not because it secularizes Christian and ecclesiastical theology, but because it belongs in the nature of ontology. Ontology is older than any Christian theology, and Christian theology in turn must first be realized before a process of secularization can lay hold of it. The theology of the Absolute is that knowledge of beings *qua* beings which among the Greek thinkers reveals and follows its onto-theological nature without ever pursuing it to its foundation. The language of absolute science shows that the Christian theology, in what it knows and in the way it knows its knowledge, is metaphysics.

The statement "The experience of consciousness is thoroughgoing skepticism," and the statement "Phenomenology is the Golgotha of absolute Spirit," join the comple-

tion of the work to its beginning. But what is essential in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is not the work as the achievement of a thinker, but the work as the reality of consciousness itself. Because phenomenology is experience, the beingness of beings, therefore it is the gathering of self-appearance in concentration upon the appearance out of the light of the Absolute.

But the gathering self-concentration is the unspoken nature of the will. The will wills itself in the *parousia* of the Absolute that is with us. "Phenomenology" itself is Being, according to whose mode the Absolute is with us in and for itself. This Being wills, willing being its nature. It remains for us to consider how Being comes to have this nature.

The "being with us" belongs to the absoluteness of the Absolute. Without this "with us," the Absolute would be completely alone, unable to appear to itself in the phenomena. It could not rise into unconcealedness. Without that rising (*φύσις*), it would not be life (*ζωή*). Experience is the movement of the dialogue between natural and absolute knowledge. It is both of these, by virtue of the unifying unity in which it gathers. It is the nature of natural consciousness which is historical in the accident of its appearing Shapes. It is the self-understanding of these Shapes in the organization of their appearance. The work, accordingly, completes itself in the statement: "Both together, history grasped conceptually, form the memory and the Golgotha of absolute Spirit, the reality, truth, and certainty

of its throne without which it would be lifeless, solitary and alone." The Absolute, in its absoluteness, is in need of the throne as that exalted place in which it settles down without abasing itself.

The *parousia* of the absolute takes place as phenomenology. Experience is Being, in accordance with which the Absolute wills to be with us. Because the presentation that belongs to the very nature of experience has nothing else to present than phenomenology in the sense of *parousia*, even the end of the work's opening section mentions its conclusion: the *parousia*. True, the fact that the Absolute is in and for itself already with us, and wants to be with us, is mentioned only inconspicuously, in a subclause. At the conclusion of the work, that subclause has become the sole main clause. The "with us" has revealed itself as the "not without us."

In the phrase "with us" at the beginning of our text, the nature of the "us" has not yet been considered. At the conclusion of the work, the nature of the "us" in "not without us" has defined itself. "We" are those who skeptically pay specific heed to the Being of beings, and thus pay it authentic respect.

The circle is closed. The work's final word harks back to and loses itself in its beginning. For the sixteen sections or this passage, commonly called "Introduction to the Phenomenology of Spirit," are themselves already the phenomenology's true beginning.

The caption "Introduction" does not appear in the original edition of 1807. Only the table of contents added later to this edition lists the piece after the preface as "Introduction"—probably to solve the embarrassment caused by the necessity of a table of contents. For in substance the piece is not an introduction—which is no doubt why, only after the completion of the work, the much longer Preface was composed to prepare the reader. The passage with its sixteen sections is not an introduction, for it cannot be such. It cannot be anything of the kind because there is no such thing as an introduction to phenomenology. The phenomenology of Spirit is the *parousia* of the Absolute. The *parousia* is the Being of beings. There is for man no introduction to the Being of beings, because man's nature, his life led in the escort of Being, is itself that escort. Insofar as the "being with us" of the Absolute prevails, we are already in the *parousia*. It is not possible for us to be led, introduced to it from some place outside. But in what manner are we in the *parousia* of the Absolute? We are in it in the habitual ways of natural consciousness. To natural consciousness all things appear as though all that is present were there side by side on a level. The Absolute, too, appears to natural consciousness commonly as something that is there alongside of all the rest. Even that which is over and above commonly represented beings is over against natural consciousness. It is the "side-by-side" that is there on the upside, beside which we ourselves have our being. Following

the trend of its representations, natural consciousness stays with beings and pays no heed to Being—though Being is what attracts and draws it from the start, indeed draws it into the trend toward the Being of beings. And yet, when Being is brought to its attention, natural consciousness assures us that Being is an abstraction. That whereby consciousness is attracted to its own nature, consciousness itself claims to be an abstraction. No greater distortion of its own nature is possible than this view.

Compared with this distortion, all the perversities pale among which natural consciousness knocks about—attempting to remove one perversion by the organization of another, without giving thought to the real distortion. Thus there remains the abiding need for consciousness to turn away from this aversion for the Being of beings, to return and turn toward the appearance of the phenomena. Natural consciousness cannot be introduced where it already is. But neither should it, in its inversion, leave its abode among beings. Natural consciousness should specifically take them over, in their truth.

Textually we may regard the sixteen sections as the explication of the title which was later omitted. But thinking substantively, the issue is not a book title but the work itself; indeed not even the work, but what the work presents: experience, phenomenology as the Absolute's prevailing *parousia*. But again, the point is not that we take cognizance, acquire a knowledge of it, but that we may ourselves



be in the experience which is part of our Being itself—be in the old traditional sense of Being: present with . . . what is present.

This passage with its sixteen sections is a redirection of natural consciousness toward the appropriation of its own abode. That appropriation is achieved by the inversion of consciousness, whereby consciousness attains to the experience which is the true occurrence of the *parousia* of the Absolute. In order to bring natural consciousness back from its ordinary representations and redirect it into experience, one has to start from those notions with which it immediately answers all claims to absolute knowledge. This departure from ordinary representations marks the style of the sections and determines their sequence.

The passage with which the core of the work begins is the beginning of the *skepsis* that pervades thoroughgoing skepticism. To begin the *skepsis* means: to achieve the “having seen” into the absoluteness of the Absolute, and to retain that absoluteness. The passage is the inescapable opportunity to prompt natural consciousness to release within itself the knowledge in which it is already, being its own Concept. Only when we have achieved that inversion of consciousness in which the appearance of Spirit turns toward us, only then are the phenomena present as phenomena “for us.” “For us” does precisely not mean “relative to us”—us who are engaged in ordinary representation. “For us” means “in

itself," that is, appearing out of the absoluteness of the Absolute, and into the pure domain of its appearance.

The presentation of the experience of consciousness can begin only after this passage has prompted us to the inversion, which is the real beginning of the presentation. It begins absolutely with the absoluteness of the Absolute. It begins with the extreme force of the will of the *parousia*. It begins with the extreme self-exteriorization of the Absolute which, by appearing, divests itself of some of its absoluteness, sacrifices it. In order that we may be able to see ahead into this appearance, we must accept the phenomena such as they appear, and keep our opinions and notions about them in abeyance. But this acceptance of things and letting go of notions about them is an activity which draws assurance and endurance only from the contribution of the inversion. Our contribution consists in that we go skeptically, that is, open-eyed, to the encounter of the appearance of phenomenal consciousness which has already come toward us in the *parousia*—so that we may be on the road on which the process of experience is the phenomenology of the Absolute.

The presentation begins by letting "sense-certainty" appear absolutely:

"Knowledge, which is our object first of all or immediately, can be nothing other than that which itself

is immediate knowledge, *knowledge* of the *immediate* or of *what is*. We must act just as *immediately* or *receptively*, that is, must change nothing in our object as it offers itself, and must keep conceptual understanding out of the reception."

Once the presentation of the appearance of sense-certainty is achieved, the Being of what sense-certainty regards as existing and true has arisen from it as the new subject matter—the truth of certainty; and certainty is self-consciousness in its self-knowledge. The presentation of the appearance of "the truth of the certainty of oneself" begins with the following sentences:

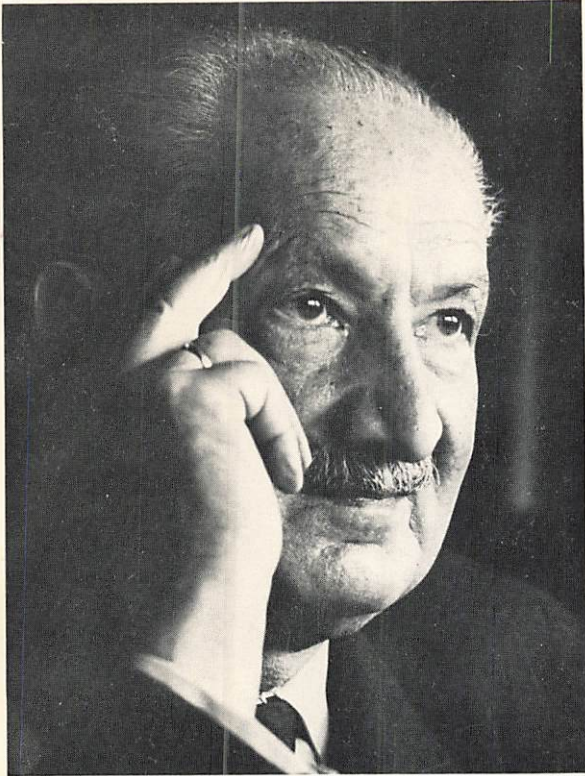
"In the kinds of certainty hitherto considered, the truth for consciousness is something other than consciousness itself. The conception, however, of this truth vanishes in the course of our experience of it. What the object immediately was *in itself*—whether mere being in sense-certainty, a concrete thing in perception, or force in the case of understanding—it turns out, in truth, not to be this really; but instead, this inherent nature proves to be a way in which it is for an other. The abstract conception of the object gives way before the actual concrete object, or the first immediate idea is canceled in the course of experience. Mere certainty vanished in favor of the truth."

## N O T E

The contents of this essay were discussed, in a somewhat more didactic manner, in a series of seminars devoted to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (books IV and IX), in 1942/43, and at the same time were presented in two lectures before a smaller audience.







*Eric Schaal*

MARTIN HEIDEGGER, before his retirement, was professor of philosophy at the University of Friburg. He is a foremost existential twentieth-century philosopher.