

# FIRST SUBDIVISION OF THE LOGIC THE DOCTRINE OF BEING

## § 84

Being is the Concept only *in-itself*; its determinations [simply] *are*;<sup>a</sup> in their distinction they are *others* vis-à-vis each other, and their further determination (the form of the dialectical) is a *passing-over into another*. This process of further determination is both a *setting-forth*, and thus an unfolding, of the Concept that is *in-itself*, and at the same time the *going-into-itself* of being, its own deepening into itself. The explication of the Concept in the sphere of Being becomes the totality of being, just as the immediacy of being, or the form of being as such, is sublated by it.

## § 85

Being itself, as well as the following determinations (the logical determinations in general, not just those of being), may be looked upon as definitions of the Absolute, as the *metaphysical definitions of God*; more precisely, however, it is always just the first simple determination of a sphere that can be so regarded and again the third, the one which is the return from difference<sup>b</sup> to simple self-relation. For to define God metaphysically means to express his nature in *thoughts* as such; but the Logic embraces all thoughts while they are still in the form of thoughts. The *second* determinations, on the other hand, which constitute a sphere in its *difference*, are the definition of the *finite*. But if the form of definitions were used, then this form would entail the hovering of a substrate of representation before the mind; for even *the Absolute*,<sup>3</sup> as what is supposed to express God in the sense and form of thought, remains in its relationship to the predicate (which is its determinate and actual expression in thought) only

a. *sind* seiende<sup>1</sup>

b. *Differenz*<sup>2</sup>

what is *meant* to be a thought,<sup>a</sup> a substrate that is not determined on its own account. Because the thought, the matter which is all that we are here concerned about, is contained only in the predicate, the propositional form, as well as the subject [of the proposition], is something completely superfluous (cf. § 31, and the chapter on Judgment below [i.e., §§ 166–80]).

*Addition.* Each sphere of the logical Idea proves to be a totality of determinations and a presentation of the Absolute. In particular, this is the case with Being too, which contains within it the three stages of *quality*, *quantity*, and *measure*. *Quality* is, to begin with, the determinacy that is identical with being, in such a way that something ceases to be what it is if it loses its quality. *Quantity*, on the contrary, is the determinacy that is external to being, indifferent for it. For example, a house remains red whether it be bigger or smaller, and red remains red, whether it be brighter or darker. The third stage of Being, *measure*, is the unity of the first two, it is qualitative quantity. Everything has its measure; i.e., things are quantitatively determinate, and their being of this or that magnitude is indifferent for them; but at the same time, there is a limit to this indifference, the overstepping of which by a further increase or decrease means that the things cease to be what they were. From measure there follows then the advance to the second major sphere of the Idea, to *Essence*.

Precisely because they come first, the three forms of Being that have been mentioned here are also the poorest in content, i.e., the most abstract. Insofar as it also involves thinking, our immediate, sensible consciousness is mainly limited to the abstract determinations of quality and quantity. This sense-consciousness is usually considered to be the most concrete and therefore at the same time the richest; but this is the case only with regard to its material, whereas in respect of its thought-content, on the other hand, it is in fact the poorest and most abstract.

## A Quality

### A. BEING

#### § 86

*Pure being* makes the beginning, because it is pure thought as well as the undetermined, simple immediate, [and because] the first beginning cannot be anything mediated and further determined.

a. gemeinter *Gedanke*

All of the doubts and recollections that can be brought against beginning the science with abstract empty *being* are disposed of by the simple consciousness of what the nature of the beginning implies. Being can be determined as  $I=I$ , as *absolute Indifference* or *Identity*, and so on. Where there is the need to begin, either with something strictly *certain*, i.e., with the certainty of oneself, or with a definition or intuition of *what is absolutely true*, these and other similar forms can be looked upon as the ones that must come first. But since there is already *mediation* within each of these forms, they are not truly the first; [for] mediation consists in having already left a first behind, to go on to a second, and in a going forth from moments that are distinct. When  $I=I$ , or even intellectual intuition, is truly taken just as the first, then in this pure immediacy it is nothing else but *being*; just as, conversely, pure being, when it is no longer taken as this abstract being, but as being that contains mediation within itself, is pure thinking or intuiting.

If *being* is enunciated as a predicate of the Absolute, then we have as its first definition: "The Absolute is being". This is the definition that is (in thought) absolutely initial, the most abstract and the poorest. It is the definition given by the *Eleatics*, but at the same time it is the familiar [assertion] that *God is the essential sum of all realities*.<sup>a</sup> That is to say, one has to abstract from the restrictedness which is [there] in every reality, so that God is only what is *real*<sup>b</sup> in all reality, the *Supremely Real*. Since "reality" already contains a reflection, this is expressed more immediately in what Jacobi says of Spinoza's God, that he is the "*principium* of being in all that is there."<sup>4</sup>

*Addition 1.* When thinking is to begin, we have nothing but thought in its pure lack of determination, for determination requires both one and another; but at the beginning we have as yet no other. That which lacks determination, as we have it here, is the immediate, not a mediated lack of determination, not the sublation of all determinacy, but the lack of determination in all its immediacy, what lacks determination prior to all determinacy, what lacks determinacy because it stands at the very beginning. But this is what we call "being". Being cannot be felt, it cannot be directly perceived nor can it be represented; instead, it is pure thought, and as such it constitutes the starting point. Essence lacks determination too, but, because it has already passed through mediation, it already contains determination as sublated within itself.

a. der Inbegriff aller Realitäten

b. das Reale

*Addition 2.* We find the various stages of the logical Idea in the history of philosophy in the shape of a succession of emerging philosophical systems, each of which has a particular definition of the Absolute as its foundation. Just as the unfolding of the logical Idea proves to be an advance from the abstract to the concrete, so the earliest systems in the history of philosophy are the most abstract and therefore at the same time the poorest. But the relationship of the earlier to the later philosophical systems is in general the same as the relationship of the earlier to the later stages of the logical Idea; that is to say, the earlier systems are contained sublated within the later ones. This is the true significance of the fact (which is so often misunderstood) that in the history of philosophy one philosophical system refutes another, or, more precisely, that an earlier philosophy is refuted by a later one.

When people talk about a philosophy's being refuted, they usually take this first in a merely abstract, negative sense—in other words, as meaning that the refuted philosophy is simply no longer valid at all, that it is set aside and done with. If this were the case, then the study of the history of philosophy would have to be considered an utterly mournful affair indeed, since it only shows how all the philosophical systems that have emerged in the course of time have met their refutations. But, although it must certainly be conceded that all philosophies have been refuted, it must also equally be affirmed that no philosophy has ever been refuted, nor can it be. This is the case in two ways. First, every philosophy worthy of the name always has the Idea as its content, and second, every philosophical system should be regarded as the presentation of a particular moment, or a particular stage, in the process of development of the Idea. So, the “refuting” of a philosophy means only that its restricting boundary has been overstepped and its determinate principle has been reduced to an ideal moment.

Consequently, so far as its essential content is concerned, the history of philosophy does not deal with the past, but with what is eternal and strictly present; it does not result in a gallery of aberrations of the human spirit, but must instead be compared with a pantheon of divine shapes. These divine shapes are the various stages of the Idea, as they emerge successively in their dialectical development. It must be left to the history of philosophy to show more precisely the extent to which the unfolding of its content coincides with the dialectical unfolding of the pure logical Idea on the one hand, and deviates from it on the other; but we must at least point out here that the starting point of the Logic is the same as the starting point of the history of philosophy in the proper sense of the word. This starting point is to be found in Eleatic philosophy, and, more precisely, in the philosophy of Parmenides, who apprehends the Absolute as being. For he says that, “Only being is, and nothing is not.”<sup>5</sup> This must be taken as the proper starting point of philosophy, because philosophy as such is cognition by means of thinking, and here pure thinking was firmly adhered to for the first time and became objective for itself.

Of course, humans have been thinkers from the first, for it is only by thinking that they distinguish themselves from the animals; but it has taken millennia for them to grasp thinking in its purity, and, at the same time, as what is wholly objective. The Eleatics are famous as daring thinkers; but this abstract admiration is often coupled with the remark that, all the same, these philosophers surely went too far, because they recognised only being as what is true, and denied truth to

every other object of our consciousness. And, of course, it is quite correct that we must not stop at mere being; but it shows only lack of thought to treat the further content of our consciousness as discoverable somewhere “beside” and “outside” being, or as something that is just given “also.” On the contrary, the true situation is that being as such is not firm and ultimate, but rather something that overturns dialectically into its opposite—which, taken in the same immediate way, is *nothing*. So, when all is said and done, being is the first pure thought; and whatever else may be made the starting point (I=I, absolute Indifference, or God himself)<sup>6</sup> is initially only something which is represented, rather than thought. With regard to its thought-content, it is quite simply being.

## § 87

But this pure being is the *pure abstraction*, and hence it is the *absolutely negative*, which when taken immediately, is equally *nothing*.<sup>7</sup>

(1) From this the second definition of the Absolute followed, that it is *nothing*; in fact, this definition is implied when it is said that the thing-in-itself is that which is indeterminate, absolutely without form and therefore without content—or again when it is said that God is *just the supreme essence* and no more than that, for to call him that expresses precisely the same negativity; the nothing, which the *Buddhists*<sup>8</sup> make into the principle of everything (and into the ultimate end<sup>a</sup> and goal of everything too), is this same abstraction.—(2) When the antithesis is expressed in this immediacy, as *being* and *nothing*, then it seems too obvious that it is null and void, for people not to try to fix being and to preserve it against the passage [into nothing]. In this situation, we are bound, as we think it over, to start searching for a stable determination for being by which it would be distinguished from nothing. For example, being is taken as what persists through all variation as the infinitely determinable [prime] *matter*, and so on; or even without thinking it over at all, as any *single* existence whatever, anything readily available, be it sensible or spiritual. But none of these additional and more concrete determinations of this kind leave us with being as *pure being*, the way it is here in the beginning, in its immediacy. Only in this pure indeterminacy, and because of it, is being *nothing*—something *that cannot be said*; what distinguishes it from nothing is something merely *meant*.—All that really matters here is consciousness about these beginnings: that they are nothing but these empty abstractions, and that each of them is as

a. letzten Endzweck

empty as the other; the *drive* to find in being or in both [being and nothing] a stable meaning is this very *necessity*, which leads being and nothing further along and endows them with a true, i.e., concrete meaning. This progression is the logical exposition and course [of thought] that presents itself in what follows. The *thinking them over* that *finds* deeper determinations for them is the logical thinking by which these determinations produce themselves, not in a contingent but in a necessary way.

Every subsequent meaning that they acquire must therefore be regarded as only a *more articulate determination*<sup>a</sup> and a *truer definition* of the *Absolute*; hence, any such determination or definition is no longer an empty abstraction like being and nothing, but is, instead, something concrete within which both being and nothing are moments.—In its highest form of explicitation<sup>b</sup> nothing would be *freedom*. But this highest form is negativity insofar as it inwardly deepens itself to its highest intensity; and in this way it is itself affirmation—indeed absolute affirmation.<sup>9</sup>

*Addition.* Being and nothing are at first only *supposed* to be distinguished, i.e., the distinction between them is initially only *in-itself*, but not yet *posited*. Whenever we speak about a distinction we have in mind *two* items, each of which possesses a determination that the other does not have. But being is precisely what strictly lacks determination, and nothing is this same lack of determination also. So the distinction between these two [terms] is only meant to be such, a completely abstract distinction, one that is at the same time no distinction. In all other cases of distinguishing we are always dealing also with something common, which embraces the things that are distinguished. For example, if we speak of two diverse kinds, then being a kind is what is common to both. Similarly, we say that there are natural and spiritual essences. Here, being an essence is what they have in common. By contrast, in the case of being and nothing, distinction has no basis,<sup>c</sup> and, precisely because of this, it is no distinction, since neither determination has any basis.<sup>d</sup> Someone might want to say that being and nothing are still both thoughts, and so to be a thought is what is common to them both. But this would be overlooking the fact that being is not a particular, determinate thought, but is the still quite undetermined thought which, precisely for this reason, cannot be distinguished from nothing.

We certainly also represent being as absolute riches, and nothing, on the contrary, as absolute poverty. But, when we consider the entire world, and say simply that everything is, and nothing further, we leave out everything determinate, and,

a. *nähere Bestimmung*

b. *Die höchste Form des Nichts für sich*

c. *in seiner Bodenlosigkeit*

d. *dieselbe Bodenlosigkeit*

in consequence, have only absolute emptiness instead of absolute fullness. The same applies to the definition of *God* as mere being. Against it there stands, with equal justification, the definition of the Buddhists that *God* is nothing—from which it follows that man becomes *God* by annihilating himself.

## § 88

And similarly, but conversely, *nothing*, as this immediate [term] that is equal to itself, is *the same* as *being*. Hence, the truth of being and nothing alike is the *unity* of both of them; this unity is *becoming*.

(1) In *representation*, or for the understanding, the proposition: “*Being and nothing is the same*,” appears to be such a paradoxical proposition that it may perhaps be taken as not seriously meant. And it really is one of the hardest propositions that thinking dares to formulate, for being and nothing are the antithesis in all its *immediacy*, i.e., without the prior *positing* of any determination in one of the two which would contain its relation to the other. But as was shown in the preceding paragraph, they *do contain* this determination; i.e., the one that is precisely the same in both. The deduction of their unity is to this extent entirely *analytic*; just as, quite generally, the whole course of philosophising, being methodical, i.e., *necessary*, is nothing else but the mere *positing* of what is already contained in a concept.—But correct as it is to affirm the unity of being and nothing, it is *equally* correct to say that *they are absolutely diverse too*—that the one is *not* what the other is. But because this distinction has here not yet determined itself, precisely because being and nothing are still the immediate—it is, as belonging to them, *what cannot be said*, what is merely *meant*.

(2) No great expense of wit is needed to ridicule the proposition that being and nothing are the same, or rather to produce absurdities which are falsely asserted to be consequences and applications of this proposition; e.g., that, on that view, it is all the same whether my house, my fortune, the air to breathe, this city, the sun, the law, the spirit, *God*, *are* or *are not*. In examples of this kind, it is partly a matter of *particular purposes*, the *utility* that something has for *me*, being sneaked in. One then asks whether it matters *to me* that the useful thing is or that it is not. But philosophy is in fact the very discipline that aims at liberating man from an infinite crowd of finite purposes and intentions and at making him indifferent with regard to them, so that it is all the same to him whether such matters are the case or not. But wherever and as

soon as one speaks about a *content*, a connection is already posited with *other* existences, purposes, etc., that are *presupposed* as valid, and whether the being or nonbeing of a *determinate content* is the *same* or *not* has now become dependent on *these presuppositions*. A distinction that is *full of content* has been sneaked into the empty distinction of being and nothing.—In part, however, it is purposes that are in themselves essential, absolute existences and Ideas, that are just posited under the determination of *being* or *nonbeing*. Concrete ob-jects of this kind are something much more than what only *is* or *is not*. Poor abstractions, like being and nothing—which, precisely because they are only the determinations of the beginning, are the poorest of all—are quite inadequate to the nature of these ob-jects; genuine content has already left these abstractions themselves and their antithesis far behind.—Whenever something concrete is sneaked into being and nothing, it is just business as usual for the unthinking [mind]:<sup>a</sup> something else altogether appears before it and it speaks about that as if it were what is at issue, whereas at the moment only abstract being and nothing are at issue.

(3) It is easy to say that we do not *comprehend* the unity of being and nothing. But the concept of both has been indicated in the preceding paragraphs, and it is nothing more than what has been indicated; to comprehend their unity means no more than to grasp this. But what is understood by “comprehension” is often something more than the concept in the proper sense; what is desired is a more diversified, a richer consciousness, a notion such that this sort of “concept” can be presented as a concrete case of it, with which thinking in its ordinary practice would be more familiar. Insofar as the inability to comprehend only expresses the fact that one is not used to holding onto abstract thoughts without any sensible admixture or to the grasping of speculative propositions, all we can say is that philosophical knowing is indeed quite diverse in kind from the knowing that we are used to in everyday life, just as it is diverse from what prevails in the other sciences too. But if noncomprehension only means that one cannot *represent* the unity of being and nothing, this is really so far from being the case, that on the contrary everyone has an infinite supply of notions of this unity; saying that one has none can only mean that one does not [re]cognise the present concept in any of those notions, and one

a. *die Gedankenlosigkeit*



does not know them to be examples of it. The readiest example of it is *becoming*. Everyone has a notion of becoming and will also admit moreover that it is *One* notion; and further that, if it is analysed, the determination of *being*, but also that of *nothing*, the stark Other of being, is found to be contained in it; further, that these two determinations are undivided in this *One* notion; hence that becoming is the unity of being and nothing.—Another example that is equally ready to hand is the *beginning*; the matter [itself] is *not yet* in its beginning, but the beginning is not merely its *nothing*: on the contrary, its *being* is already there, too. The beginning itself is also becoming, but it expresses already the reference to the further progression.—In conformity with the most usual procedure of the sciences, one could begin the Logic with the notion of “beginning” thought purely, i.e., with the notion of beginning as beginning, and one could analyse this notion; and then it would perhaps be more readily conceded, as a result of the analysis, that being and nothing show themselves to be undivided within a unity.<sup>a</sup>

(4) It remains to be noted, however, that the expression: “Being and nothing is *the same*,” or “*the unity* of being and nothing”—like all other *unities* of this kind (the unity of subject and object, etc.)—can fairly be objected to, because it is misleading and incorrect insofar as it makes the *unity* stand out; and although diversity is contained in it (because it is, for instance, being and nothing whose unity is posited), this diversity is not expressed and recognised along with the unity. So we seem only to have abstracted quite improperly from this diversity, and to have given no thought to it. The fact is that no speculative determination can be expressed correctly in the form of such a proposition; what has to be grasped is the unity *in* the diversity that is both *given* and *posited* at the same time. As their unity, *becoming* is the true expression of the result of being and nothing; it is not just the *unity* of being and nothing, but it is inward *unrest*—a unity which in its self-relation is not simply motionless, but which, in virtue of the diversity of being and nothing which it contains, is inwardly turned against itself.—*Being-there*, on the contrary, is this *unity* or becoming in this form of unity; that is why it is *one-sided* and *finite*. It is, as if the antithesis had disappeared; it is contained in the unity, but only *in-itself*, not as *posited* in the unity.

a. als in Einem ungetrennt

(5) To the proposition that being is the passing into nothing and that nothing is the passing into being—to the proposition of *becoming*, is opposed the proposition: “From nothing, nothing comes,” “Something only comes from something,” the proposition of the eternity of matter, or of pantheism. The Ancients<sup>10</sup> made the simple reflection that the proposition: “Something comes from something,” or “From nothing, nothing comes,” does indeed sublate becoming; for that from which there is becoming and that which comes to be are one and the same; all we have here is the proposition of the abstract identity of the understanding. But it must strike one as amazing to see the propositions: “From nothing, nothing comes,” or “Something comes only from something,” advanced quite naïvely, without any consciousness that they are the foundation of pantheism; and equally without any awareness that the Ancients have already dealt with these propositions exhaustively.

*Addition.* Becoming is the first concrete thought and hence the first concept, whereas being and nothing, in contrast, are empty abstractions. If we speak of the concept of being, this can only consist in becoming, for as being it is the empty nothing, but as the latter it is empty being. So, in being we have nothing, and in nothing being; but this being which abides with itself in nothing is becoming. The unity of becoming cannot leave out the distinction, for without that we would return once more to abstract being. Becoming is simply the positedness of what being is in its truth.

We often hear it asserted that thinking is opposed to being. Regarding such an assertion the first thing to ask is what is understood here by “being”. If we take “being” in the way that reflection determines it, we can only assert of it that it is what is thoroughly identical and affirmative; and if we then consider “thinking”, it cannot escape us that thinking is, at least, in like manner, what is thoroughly self-identical. So the same determination accrues to both “being” and “thinking”. But this identity of being and thinking is not to be taken concretely; it must not be taken as saying that a stone, insofar as it is, is the same as a human thinker. Something concrete is always quite different from the abstract determination as such. But, in the case of being, we are not speaking of anything concrete, for being is precisely just what is wholly abstract. In consequence, the question of the being of God, i.e., [of the being of] what is infinitely concrete within itself,<sup>11</sup> is also of very little interest.

As the first concrete determination of thought, becoming is also the first genuine one. In the history of philosophy it is the system of Heraclitus that corresponds to this stage of the logical Idea. When Heraclitus says, “Everything flows” (*panta hrei*), then it is *becoming* that is thereby pronounced to be the basic determination of everything that is there; whereas on the contrary, as we said earlier, the Eleatics took being, rigid being without process, to be what is uniquely true. In connection

with the principle of the Eleatics Heraclitus<sup>12</sup> says further, “Being is no more than not-being” (*ouden mallon to on tou me ontos esti*); what this expresses is precisely the negativity of abstract being, and the identity, posited in becoming, between it and nothing, which, in its abstraction, is equally unstable.—We have here, too, an example of the genuine refutation of one philosophical system by another. The refutation consists precisely in the fact that the principle of the refuted philosophy is exhibited in its dialectic and reduced to an ideal moment of a higher concrete form of the Idea.

But now, furthermore, even becoming is, by itself, still a very poor determination; and it must inwardly deepen itself a lot more, and fill itself out.<sup>13</sup> An inward deepening of becoming is what we have, for example, in *life*. This is a becoming, but its concept is not exhausted by that. We find becoming in a still higher form in *spirit*. This, too, is a becoming, but one that is more intensive, richer than the merely logical becoming. The moments whose unity is Spirit are not those mere abstractions, being and nothing, but the system of the logical Idea and of Nature.

## B. BEING-THERE

### § 89

In becoming, being, as one with nothing, and nothing as one with being, are only vanishing [terms]; because of its contradiction becoming collapses inwardly, into the unity within which both are sublated; in this way its result is *being-there*.

In this first example we have to recall once and for all what was indicated in § 82 and the Remark there: the only way that a progression and a development in knowing can be grounded is to hold firmly onto the results in their truth.—There is *nothing at all* anywhere, in which contradiction—i.e., opposed determinations—cannot and should not be exhibited. The abstracting activity of the understanding is a clinging on to One determinacy by force, an effort to obscure and to remove the consciousness of the other one that is contained in it.—But if the contradiction is exhibited and recognised in any object or concept whatever, then the conclusion that is usually drawn is: “Therefore this object is *nothing*.” Thus Zeno first showed that movement contradicts itself, and that it therefore *is not*;<sup>14</sup> likewise the Ancients recognised *coming to be* and *passing away*, the two kinds of becoming, as untrue determinations, by saying that the *One*, i.e., the Absolute, does not come into being or pass away. This dialectic does not go beyond the negative

side of the result, and abstracts from what is effectively given at the same time: a determinate result, which here is not a pure *nothing* but a *nothing* which includes *being* within itself, and equally a being, which includes nothing. It follows that (1) being-there is the unity of being and nothing, in which the immediacy of these determinations, and therewith their contradiction, has disappeared in their relation—a unity in which they are only *moments*. (2) Because the result is the sublated contradiction, it is in the form of *simple* unity with itself or even as a *being*, but [as] a being with its negation or determinacy; it is becoming posited in the *form* of *one* of its moments, of being.

*Addition.* Even our representation of it implies that, if there is a becoming, something comes forth and that becoming therefore has a result. But at this point the question arises of why becoming does not remain mere becoming but has a result. The answer to this question follows from what becoming has previously shown itself to be. That is to say, becoming contains being and nothing within itself and it does this in such a way that they simply overturn into one another and reciprocally sublate one another as well as themselves. In that way becoming proves itself to be what is thoroughly restless, but unable to maintain itself in this abstract restlessness; for, insofar as being and nothing vanish in becoming—and just this is its concept—becoming is thereby itself something that vanishes, like a fire, that dies out within itself by consuming its material. But the result of this process is not empty nothing; instead it is being that is identical with negation, which we call *being-there*—and its significance proves to be, first of all, this: that it is *what has become*.<sup>a</sup>

## § 90

( $\alpha$ ) *Being-there* is being with a *determinacy*, that is [given] as immediate determinacy or as a determinacy that [simply] is: *quality*. As reflected *into itself* in this its determinacy, being-there is *that which is there*,<sup>b</sup> *something*.—The categories that develop in respect of being-there only need to be indicated in a summary way.

*Addition.* *Quality* is, in general, the determinacy that is immediate, identical with being, as distinct from *quantity* (which will be considered next). Of course, quantity is likewise [a] determinacy of being, though it is a determinacy that is not immediately identical with being, but rather one that is indifferent with respect to being and external to it.—Something is what it is by virtue of its quality, and if it loses its quality it ceases to be what it is. Furthermore, quality is essentially only a category of the finite—and for that reason it has its proper place only in nature and not in

a. geworden zu sein

b. Daseiendes

the spiritual world. Thus, for instance, the so-called simple matters,<sup>a</sup> oxygen, nitrogen, etc., must be considered as existent qualities within nature.

Within the sphere of spirit, on the other hand, quality occurs only in a secondary way, and never so that it exhausts the content of any determinate shape of spirit. For example, if we consider subjective spirit, which forms the subject matter of psychology, we can certainly say that the logical significance of what people call “character” is that of quality. But this is not to be understood as if character were a determinacy that pervades the soul and is immediately identical with it, as is the case in nature with the simple matters referred to above. Nevertheless, quality shows itself in a more determinate way in spirit, too, where the latter is found in an unfree, morbid state. This is the case in states of passion, and especially where passion has risen to the height of derangement. We can properly say of a deranged person whose consciousness is completely pervaded by jealousy, fear, etc., that his consciousness is determined in the manner of quality.

### § 91

As determinacy that [simply] *is vis-à-vis* the *negation* which it contains but which is distinct from it, quality is *reality*. The negation is no longer abstract nothing, but as a being-there and as *something*, it is only a form of the something; it is as *otherness*. Since this otherness is quality's own determination, though at first distinct from it, quality *is being-for-another*—an expanse of being-there, of something. The *being* of quality as such, vis-à-vis this relation to another, *is being-in-itself*.<sup>b</sup>

*Addition.* The basis of all determinacy is negation (*omnis determinatio est negatio*, as Spinoza says).<sup>15</sup> Unthinking opinion considers determinate things to be merely positive and holds them fast in the form of being. Mere being is not the end of the matter, however, for, as we saw earlier, that is something utterly empty and at the same time unstable. Still, this confusion of being-there (as determinate being) with abstract being implies the correct insight that the moment of negation is certainly already contained in being-there, but only shrouded as it were; it emerges freely and comes into its own only in being-for-itself.

If we now go on to consider being-there as determinacy that *is*, we have the same as what is generally understood by “reality”. We speak, for instance, of the reality of a plan or of an intention, and we understand by this that such things are no longer merely something inner and subjective, but have moved out into being-there. In the same sense the body can be called the reality of the soul, and this [or that] law<sup>c</sup> can be called the reality of freedom; or, quite universally, the world is the reality of the divine Concept. But, in addition, we often speak of “reality” in still

a. *Stoffe*

b. *An-sich-sein*

c. *dies Recht*<sup>16</sup>

another sense, understanding by it that something behaves in accordance with its essential determination or its concept. For example, someone may say: "This is a real occupation," or: "This is a real person." Here it is not a question of what is immediately and externally there, but rather of the correspondence between what is there and its concept. Interpreted in this way, however, reality is not distinct from ideality, which we shall first become acquainted with as being-for-itself.

## § 92

(β) The being that is kept firmly distinct from the determinacy, *being-in-itself*, would be only the empty abstraction of being. In being-there the determinacy is one with being and is at the same time posited as negation; this determinacy is *limit, restriction*.<sup>17</sup> Thus, otherness is not something-indifferent outside it, but its own moment. In virtue of its quality, *something* is first *finite* and secondly *alterable*, so that the finitude and alterability belong to its being.

*Addition.* In being-there negation is still immediately identical with being, and this negation is what we call "limit". Something only is what it is *within* its limit and *by virtue* of its limit. We cannot regard limit, therefore, as merely external to being-there; on the contrary, limit totally permeates everything that is there. The interpretation of limit as a merely external determination of being-there is based on a confusion of quantitative with qualitative limit. Here we are dealing first with qualitative limit. When we are considering a piece of land three acres in area, for example, that is its quantitative limit. But, in addition, this piece of land is also a meadow and not a wood or a pond, and this is its qualitative limit.—Humans who want to be actual must be *there*, and to this end they must limit themselves. Those who are too fastidious toward the finite achieve nothing real at all, but remain in the realm of the abstract and peter out.

Let us now consider more closely what a limit implies. We find that it contains a contradiction within itself, and so proves itself to be dialectical. That is to say, limit constitutes the reality of being-there, and, on the other hand, it is the negation of it. But, furthermore, as the negation of the something, limit is not an abstract nothing in general, but a nothing that *is*, or what we call an "other". In something we at once hit upon the other, and we know that there is not only something, but also something else. But the other is not such that we just happen upon it; it is not as if something could be thought without that other; rather, something is *in* itself the other of itself, and the limit of a something becomes objective to it in the other. When we ask what the distinction between the something and the other is, then it turns out that both are the same; and this identity is expressed in Latin by calling the pair *aliud-aliud*. The other, as opposed to the something, is itself a something and accordingly we call it "*something else*".<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the first something opposed to an other that is similarly determined as a something is itself something else. When we say "*something else*" we think initially that something taken by itself is only something, and the determination of being something else

only accrues to it in virtue of a merely external point of view. Thus we suppose, for instance, that the moon, which is something else than the sun, could quite well exist if the sun did not. But, in fact, the moon (as something) has its other in itself, and this constitutes its finitude.

Plato says: "God made the world from the nature of the One and the Other (*tau heterou*); he brought them together and formed a Third out of them, which is of the nature of the One and the Other."<sup>19</sup>—This expresses the general nature of the finite which, being something, does not stand over against the other indifferently, but in such a way that it is in-itself the other of itself and hence it alters. Alteration exhibits the inner contradiction with which being-there is burdened from the start, and which drives it beyond itself. In representation, being-there appears initially to be simply positive and to be quietly persisting within its limit as well; but, of course, we also know that everything finite (and being-there is finite) is subject to alteration. But this alterability of being-there appears in our representation as a mere possibility, whose realisation is not grounded within being-there itself. In fact, however, self-alteration is involved in the concept of being-there, and is only the manifestation of what being-there is in-itself. The living die, and they do so simply because, insofar as they live, they bear the germ of death within themselves.

### § 93

Something becomes an other, but the other is itself a something, so it likewise becomes an other, and so on *ad infinitum*.

### § 94

This *infinity* is *spurious or negative* infinity,<sup>20</sup> since it is nothing but the negation of the finite, but the finite arises again in the same way, so that it is no more sublated than not. In other words, this infinity expresses only the requirement that the finite *ought* to be sublated. This progress *ad infinitum* does not go beyond the expression of the contradiction, which the finite contains, [i.e.,] that it is just as much *something* as its *other*, and [this progress] is the perpetual continuation of the alternation between these determinations, each bringing in the other one.

*Addition.* If we let something and other, the moments of being-there, fall asunder, the result is that something becomes an other, and this other is itself a something, which, as such, then alters itself in the same way, and so on without end. Reflection takes itself to have arrived here at something very elevated, indeed the most elevated [truth] of all. But this infinite progression is not the genuine Infinite, which consists rather in remaining at home with itself in its other, or (when it is expressed as a process) in coming to itself in its other. It is of great importance to grasp the concept of true Infinity in an adequate way, and not just to stop at the spurious infinity of the infinite progress. When the infinity of space and time are

spoken of, it is first the infinite progression that we usually stop at. So we say, for example, "*this time*," "*now*," and then we keep continually going beyond this limit, backward and forward. It is the same with space, about whose infinity astronomers with a taste for edification have preached many empty sermons.

Of course, it is also usually maintained that thinking must surrender as soon as it begins to deal with this infinity. Well, one thing is certainly correct, and that is that we must ultimately abandon the attempt to pursue this consideration further and further; but we do so not because of the sublimity, but rather because of the tedium of this occupation. It is tedious to go on and on in the consideration of this infinite progression because the same thing is continually repeated. A limit is set, it is exceeded, then there is another limit, and so on without end. So we have nothing here but a superficial alternation, which stays forever within the sphere of the finite. If we suppose that we can liberate ourselves from the finite by stepping out into that infinitude, this is in fact only a liberation through flight. And the person who flees is not yet free, for in fleeing, he is still determined by the very thing from which he is fleeing. So if people then add that the infinite cannot be attained, what they say is quite correct, but only because the determination of being something abstractly negative is being lodged in the infinite. Philosophy does not waste time with such empty and otherworldly stuff. What philosophy has to do with is always something concrete and strictly present.

The task of philosophy has, indeed, also been formulated in such a way that it has to answer the question of how the Infinite comes to the resolve to go out of itself. This question, which presupposes a rigid antithesis between infinite and finite, can only be answered by saying that the antithesis is something untrue, and that the Infinite is in fact eternally gone from itself, and also eternally not gone from itself.—Besides, if we say that the infinite is the "*nonfinite*," then by saying that we have already expressed what is true: for, since the finite itself is the first negative, the nonfinite is the negative of the negation, the negation that is identical with itself, so that it is at the same time true affirmation.

The infinity of reflection discussed here is merely the attempt to attain true Infinity; it is a wretched intermediate thing. Generally speaking, this is the philosophical standpoint that has recently prevailed in Germany. In this view, the finite only *ought* to be sublated; and the infinite ought not to be merely something negative but something positive as well. This "*ought*" always implies impotence: the fact that something is recognised as justified, and yet can never make itself prevail. With regard to the ethical domain, the Kantian and the Fichtean philosophies got stuck at this standpoint of the "*ought*." Perpetual approximation to the law of reason is the utmost that can be attained on this path; and even the immortality of the soul has been based on this postulate.

## § 95

(γ) What is indeed given is that something becomes another, and the other becomes another quite generally. In its relationship to an other, something is already an other itself vis-à-vis the latter; and therefore, since what it



passes into is entirely the same as what passes into it—neither having any further determination than this identical one of being an *other*—in its passing into another, something only comes together *with itself*; and this relation to itself in the passing and in the other is *genuine Infinity*.<sup>21</sup> Or, if we look at it negatively: what is changed is the *other*, it becomes the *other* of the *other*. In this way being is reestablished, but as negation of the negation. It is now *being-for-itself*.

Dualism, which makes the opposition of finite and infinite insuperable, fails to make the simple observation that in this way the infinite itself is also just *one of the two*, [and] that it is therefore reduced to one *particular*, in addition to which the finite is the other one. Such an infinite, which is just one particular, *beside* the finite, so that it has precisely its restriction, its limit, in the latter, is *not* what it ought to be. It is not the Infinite, but is only *finite*. In this relationship, where one is situated *here*, and the other over *there*, the finite *in this world* and the infinite *in the other world*, an *equal dignity* of subsistence and independence is attributed to the finite and to the infinite; the being of the finite is made into an absolute being; in this Dualism it stands solidly on its own feet. If it were touched by the infinite, so to speak, it would be annihilated; but it is supposed to be not capable of being touched by the infinite; there is supposed to be an abyss, an impassable gulf, between the two; the infinite has to *remain* absolutely on the other side and the finite on this side. This assertion of the solid persistence of the finite vis-à-vis the infinite supposes itself to be beyond all metaphysics, but it stands simply and solely on the ground of the most vulgar metaphysics of the understanding. What happens at this point is just what the infinite progress expresses; it is first admitted that the finite *is not in and for itself*, that it has *no* title to independent actuality, or to *absolute* being, but that it is only something that passes; then in the *next* moment, this is forgotten, and the finite is represented as merely facing the infinite, radically separate from it and rescued from annihilation, [i.e., represented] as independent, and persisting on its own.—Although thinking means in this way to elevate itself to the Infinite, what happens to it is just the opposite—it arrives at an infinite which is only a finite, and the finite which it had left behind is, on the contrary, just what it always maintains and makes into an absolute.

After the above consideration of the nullity of the antithesis set up by the understanding between the finite and the infinite (with which it would be useful to compare Plato's *Philebus* [23–38]), one

can easily fall back upon the expression that the finite and the infinite are therefore *One*, that the True, or the genuine Infinity, is determined and expressed as the *unity* of the infinite and the finite. And this expression does indeed contain something correct, but it is equally misleading and false, just as we said earlier in the case of the *unity* of being and nothing. It leads, moreover, to the justified complaint about the Infinite having been made finite, about a finite infinite. For in the above expression ("The Infinite is the *unity* of the infinite and the finite"), the finite appears to be left as it was; it is not explicitly expressed as *sublated*.—Or, if we were to reflect upon this fact that the finite, when posited as one with the infinite, could surely not remain what it was outside of this unity, and would at the every least be somewhat affected in its determination (just as an alkali when combined with an acid loses some of its properties), then the same would happen to the infinite, which as the negative would, for its part, also be blunted upon the other. And this is, indeed, what does happen to the abstract, one-sided infinite of the understanding. But the genuine Infinite does not merely behave like the one-sided acid; on the contrary it preserves itself; the negation of the negation is not a neutralisation; the Infinite is the affirmative, and it is only the finite which is sublated.

In being-for-itself the determination of *ideality* has entered. *Being-there*, taken at first only according to its being or its affirmation, has *reality* (§ 91); and hence finitude, too, is under the determination of reality at first. But the truth of the finite is rather its *ideality*. In the same way the infinite of the understanding, which is put *beside* the finite, is itself also only one of two finites, something-untrue, something-ideal. This ideality of the finite is the most important proposition of philosophy, and for that reason every genuine philosophy is *Idealism*.<sup>22</sup> Everything depends on not mistaking for the Infinite that which is at once reduced in its determination to what is particular and finite.—That is why we have here drawn attention to this distinction at some length; the basic concept of philosophy, the genuine Infinite, depends on it. This distinction is established by the reflections contained in the paragraph. They may seem to be unimportant, because they are quite simple, but they are irrefutable.

## C. BEING-FOR-ITSELF

## § 96

(α) As relation to itself, being-for-itself is *immediacy*, and as relation of the negative to itself it is what-is-for-itself, the *One*—that which lacks inward distinction, thereby *excluding* the *Other* from itself.

*Addition.* Being-for-itself is quality completed, and as such it contains being and being-there within itself as its ideal moments. As *being*, being-for-itself is simple self-relation, and as *being-there* it is determined; but this determinacy is no longer the finite determinacy of the something in its distinction from the other, but the infinite determinacy that contains distinction within it as sublated.

The most familiar example of being-for-itself is the “I.” We know ourselves to be beings who are there, first of all distinct from other such beings, and related to them. But secondly, we also know that this expanse of being-there is, so to speak, focused into the simple form of being-for-itself. When we say “I,” that is the expression of the infinite self-relation that is at the same time negative. It may be said that man distinguishes himself from the animals, and so from nature generally, because he knows himself as “I”; what this says, at the same time, is that natural things never attain to free being-for-oneself, but, being restricted to being-there, are always just being-for-another.

But again, being-for-itself has to be interpreted generally as *ideality*,<sup>23</sup> just as, in contrast, being-there was earlier designated as *reality*. *Reality* and *ideality* are frequently considered as a pair of determinations that confront one another with equal independence, and therefore people say that apart from reality, there is “also” an ideality. But ideality is not something that is given outside of and apart from reality. On the contrary, the concept of ideality expressly consists in its being the *truth* of reality, or in other words, reality posited as what it is in-itself proves itself to be ideality. So we must not believe that we have given to ideality all the honour that is due to it, if we simply allow that reality is not all, but that we have to recognise an ideality outside it as well. An ideality of this kind, set beside or even above reality, would in fact be only an empty name. Ideality has a content only because it is the ideality of something; and this “something” is not merely an indeterminate this or that—on the contrary, it is being-there characterised as “reality”—to which, when it is maintained on its own, no truth pertains.

The distinction between nature and spirit has been interpreted quite correctly as meaning that we must trace nature back to “reality” as its basic determination, and spirit to “ideality.” But nature is not just something fixed and complete on its own account, which could therefore subsist even without spirit; rather, it is only in spirit that nature attains to its goal and its truth. Similarly, spirit, for its part, is not just an abstract world beyond nature; on the contrary, it only genuinely *is*, and proves to be spirit, insofar as it contains nature sublated within itself.

At this point we should remember the double meaning of the German expression "*aufheben*". On the one hand, we understand it to mean "clear away" or "cancel", and in that sense we say that a law or regulation is cancelled (*aufgehoben*). But the word also means "to preserve", and we say in this sense that something is well taken care of (*wohl aufgehoben*). This ambiguity in linguistic usage, through which the same word has a negative and a positive meaning, cannot be regarded as an accident nor yet as a reason to reproach language as if it were a source of confusion. We ought rather to recognise here the speculative spirit of our language, which transcends the "either-or" of mere understanding.

### § 97

(β) The relation of the negative to itself is *negative* relation, and therefore distinguishing of the One from itself, the *repulsion* of the One, i.e., the positing of *many Ones*. In keeping with the *immediacy* of what-is-for-itself, these many [simply] *are*,<sup>a</sup> and as a result the repulsion of the ones that [simply] *are* becomes their repulsion *against each other* as given, or their reciprocal *exclusion*.

*Addition.* When we speak of the One, the *many*<sup>b</sup> usually come to mind at the same time. So the question arises here as to where the many come from. Within representational thinking there is no answer to this question, because the many is there regarded as immediately present, and the One counts only as one among the many.<sup>c</sup> But in accordance with its concept, the One forms the presupposition of the many, and it lies in the thought of the One to posit itself as what is many. In other words, the One which is for-itself is under that aspect not something that lacks relation, like being; instead it is relation, just as being-there is. But now it is not related as something to something else; being the unity of the something and the other, it is relation to itself instead, and, of course, this relation is a negative one. In consequence, the One proves to be what is strictly incompatible with itself, it expels itself out of itself, and what it posits itself as is what is *many*.<sup>d</sup> We can designate this side of the process of being-for-itself by the figurative expression "repulsion". The term "repulsion" is primarily used with reference to matter; and what is understood by it is precisely that matter, as a many,<sup>e</sup> behaves, in each of these many ones, as exclusive of all the others. Besides, we must not interpret this process of repulsion to mean that One<sup>f</sup> is *what repels* while the many<sup>g</sup> are *what is repelled*; instead, as we said earlier, it is the One that is just what excludes itself from itself and posits

- a. *sind diese Viele Seiende*
- b. *die Vielen*
- c. *das Viele*
- d. *das Viele*
- e. *ein Vieles*
- f. *Eins*
- g. *die Vielen*

itself as what is many;<sup>a</sup> each of the many, however, is itself One, and because it behaves as such, this all-round repulsion turns over forthwith into its opposite—*attraction*.

## § 98

But the *many* are each one what the other is, each of them is one or also one of the many; they are therefore one and the same. Or, when the repulsion is considered in itself then, as the negative *behaviour* of the many ones against each other, it is just as essentially their *relation* to each other; and since those to which the One relates itself in its repelling are ones, in relating to them it relates itself to itself. Thus, repulsion is just as essentially *attraction*; and the excluding One or being-for-itself sublates itself. Qualitative determinacy, which in the One has reached its determinateness-in-and-for-itself, has thus passed over into determinacy as *sublated*, i.e., into being as *quantity*.

The *atomistic* philosophy is the standpoint from which the Absolute determines itself as being-for-itself, as One, and as many Ones. The repulsion which shows itself in the concept of the One was assumed to be its fundamental force; it is not attraction, however, but *chance*, i.e., what is without thought, that is supposed to bring them together. Since the One is fixed as One, its coming together with others does, indeed, have to be considered as something quite external.—The *void*, which is assumed to be the other principle [added] to the atoms, is repulsion itself, represented as the nothingness *that is* between the atoms.<sup>24</sup> Modern Atomism—and physics still maintains this principle—has abandoned the atoms, in that it just holds onto small parts or molecules; by doing that it has come closer to sensible representation, but has abandoned the determination by thought.—And since a force of attraction is put beside the force of repulsion, the antithesis has indeed been made *complete*, and the discovery of this so-called force of nature has occasioned much pride. But the relation of both forces with one another, which constitutes what is concrete and genuine in them, needs to be rescued from the muddy confusion in which it is left, even in Kant's *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*.<sup>25</sup>—In modern times, the atomistic view has become even more important in the *political* [realm] than in the physical [one]. According to this view, the will of the *single* [individuals] as such is

a. *das Viele*

the principle of the State; what produces the attraction is the particularity<sup>a</sup> of needs [and] inclinations; and the universal, the State itself, is the external relationship of a contract.

*Addition 1.* The philosophy of Atomism forms an essential stage in the historical development of the Idea, and the overall principle of this philosophy is being-for-itself in the shape of what is many.<sup>b</sup> Since Atomism is still held in high esteem nowadays among those natural scientists who do not want anything to do with metaphysics, it should be remembered in this connection that we do not escape metaphysics (or, more precisely, the tracing back of nature to thoughts) by throwing ourselves into the arms of Atomism, because, of course, the atom is itself a thought, and so the interpretation of matter as consisting of atoms is a metaphysical one.

It is true that Newton expressly warned physics to beware of metaphysics;<sup>26</sup> but, to his honour, let it be said that he did not conduct himself in accordance with this warning at all. Only the animals are true blue physicists by this standard, since they do not think; whereas humans, in contrast, are thinking beings, and born metaphysicians. All that matters here is whether the metaphysics that is employed is of the right kind; and specifically whether, instead of the concrete logical Idea, we hold on to one-sided thought-determinations fixed by the understanding, so that they form the basis both of our theoretical and of our practical action. This is the reproach that strikes down the philosophy of Atomism.

Like many thinkers nowadays, the ancient atomists regarded everything as a many; and it was supposed to be chance that brings the atoms together, as they float about in the void. But the relation of the many to one another is not a merely accidental one at all; instead their relation is grounded in the many themselves (as we said before). It is Kant who deserves the credit for having perfected the theory<sup>c</sup> of matter by considering it as the unity of repulsion and attraction. This involves the correct insight that attraction should certainly be recognised as the other of the two moments in the concept of being-for-itself, and hence attraction belongs to matter just as essentially as repulsion. But Kant's so-called dynamic construction of matter suffers from the defect that repulsion and attraction are postulated as present without further ado, rather than being deduced. The "how" and the "why" of this merely asserted unity would have followed logically from a proper deduction. Besides, Kant expressly insisted that we must not regard matter as present on its own account, and only fitted out afterwards ("on the side" as it were) with the two forces of repulsion and attraction here referred to; on the contrary, matter consists in nothing else but their unity.

German physicists were satisfied with this pure dynamics for a time, but in more recent times the majority of them have found that it suited them better to return once more to the standpoint of Atomism; and, in spite of the warning of their colleague, the late lamented Kästner,<sup>27</sup> they regard matter as then consisting of infinitely small particles, called atoms. They suppose these atoms to be set in

a. *die Partikularität*

b. *des Vielen*

c. *Auffassung*

relation with each other through the play of the forces (attractive, repulsive, or whatever) that attach to them. This is a “metaphysics,” too; and there is certainly a sufficient ground to beware of it, because there is so little thought in it.

*Addition 2.* The passage from quality to quantity indicated in the preceding paragraph is not found in our ordinary consciousness. In the ordinary way, quality and quantity count as a pair of determinations standing independently side by side; and we say, therefore, that things are not only qualitatively, but “also” quantitatively, determined. We make no further inquiry as to where these determinations come from, or what relationship they have to one another. We have seen, however, that quantity is nothing but sublated quality, and it is through the dialectic of quality considered here that this sublation comes about.

Initially we had *being*, and its truth turned out to be becoming; this formed the passage to being-there, whose truth we saw to be alteration. But alteration showed itself in its result to be being-for-itself, that is exempt from relation to another and passage into another. And finally, being-for-itself (in the two sides of its process, repulsion and attraction) has proved itself to be the sublating of itself, and hence of quality altogether, in the totality of its moments. This sublated quality, however, is neither an abstract nothing nor the similarly abstract being (lacking all determination), but only a being that is indifferent with regard to determinacy; and this is the shape of being that occurs, even in our ordinary representation, as *quantity*. Accordingly, we consider things first from the point of view of their quality—and this means for us the determinacy that is identical with their being. When we move on to the consideration of quantity, this gives us at once the representation of an indifferent, external determinacy, such that a thing still remains what it is, even when its quantity alters and it becomes greater or smaller.

## B Quantity

### A. PURE QUANTITY

#### § 99

*Quantity* is pure being in which determinacy is no longer posited as one with being itself, but as *sublated* or *indifferent*.

(1) *Magnitude* is not an apt expression for quantity insofar as it especially designates *determinate* quantity. (2) In mathematics magnitude is usually defined as what can be *increased* or *decreased*. This definition is faulty, since it still contains what is to be defined; but it does at least imply that the determination of magnitude is such

that it is posited as *alterable* and *indifferent*, so that, notwithstanding a change of this determination (whether it be an extensive or an intensive increase), the thing in question,<sup>a</sup> for instance a house, or red, would not cease to be a house, or red. (3) "The Absolute is pure quantity"—this standpoint coincides in general with the attribution of the determination of *matter*<sup>b</sup> to the Absolute, [a matter] in which, it is true, form would be present, but only as an indifferent determination. Quantity also constitutes the fundamental determination of the Absolute, if it is so grasped that, being what is absolutely-undifferentiated, distinctions in it are only quantitative.—Pure space, time, etc., may also be taken as examples of quantity, insofar as the real is supposed to be grasped as an *indifferent* filling for space or time.

*Addition.* The usual definition of magnitude in mathematics, as "what can be increased or decreased", seems at first sight to be more illuminating and more plausible than the conceptual determination contained in the present paragraph. When we look at it more closely, however, it contains, in the form of presupposition and representation, the same [content] that has emerged as the concept of quantity simply by pursuing the path of logical development. In other words, when it is said of magnitude that its concept consists in the possibility of being increased or decreased, what is meant by that is just that magnitude (or, more correctly, quantity)—in distinction from quality—is a determination with respect to whose alteration this or that thing<sup>c</sup> is indifferent. As for the defect in the usual definition of quantity which was the subject of a reproach made above, this, when examined more closely, turns out to consist in the fact that to increase and to decrease means precisely to determine the magnitude differently. Consequently, quantity would basically be just something alterable as such. But quality is alterable, too, and the distinction between quantity and quality that was previously mentioned is here expressed by the reference to "increasing or decreasing." This implies that, in whatever direction the determination of magnitude is changed, the thing in question remains what it is.

We should, moreover, take note here that philosophy has absolutely nothing at all to do with merely correct definitions and even less with merely plausible ones, i.e., definitions whose correctness is immediately evident to the consciousness that forms representations; it is concerned, instead, with definitions that have been *validated*, i.e., definitions whose content is not accepted merely as something that we come across, but is recognised as grounded in free thinking, and hence at the same time as grounded within itself. This applies to the present case. For, however correct and immediately evident the usual definition of quantity in mathematics may be, the requirement that we should know how far this particular thought is

a. *die Sache*

b. *Materie*

c. *Sache*



grounded in universal thinking, and is therefore necessary, still remains quite unsatisfied.

There is another relevant consideration here too. If quantity is adopted directly from our representational consciousness without being mediated by [pure] thinking, it can happen very easily that its range of validity is exaggerated, and indeed that quantity is elevated to the rank of an absolute category. This is what does happen in fact when only those sciences whose object can be submitted to a mathematical calculus are recognised as *exact* sciences. Here the bad metaphysics mentioned above (§ 98 Addition) appears once more—the metaphysics that substitutes one-sided and abstract determinations of the understanding for the concrete Idea. There would indeed be something badly amiss with our cognition if we had to renounce the possibility of exact cognition of objects such as freedom, law, ethical life, and even God himself, because they cannot be measured and computed or expressed in a mathematical formula.

It is immediately obvious what pernicious practical consequences would follow if we had in general to be satisfied with a quite indeterminate representation of these objects and to abandon them, as far as their more precise or particular character is concerned, to the pleasure of every single [person] to make of them what he will. For that matter, when we look closely at the exclusively mathematical standpoint that is here referred to (according to which quantity, which is a definite stage of the logical Idea, is identified with the Idea itself) we see that it is none other than the standpoint of *Materialism*. This can be confirmed completely in the history of the scientific consciousness, especially in France since the middle of the last century. “Matter” is an abstraction precisely because form is present in it, to be sure, but only as an indifferent and external determination.

Besides, it would be a serious mistake to interpret the above discussion as disparaging the dignity of mathematics, or as supplying a clear conscience for inertia and superficiality, because it designates the quantitative determination as a merely external and indifferent one. We are not maintaining that quantitative determinations can be left to take care of themselves, or even that they do not have to be treated as precisely as possible. Quantity is, in any case, a stage of the Idea, and it must be accorded its due as such, first as a logical category, and then in the world of objects, both natural and spiritual.

But here again a distinction shows up at once, namely, that determinations of magnitude do not have the same importance in the objects of the natural world as in those of the spiritual world. In nature, specifically, where the Idea has the form both of otherness and of self-externality, quantity also has—precisely for this reason—greater importance than in the world of the spirit, which is a world of free inwardness. It is true that we consider spiritual content, too, from the point of view of quantity. But it is evident at once that, when we consider God as the Trinity, the number “three” has a much more subordinate significance here than when we are considering, for example, the three dimensions of space or even the three sides of a triangle, for which the basic determination is precisely to be just a surface limited by three lines.

Even within nature this same distinction between a greater and a lesser importance of quantitative determination has its place; for it is certainly the case that quantity plays what we may call a more important role in inorganic nature than in

organic. And if we make a further distinction, within inorganic nature, between the mechanical domain, and the physical and chemical domain in the narrower sense, then again the same distinction shows up, since mechanics is generally recognised as the scientific discipline that can least do without the help of mathematics. For in mechanics, of course, hardly any step can be taken without it, and mechanics is for that reason regarded, next to mathematics, as the exact science *par excellence*. At this point, we should recall our earlier comment about the coincidence of the exclusively mathematical standpoint with materialism.

Moreover, in the light of all that we have said here, we must designate the highly popular effort to find all distinction and all determinacy in the world of objects merely in what is quantitative, as one of the most obstructive prejudices that stand in the way of any exact and thorough cognition. For example, spirit is in any case more than nature, and animals are more than plants; but we know very little about these things and the distinction between them, if we simply stick to a "more or less" of this kind, and do not advance to some grasp of specific determinacy, which is here in the first place qualitative.

### § 100

To begin with, in its immediate relation to itself, or in the determination of self-equivalence posited by attraction, quantity is *continuous* magnitude; in the other determination which it contains—that of the *One*—it is *discrete* magnitude. But continuous quantity is also discrete, for it is only continuity *of the many*; and discrete quantity is also continuous, for its continuity is the *One* as that in which the many ones are *the same, unity*.<sup>a</sup>

(1) Hence, continuous and discrete magnitude should not be looked upon as *species*, as if the determination of the one did not belong to the other, but they distinguish themselves only in this, that *the same whole* is posited first under one of its determinations, and then under the other. (2) The antinomy of space, of time, or of matter (with regard to its divisibility ad infinitum or, conversely, with regard to its being composed of indivisibles) is nothing but the affirmation of quantity, first as continuous, then as discrete. If space, time, etc., are posited only with the determination of continuous quantity, then they are *divisible* ad infinitum; but under the determination of discrete magnitude they are in-themselves *divided* and consist of indivisible ones; each affirmation is as one-sided as the other.

*Addition.* As the proximate result of being-for-itself, quantity contains within itself as ideal elements both sides of its process (repulsion and attraction). Hence it is both continuous and discrete. Each of these two moments contains the other

a. die Einheit—See also p. xxxix above.

within itself, so that there *is* no such thing as a merely continuous or a merely discrete magnitude. If we happen to speak of them as two particular and contrasting species of magnitude, that is just the result of our abstractive reflection. In the consideration of determinate magnitudes, this reflection prescind now from the one and then from the other of the two moments that are contained in the concept of quantity in inseparable unity. So we say, for instance, that the space that this room takes up is a continuous magnitude, whilst the hundred people who are gathered in it form a discrete magnitude. But the space is both continuous and discrete at once, so that we also speak of spatial points and subdivide every space—e.g., a certain length into so and so many feet, inches, etc., which can only occur on the presupposition that space is *in-itself* discrete too. On the other hand, the discrete magnitude consisting of a hundred people is equally and at the same time continuous; and what is common to them, the species mankind, which pervades all of the single instances and unites them with each other, is that wherein the continuity of this magnitude is grounded.

## B. QUANTUM

### § 101

Quantity, *posited* essentially with the excluding determinacy that it contains, is *quantum* or limited quantity.

*Addition.* Quantum is the way that quantity *is there*, whereas pure quantity corresponds to *being*, and degree (which will come next) corresponds to *being-for-itself*. —As for the details of the advance from pure quantity to quantum, this progress is grounded in the fact that, whereas distinction is initially present in pure quantity only implicitly (as the distinction between continuity and discreteness), in quantum, on the other hand, distinction is posited. It is, indeed, posited in such a way that from now on quantity appears always as distinguished or limited. But as a result quantum also breaks up at the same time into an indeterminate multitude of quanta or determinate magnitudes. Each of these determinate magnitudes, as distinct from the others, forms a unit, just as, on the other hand, considered all by itself, it is a many. And in this way quantum is determined as *number*.

### § 102

Quantum has its development and perfect determinacy in *number*, which contains the One within itself as its element. As its qualitative moments, *number* contains according to its moment of discreteness, *annumeration*,<sup>a</sup> and according to its moment of continuity, *unit*.

a. Anzahl

In arithmetic the *kinds of calculation* are usually presented as contingent ways of treating numbers. If a necessity and hence a [matter for] understanding is to be found in them, then it has to lie in a principle; and this [in turn] can only be found in the determinations that are contained within the concept of number itself. This principle must be briefly expounded at this point.—The determinations of the concept of number are *annumeration* and *unit*; and number itself is the unity of the two. But unity, when applied to empirical numbers, is only their *equality*; hence, the principle of the kinds of calculation has to be the positing of numbers in the relationship of unit and annumeration and the production of the equality of these determinations.

Since the ones, or the numbers, are themselves indifferent toward each other, the unity into which they are transposed appears to be an external combination. To calculate, therefore, is quite generally to *count*; the distinction between the kinds of calculation lies only in the qualitative character of the numbers which are counted together, and the principle of that character<sup>a</sup> is the determination of unit and annumeration.

*Numbering* comes first: the making of numbers *generally*, which is the combining of as many *ones* as we want.—But it is the counting together of what are no longer merely *ones* but already numbers that is a *kind of calculation*.

*Immediately and to begin with*, numbers are just numbers in general without any [further] determination, and hence they are generally unequal too; the combination or counting of such numbers is *addition*.

The *next* determination is that the numbers [to be calculated] are *equal* throughout, so that they form One *unit*, and there is an *annumeration* of them; the counting of these numbers is *multiplication*—in this case it does not matter<sup>b</sup> how the determinations of annumeration and unit are distributed between the two numbers that are the factors (which of them is taken as the annumerator<sup>28</sup> and which as the unit).

The *third* and last determinacy is the *equality* of the *annumerator* and the *unit*. The counting together of numbers thus determined is the *raising of the power*—and first of all *squaring*.—Raising the power further is the continued multiplication of the number with itself, a continuation which is [a] formal continuation that leads

a. *Beschaffenheit*

b. *est ist gleichgültig*

once more to the indefinite annumeration.—Since the complete equality of the only distinction that is available—that of annumeration and of unit—is reached in this third determination, there cannot be more than these three kinds of calculation.—To [each form of] counting together there corresponds the dissolution of the numbers according to the same determinations. There are therefore three *negative* kinds of calculation beside the three that have been indicated (which are on that account called the *positive* ones).

*Addition.* Since number is just quantum in its completed determinacy, we can employ it not only for the determination of so-called discrete magnitudes but equally for so-called continuous ones as well. And hence, number must also be utilised in geometry, wherever there is a question of specifying determinate figurations of space and their relationships.

### C. DEGREE

#### § 103

The *limit* is identical with the whole of the quantum itself; as multiple *within itself* it is *extensive* magnitude, but as determinacy that is *simple* within itself, it is *intensive* magnitude or *degree*.

Hence, the distinction between continuous and discrete magnitude and extensive and intensive magnitude consists in this: that the former concerns *quantity in general*, whereas the latter concerns the *limit* or determinacy of quantity as such.—Like continuous and discrete magnitude, extensive and intensive magnitude are not two species (each of which would contain a determinacy that would be lacking in the other); whatever has extensive magnitude has intensive magnitude as well, and vice versa.

*Addition.* *Intensive magnitude* or *degree* is conceptually diverse from *extensive magnitude* or *quantum*; we must therefore label as a mistake the frequent failure to recognise this distinction, and to identify the two forms of magnitude without further ado. This is notably the case in physics, where a distinction in specific gravity, for instance, is explained by saying that a body whose specific gravity is twice that of another contains within the same space twice as many material parts (atoms) as the other. It would be the same with heat and light, if the various

degrees of temperature and brightness were to be explained in terms of a greater or lesser number of heat or light particles (or molecules). When physicists who employ such explanations are reproached with the untenability of this procedure they usually try, of course, to wriggle out of it by saying that they do not at all mean to decide about the (admittedly unknowable) character of these phenomena in-themselves, and that they use these expressions only because they are more *convenient*.

First then, this greater convenience is supposed to be connected with the easier application of the methods of calculation; but it is hard to see why intensive magnitudes, which do, of course, equally have their determinate expression in number, should not be just as convenient for calculation as extensive magnitudes. Surely, it would be even more convenient to give up calculation altogether, and thinking as well. Another comment that should be made against this excuse is that when physicists engage in explanations of this sort, they are, in any case, overstepping the domain of perception and experience; they are taking refuge in the domain of metaphysics and speculation (which they declare on other occasions to be idle, and even pernicious). We do find by experience, to be sure, that if one of two purses filled with dollars is twice as heavy as the other, it is because the first purse contains two hundred dollars and the second only one hundred. We can see these pieces of money, and can always perceive them with our senses; but, atoms, molecules, and the like lie outside the domain of sense-perception, and it is the task of thinking to decide about their admissibility and significance.

As we said earlier (in the Addition to § 98), it is the abstract understanding that fixes the moment of the many contained in the concept of being-for-itself in the shape of atoms, and sticks to this moment as to something ultimate; and it is the same abstract understanding which, in the present case, contradicts both unprejudiced perception and genuinely concrete thinking, by considering extensive magnitude to be the one and only form of quantity. So, where intensive magnitudes are found, it fails to recognise them in their own determinacy, and tries to reduce them to extensive magnitudes by force instead, on the basis of an hypothesis which is in itself untenable.

Among the reproaches that have been levelled against recent philosophy, the one that is heard very frequently is the claim that it reduces everything to identity; and hence it has even been given the nickname "Philosophy of Identity".<sup>29</sup> But the argumentation that we have just presented shows that it is precisely philosophy that insists on distinguishing between what is, both conceptually and experimentally, diverse; on the contrary, it is the professed empiricists who elevate abstract identity to the highest principle of cognition, and whose philosophy should therefore more properly be called the "Philosophy of Identity".

For the rest, it is quite correct that there are no merely intensive and merely extensive magnitudes, any more than there are merely continuous and merely discrete ones; and hence, these two determinations of quantity are not independent species that confront one another. Any intensive magnitude is also extensive, and conversely. So, a certain degree of temperature, for instance, is an intensive magnitude, to which, as such, there corresponds a wholly simple sensation; and if we

then go to the thermometer we find that a certain expansion of the column of mercury corresponds to this degree of temperature, and this extensive magnitude changes together with the temperature taken as an intensive magnitude. It is the same in the domain of spirit, too; a more intense character exerts influence over a wider range than a less intense one.

### § 104

In degree, the *concept* of quantum is *posited*. Degree is magnitude as indifferent *for-itself* and simple, but in such a way that the magnitude has the determinacy in virtue of which it is quantum, strictly *outside of it* in other magnitudes. In this contradiction—that although it is *for-itself*, the indifferent limit is absolute *externality*—the *infinite* quantitative *progress* is posited. This is an *immediacy* that immediately turns over into its opposite, into its *being mediated* (a going beyond the just posited quantum), and vice versa.

*Number* is thought, but it is thought as a being that is completely external to itself. Number does not belong to intuition, because it is thought, but it is thought that has the externality of intuition as its determination.—Hence, it is not only the case that quantum *can* be increased or decreased ad infinitum; by its very concept, quantum is just this expulsion beyond itself. Similarly the infinite quantitative progress is that unthinking repetition of that one and the same contradiction, which is quantum in general and (when posited in its determinacy) degree. It is superfluous to express this contradiction in the form of an infinite progress; on this topic Zeno rightly says (in Aristotle's report)<sup>30</sup> that it is the same to say something *once* and to say it *over and over again*.

*Addition 1.* According to the usual definition of it in mathematics (discussed in § 99), magnitude is what can be increased or decreased; and there is nothing against the correctness of the intuition that underlies this. But the prior question still remains of how we come to assume this *capacity for increase or decrease*. A simple appeal to experience does not suffice to answer this question, because, quite apart from the fact that in experience we have only the representation of magnitude and not the thought of it, this capacity would prove to be just a possibility (of increasing and decreasing), and we should lack all insight into the necessity of this state of affairs. By contrast, the path of our logical development has not only brought us to quantity as a stage of self-determining thinking, but has shown us also that it lies strictly in the *concept* of quantity to project beyond itself, so that what we have to do with here is not merely possible but necessary also.

*Addition 2.* It is mainly the quantitative infinite progression that the reflective understanding usually relies upon when it has to deal with infinity in general. But,

to begin with, what we said earlier about the qualitatively infinite progress holds good for the quantitative form of the infinite progress too, namely, that it is the expression not of true Infinity but only of the spurious infinity that never gets beyond what merely *ought* to be the case, so that in fact it gets stuck in the finite. As for the specifically quantitative form of this finite progression, which Spinoza rightly calls a merely imaginary infinity (*infinitum imaginationis*),<sup>31</sup> the poets, too, (Haller and Klopstock are good examples) have quite often availed themselves of this representation in order to depict not only the infinity of nature but also that of God himself. There is a famous description of the infinity of God in Haller, for example:

I heap up monstrous numbers,  
Mountains of millions,  
Time I pile on time  
And world on top of world;  
And when from the awful height  
I cast a dizzy look on Thee:  
Then all the might of number,  
Numbered itself a thousand times,  
Is not yet a simple part of Thee.<sup>32</sup>

Here we have at once the perpetual projection of quantity—or more precisely, number—beyond itself, which Kant describes as “terrible,” though the only really terrible thing about it would be the tedium of continually positing a limit which is again done away with, so that one stays forever at the same spot. But then, the same poet ends his description of that spurious infinity with the very relevant conclusion:

These I remove, and thou liest all before me.

This expresses precisely the fact that the genuine Infinite is not to be considered merely as what is beyond the finite, and that we must renounce that *progressus in infinitum* in order to reach the consciousness of the genuine Infinite.

*Addition 3.* It is well known that Pythagoras<sup>33</sup> philosophised with numbers, and conceived number to be the basic determination of things. To the ordinary mind this interpretation must at first sight appear to be thoroughly paradoxical, and indeed quite mad. So the question arises, what we are to make of it. To answer this question we must first remember that the task of philosophy consists just in tracing things back to thoughts, and to determinate thoughts at that. Now, number is certainly a thought, and indeed it is the thought which stands closest to the sensible world; more precisely, it expresses the thought of the sense-world itself, because we understand generally by that what is mutually external and what is many.<sup>a</sup> So we can recognise in the attempt to interpret the universe as Number the first step toward metaphysics.

a. *das Viele*



It is also well known that in the history of philosophy Pythagoras stands between the Ionian philosophers and the Eleatics. As Aristotle already remarked, the Ionians went no further than to regard the essence of things as something material (as a *hule*); the Eleatics, however, and in particular Parmenides, advanced to pure thinking in the form of being. Thus, the principle of the Pythagorean philosophy forms as it were the bridge between the sensible and the supersensible. This tells us how we should assess the view of those who hold that Pythagoras obviously went too *far* in interpreting the essence of things as consisting in pure numbers, and who comment that, whilst there is nothing objectionable in the view that things are certainly countable, still, things are *more* than mere numbers. As for the “more” that is here ascribed to things, we must, of course, willingly concede that things are more than mere numbers; but the real question concerns how this “more” is to be understood. Consistently with its own standpoint, the ordinary sensible consciousness will not hesitate to answer the question by referring to what is sensibly perceptible; hence, it will remark that things are not merely countable but also visible, odorous, palpable, etc.

So, putting this in our modern way, the reproach levelled against the Pythagorean philosophy reduces to the claim that it is too idealistic. In fact, however, the situation is quite the opposite, as can already be inferred from what we have just said about the historical position of the Pythagorean philosophy. In other words, the concession that things are “more” than mere numbers must be understood as meaning that the mere thought of *number* does not suffice to express the determinate essence or concept of things. So, instead of maintaining that Pythagoras went too *far* with his philosophy of numbers, we ought to say, on the contrary, that he did not go *far enough*; and, of course, it was the Eleatics who already took the next step toward pure thinking.

Moreover, even if there are no things whose determinacy rests essentially on definite numbers and relationships of numbers, still there are states of things, and all sorts of natural phenomena that rest on them. This is especially the case with the differences of tone and their harmonic concord; everyone knows the story that it was the perception of this phenomenon that prompted Pythagoras to apprehend the essence of things as numbers. Now it is certainly an important scientific concern to trace back the phenomena that rest on determinate numbers to the right ratios; but, by the same token, it is quite inadmissible to regard the determinacy of thought generally as a merely numerical one.

We may, of course, be prompted at first to connect the most general determinations of thought with the first numbers, and to say therefore that *one* is what is simple and immediate, *two* is distinction and mediation, and *three* the unity of both. But these combinations are completely external, and there is nothing in these numbers as such to make them the expression of precisely these determinate thoughts. Besides, the further we advance in applying this method, the more obvious becomes the sheer arbitrariness of combining determinate numbers with determinate thoughts. For instance, [the number] 4 can be considered the unity of 1

and 3, and of the thoughts connected with them; but 4 is also just as much twice 2, and, similarly, 9 is not only the square of 3, but also the sum of 8 and 1, of 7 and 2, etc. Even today some secret societies place great weight on all manner of numbers and figures; but this can only be regarded a harmless game, on the one hand, and as a sign of ineptitude in thinking, on the other. Of course, it is also claimed that there is a deep meaning concealed in all this, and that one could find a lot to think about here. But what is important in philosophy is not that we *can* think about something, but that we *really* do think, and the genuine element of thought must be sought not in arbitrarily chosen symbols but only in thinking itself.

### § 105

In its determinacy of *being on its own account* quantum is *external* to itself. This self-externality constitutes its *quality*; it is in this very self-externality that it is itself and is related to itself. In this way, the externality, i.e., the quantitative, and the being-for-itself, the qualitative, are united.—Posited *upon itself*<sup>a</sup> in this way, quantum is *quantitative relationship* [or *ratio*], [i.e., the] determinacy that is both an *immediate* quantum (the exponent), and *mediation* (namely the *relation* of any quantum to another)—the two terms of the ratio, which do not count according to their immediate value, since their value is only [determined] in this relation.

*Addition.* The quantitative infinite progress appears at first as a perpetual projection of numbers beyond themselves. However, when we look more closely, it turns out that in this progression quantity returns to itself, for the thought that is contained in it is in any event the determination of number by number, and this gives us *quantitative ratio*. If we speak of the ratio 2:4, for example, then we have two magnitudes whose significance does not lie in their immediate character as such, but only in their reciprocal relation to one another. But this relation (the exponent of the ratio) is itself a magnitude, which is distinguished from the magnitudes that stand in relation to one another by virtue of the fact that altering them changes the ratio, whereas the ratio remains indifferent to the alteration of its two sides and stays the same, just as long as the exponent is not altered. So we can substitute 3:6 for 2:4, without altering the ratio, because the exponent, 2, remains the same in both cases.

a. an ihm selbst

## § 106

The *terms* of the ratio are still immediate quanta, and the qualitative and quantitative determinations are still external to each other. But according to their truth—that, even in its externality, the quantitative itself is relation to itself, or that the being-for-itself and the indifference of the determinacy are united—the ratio is *measure*.

*Addition.* In virtue of the dialectical movement of quantity through its moments which we have considered so far, quantity has turned out to be a return to quality. Initially, we had the concept of quantity as sublated quality, that is, as determinacy which is not identical with being, but, on the contrary, indifferent to it, and only external with regard to it. This is also the concept which (as we said earlier) underlies the usual definition of magnitude in mathematics, as what can be increased or decreased. Now, it may seem at first sight that according to this definition magnitude is simply what is alterable as such—for both increasing and decreasing mean just determining the magnitude differently. But by this definition, magnitude would not be distinct from *being-there* (the second stage of quality) which, according to its concept, is alterable in like manner. So the content of that definition of magnitude would have to be completed by adding that in quantity we have something which is alterable, but which still remains the same in spite of its alteration. As a result, the concept of quantity turns out to contain a contradiction, and it is this contradiction that constitutes the dialectic of quantity. But the result of this dialectic is not a mere return to quality, as if the latter were what is true, and quantity<sup>34</sup> on the contrary what is untrue. Instead, the result is the unity and truth of the two of them: it is qualitative quantity or *measure*.

One more comment in place at this point is that when we are concerned with quantitative determinations in the study of the world of objects, it is in fact always measure that we have in mind as the goal of our endeavours. This is indeed indicated in our language by the fact that we call the ascertaining of quantitative determinations and ratios “measuring”. For instance, we measure the length of various strings that have been made to vibrate, with an eye to the corresponding distinction between the sounds that are brought about by the vibration. Likewise, in chemistry, we calculate the quantity of the substances that have been brought into combination, so as to be cognizant of the measure by which these combinations are conditioned—in other words, to discover the quantities that underlie determinate qualities. And in statistics, too, the numbers with which we are occupied have an interest only on account of the qualitative results which are conditioned by them. By contrast, mere numerical findings as such, apart from the guiding interest which we have discussed here, rightly count as empty curiosities that satisfy neither a theoretical nor a practical concern.

## C Measure

### § 107

Measure is qualitative quantum; at first, as *immediate* [measure], it is a quantum, with which a being-there or a quality is bound up.

*Addition.* As the unity of quality and quantity, measure is thus also completed being. When we speak of being, it appears initially to be what is entirely abstract and lacking all determination; but being is essentially what determines itself, and it reaches its completed determinacy in measure. We can also consider measure as a definition of the Absolute, and it has been said accordingly that God is the measure of all things.<sup>35</sup> That is also why this intuition forms the keynote of many ancient Hebrew psalms,<sup>36</sup> where the glorification of God essentially comes down to saying that it is *he* who has appointed for everything its limit, for the sea and the dry land, the rivers and the mountains, and equally for the various kinds of plants and animals.—In the religious consciousness of the Greeks we find the divinity of measure represented, with special reference to the ethical order, by *Nemesis*. Nemesis involves the general notion that everything human—wealth, honour, power, and similarly joy, sorrow, etc.—has its definite measure, the transgression of which leads to undoing and ruin.

As for the occurrence of measure in the world of ob-jects, we find first that in nature things exist whose essential content is measure. This is especially the case with the solar system, which we have to regard generally as the realm of free measure. As we advance further in the consideration of inorganic nature, measure retreats into the background, so to speak, because the qualitative and quantitative determinations that we have here prove to be largely indifferent to one another. For example, the qualitative character of a rock or a river is not bound up with a determinate magnitude. Still, a closer study shows that even ob-jects like these are not utterly without measure, since chemical investigation reveals that the water in a river, and the single constituents of a rock, are again qualities that are conditioned by quantitative ratios between the substances they contain. But then, measure emerges again in organic nature, falling now more decisively into the domain of immediate intuition. The various kinds of plants and animals have a certain measure, both as a whole and also in their single parts. We should notice here that the more imperfect organic formations, those that stand closer to inorganic nature, are distinguished in part from the higher organisms through the greater indeterminacy of their measure. Thus, we find among fossils, for example, some so-called ammonites, of which we are cognizant only through the microscope, and others which reach the size of a coach wheel. The same indeterminacy of measure is also shown by many plants which stand on a lower stage of organic development. This is the case with ferns, for example.

## § 108

Insofar as in measure quality and quantity are only in *immediate* unity, their distinction shows itself in them in an equally immediate way. Under this aspect the specific quantum is in some cases mere quantum, and what is there<sup>a</sup> is capable of increase and decrease without the sublation of measure, which to that extent is a *rule*; but in other cases the alteration of the quantum is also an alteration of the quality.

*Addition.* The identity of quality and quantity present in measure is only *implicit* at first, and not yet *posited*. This implies that each of the two determinations, whose unity is measure, also claims validity on its own account. In this way, on the one hand, quantitative determinations of what is there can be altered, without its quality being affected thereby, but, on the other, this indifferent increase and decrease also has a limit, the transgression of which alters the quality. Thus, for instance, the temperature of water is, up to a point, indifferent in relation to its liquid state; but there comes a point in the increasing or decreasing of the temperature of liquid water where this state of cohesion changes qualitatively, and the water is transformed into steam, on the one hand, and ice, on the other. When a quantitative alteration takes place it appears, to start with, to be something quite innocent; but something quite different lurks behind it, and this seemingly innocent alteration of the quantitative is like a ruse with which to catch the qualitative.

The antinomy of measure that is involved here was already depicted by the Greeks under many guises. They raised the question, for instance, [of] whether *one* grain of wheat can make a heap of wheat, or whether the plucking of *one* hair from the tail of a horse makes it a bald-tail.<sup>37</sup> Regarding the nature of quantity as an indifferent and external determinacy of being, we are, at first, inclined to answer those questions in the negative. Nevertheless, we must soon concede that this indifferent increasing or decreasing also has a limit, and that a point in the process is finally reached where, through the continued adding of just *one* grain of wheat at a time, a heap of wheat results, and through the continued plucking of just *one* hair at a time we have a bald-tail. It is the same with these examples as with the story of a farmer who, as his ass cheerfully strode along, increased its load *one* ounce at a time, until at last it sank down under the burden that had become unbearable. It would be very wrong to treat considerations of this sort as idle academic twaddle, for in fact we are dealing with thoughts that it is also very important to be familiar with in our practical and especially in our ethical life. With regard to the outlays that we make, for instance, there is initially a certain latitude within which a bit more or a bit less does not matter; but if we exceed, on one side or the other, the measure determined by the individual circumstances of the situation, then the qualitative nature of the measure comes into play (just as it does in the above example of the various temperatures of the water), and what could be considered good management of resources a moment ago now becomes avarice or waste.

a. *das Dasein*

The same applies in the political sphere as well—for, of course, it is the case that the constitution of a State must be regarded both as independent of, and also as dependent upon, the size of its territory, the number of its inhabitants, and other such quantitative determinations. For instance, if we consider a State with a territory of a thousand square miles, and a population of four million inhabitants, we would at first admit without hesitation that a few square miles of territory or a few thousand inhabitants more or less would not have an essential influence on its constitution. In contrast, however, we could not deny either that in the continual increase or decrease of the State a point is finally reached where, simply because of the quantitative change (quite apart from all other circumstances), the qualitative aspects of the constitution cannot remain unaltered. The constitution of a small Swiss canton will not do for a great empire, and the constitution of the Roman republic was equally unsuitable when it was transferred to the small “free cities” of the German empire.

#### § 109

The *measureless* occurs initially when a measure, in virtue of its quantitative nature, goes beyond its qualitative determinacy. But since the new quantitative ratio, which is measureless with regard to the first, is just as qualitative, the measureless is also a measure; both of these transitions, from quality to quantity and vice versa, can once more be represented as *infinite progress*—as the self-sublation and restoration of measure in the measureless.

*Addition.* As we have seen, quantity is not merely *capable* of alteration, i.e., of increase and decrease; rather, it is, generally and as such, the process of going beyond itself. And in measure, quantity does indeed confirm this nature. But now, when the quantity that is present in measure exceeds a certain limit, the corresponding quality is thereby sublated, too. What is negated in this way, however, is not quality in general, but only this determinate quality, whose place is immediately taken again by another one. This process of measure, which proves to be alternately a mere alteration of quantity and an overturning of quantity into quality, can be visualised in the image of a knotted line.<sup>38</sup> We find these knotted lines first in nature, in a variety of forms. We have already given the example of water's qualitatively various states of aggregation, conditioned by increase and decrease [of temperature]. The various stages of oxidation of metals are a similar case. The distinctions of musical notes can also be regarded as an example of the overturning of what is initially a merely quantitative into a qualitative alteration that takes place in the process of measure.

#### § 110

What actually happens here is that the *immediacy*, which still belongs to measure as such, is sublated; quality and quantity themselves are initially

in measure as *immediate*, and measure is only their *relational identity*. But although measure sublates itself in the measureless, it shows itself equally to be only going together *with itself* in the measureless, which is its negation, but is itself a unity of quantity and quality.

### § 111

Instead of the more abstract sides (of being and nothing, of something and an other, etc.) the Infinite, the affirmation as the negation of the negation, now has quality and quantity for its sides. These sides ( $\alpha$ ) *have passed over* into one another: quality into quantity (§ 98) and quantity into quality (§ 105), and they have thus exhibited themselves to be *negations*. ( $\beta$ ) But in their *unity* (in measure) they are at first distinct, and each is only *through the mediation* of the other; and ( $\gamma$ ) after the immediacy of this unity has proven to be self-sublating, this unity is now *posited* as what it is *in-itself*, as simple self-relation that contains within it being in general and its forms as sublated.—Being or immediacy which, through self-negation, is mediation *with itself* and relation to itself, and which is therefore equally mediation that sublates itself into relation to itself or into immediacy—this being or immediacy is *Essence*.

*Addition.* The process of measure is not just the spurious infinity of the infinite progression in the shape of a perpetual overturning of quality into quantity and of quantity into quality; rather, it is, at the same time, the true Infinity which consists in the going together with oneself in one's other. Quality and quantity do initially confront one another in measure like something and other. But quality is indeed *in-itself* quantity, and conversely, quantity is *in-itself* quality, too. Hence, in that the two determinations pass over into one another in the process of measure, each of them only becomes what it already is *in-itself*, and we now obtain the being that is negated in its determinations, in general terms the sublated being that is *Essence*. Essence was already implicit within measure, and its process consists simply in its positing itself as what it is in-itself.

Ordinary consciousness interprets things as [simply] being, and considers them in terms of quality, quantity, and measure. But these immediate determinations then prove not to be fixed, but to pass into something else, and Essence is the result of their dialectic. In Essence no passing-over takes place any more; instead, there is only relation. In Being, the relational form is only [due to] our reflection; in Essence, by contrast, the relation belongs to it as its own determination. When something becomes other (in the sphere of Being) the something has thereby vanished. Not so in Essence: here we do not have a genuine other, but only diversity, relation between the One and *its* other. Thus, in Essence passing-over is at the same time not passing-over. For in the passing of what is diverse into another diversity, the first one does not vanish; instead, both remain within this relation. For instance, if we say "being" and "nothing," then being is by itself and nothing is by itself too. The situation is not at all the same with the "positive" and

the "negative." Certainly, these contain the determination of being and nothing. But the positive makes no sense by itself; rather, it is strictly related to the negative. And the situation is the same with the negative. In the sphere of Being, relatedness is only *implicit*; in Essence, on the contrary, relatedness is posited. This then is in general what distinguishes the form of Being from that of Essence. In Being, everything is immediate; in Essence, by contrast, everything is relational.



# SECOND SUBDIVISION

## OF THE *LOGIC*

### THE DOCTRINE OF ESSENCE

#### § 112

Essence is the Concept as *posited* Concept. In Essence the determinations are only *relational*, not yet as reflected strictly within themselves; that is why the Concept is not yet *for-itself*. Essence—as Being that mediates itself with itself through its own negativity—is relation to itself only by being relation to another; but this other is immediately, not as what *is* but as *something-posited* and *mediated*.—Being has not vanished; but, in the first place, essence as simple relation to itself is being; while on the other hand, being, according to its one-sided determination of being *something-immediate*, is *degraded* to something merely negative, to a *shine* [or *semblance*].<sup>a</sup>—As a result, essence is being as *shining* within itself.

The Absolute is *essence*.—Inasmuch as being is also simple self-relation, this definition is the same as the one that says it is *being*, but at the same time it is a higher definition, because essence is being that has gone *into itself*; i.e., its simple self-relation is this relation, posited as the negation of the negative, or as inward mediation of itself with itself.—But when the Absolute is determined as *essence*, the negativity is often taken only in the sense of an *abstraction* from all determinate predicates. In that case the negative activity, the abstracting, falls outside essence, and consequently essence is taken only as a result, *without this premise that belongs to it*; it is the *caput mortuum*<sup>2</sup> of abstraction. But because this negativity is not external to being, but is its own dialectic, its truth is essence, as being that has gone *into itself* or is *self-contained*; this *reflection*, its shining within itself, is what distinguishes it from immediate being, and it is the proper determination of essence itself.

a. zu einem Scheine<sup>1</sup>

*Addition.* When we speak of "essence", we distinguish it from being, i.e., from what is immediate. In comparison with essence, we regard being as a mere *semblance*. But this semblance is not simply "not"; it is not an utter nothing;<sup>a</sup> rather, it is being as sublated.—The standpoint of essence is in general the standpoint of reflection. The term "reflection" is primarily used of light, when, propagated rectilinearly, it strikes a mirrored surface and is thrown back by it. So we have here something twofold: first, something immediate, something that is, and second, the same as mediated or posited. And this is just the case when we reflect on an object or "think it over" (as we also say very often). For here we are not concerned with the object in its immediate form, but want to know it as mediated. And our usual view of the task or purpose of philosophy is that it consists in the cognition of the essence of things. By this we understand no more than that things are not to be left in their immediate state, but are rather to be exhibited as mediated or grounded by something else. The immediate being of things is here represented as a sort of rind or curtain behind which the essence is concealed.

Now, when we say further that all things have an essence, what we mean is that they are not truly what they immediately show themselves to be. A mere rushing about from one quality to another, and a mere advance from the qualitative to the quantitative and back again, is not the last word; on the contrary, there is something that abides in things, and this is, in the first instance, their essence. As for the further significance and use of the category of essence, we can recall first at this point how the term "Wesen" is employed to designate the past for the German auxiliary verb "sein" [to be]; for we designate the being that is past as "gewesen". This irregularity in linguistic usage rests upon a correct view of the relation of being and essence, because we can certainly consider essence to be being that has gone by, whilst still remarking that what is past is not for that reason abstractly negated, but only sublated and so at the same time conserved. If we say in German, e.g., "Cäsar ist in Gallien gewesen" ["Caesar was in Gaul"], what is negated by that is just the immediacy of what is asserted about Caesar, but not his sojourn in Gaul altogether, for indeed it is just that which forms the content of this assertion—only it is here represented as having been sublated.

When a "Wesen" is spoken of in ordinary life, it frequently only means a comprehensive whole or an essential sum; we speak in this way, for instance, of a "Zeitungswesen" [the press], of the "Postwesen" [the postal service], or of the "Steuerwesen" [the taxation system], etc., which simply amounts to saying that the things that are part of these are not to be taken singly in their immediacy, but as a complex, and then further in their various relations as well. So this linguistic use involves just about the same content as essence has turned out to have for us.

We speak also about *finite* essences,<sup>3</sup> and we call man a finite essence. But, in speaking of essence, we have, strictly speaking, gone beyond finitude, so that to designate man as a finite essence is inaccurate. When we add that "es gibt"<sup>b</sup> [there is] a "highest essence," and that God ought to be designated by that name, two things should be noted. First, the expression "geben" [to give] refers to something

a. *Dieser Schein ist nun aber nicht gar nicht, nicht ein Nichts*

b. Literally "it gives," from *geben*, "to give"

finite, as when we say, for instance, that "*Es gibt* so-and-so many planets," or "*Es gibt* plants with this constitution, and others with that one." The things that are "given" in this way are such that others are "given" outside and beside them. But God, as the Infinite itself, is not something that is "given" whilst *outside* and *beside* him there are also other essences. Whatever else is "given" outside of God has no essentiality in its separateness from God; on the contrary, any such thing lacks internal stability and essence in its isolation, and must be considered as a mere semblance.

And this implies a *second* point too: namely, that all talk of God merely as the "*highest* essence" must be called unsatisfactory. For the category of quantity that is applied here has its place only in the domain of the finite. For instance, when we say, "This is the highest mountain on earth," we have the notion that, apart from this highest mountain, there are also other mountains that are high. The situation is the same when we say that someone is the richest or the most learned man in his country. But God is not merely *an* essence and not even merely the *highest* essence either. He is *the* essence. In this connection also, we should notice at once that, although this interpretation of God forms an important and necessary stage in the development of the religious consciousness, it in no way exhausts the depth of the Christian representation of God. When we just regard God purely and simply as the essence and stop at that, then we know him only as the universal, irresistible Might, or, to put it another way, as the *Lord*. Well, of course, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but it is only the beginning of it.

It was first in the Jewish and then later in the Mohammedan religions that God was interpreted as the Lord and essentially *only* as the Lord. The defect of these religions consists generally in their not giving the finite its due; whereas holding fast to the finite on its own account (be it something natural or something finite in the spiritual realm) is what is characteristic of the heathen (and thereby at the same time polytheistic) religions.

Another position that has frequently been maintained is that there can be no cognition of God as the "*highest* essence." This is the general standpoint of the modern Enlightenment, which is content to say, "*Il y a un être suprême*,"<sup>4</sup> and lets the matter rest there. When people talk like this, and regard God only as the "*highest* essence" in the Beyond, then they have the world in view as something firm and positive in its immediacy. They are forgetting, then, that essence is precisely the sublation of everything immediate. As the abstract essence in the Beyond, outside of which all distinction and determinacy must fall, God is in fact a mere name, a mere *caput mortuum* of the abstractive understanding. The true cognition of God begins with our knowing that things in their immediate being have no truth.

It frequently happens, not only in relation to God but in other contexts too, that the category of essence is employed in an abstract way, and that in the study of things their essence is fixed as something indifferent to the determinate content of their appearance, as something that subsists on its own account. Thus, we often say specifically that the main thing about people is their essence, and not what they do or how they behave. What is quite right in this claim is that what someone does must be considered not just in its immediacy, but only as mediated by his inward-

ness and as a manifestation of it. But it should not be overlooked either that essence, and inwardness as well, only prove themselves to be what they are by moving out into the domain of appearance; whereas, what underlies the appeal to an essence that is different from the content of what people do is often just the aim of making their mere subjectivity count, and of evading what holds in and for itself.

### § 113

In Essence, relation-to-self is the form of *identity*, of *inward reflection*. This form has here taken the place of the *immediacy* of being; both are the same abstractions of relation-to-self.

The absence of thought in sense-knowledge, which takes everything limited and finite for something that [*simply*] is,<sup>a</sup> passes over into the stubbornness of the understanding, which grasps everything finite as *something-identical-with-itself*, [and] not inwardly contradicting itself.

### § 114

As it emerges from being, this identity appears at first to be burdened only with the determinations of being, and related to being as to *something-external*. When being is taken separately from essence in this way, it is called the "*inessential*." But essence is being-within-itself,<sup>b</sup> it is *essential* only insofar as it has the negative of itself, [i.e.,] the relation-to-another, or mediation, within itself. It has the inessential, therefore, as its own shine within itself. But there is a distinguishing contained in the shining or mediation, and what is distinct does itself acquire the form of identity, in its distinction from the identity from which it emerges, and in which it is not or lies [only] as semblance. Hence, what is distinct is itself in the mode of self-relating immediacy or of being. And for this reason the sphere of Essence becomes a still imperfect connection of *immediacy* and *mediation*. Everything is posited in it in such a way that it relates itself to itself, while at the same time [the movement] has already gone beyond it. [It is posited] as a *being of reflection*, a being within which an other shines and which shines within an other.—Hence, the sphere of Essence is also the sphere of *posited contradiction*, whereas, in the sphere of Being, contradiction is only *implicit*.

a. *ein Seiendes*

b. *In-sich-sein*

Because the One Concept is what is substantial in everything, the same determinations occur in the development of Essence as in the development of being—but they occur in *reflected* form. Instead of *being* and *nothing*, the forms of the *positive* and *negative* present themselves; initially the positive corresponds, as *identity*, to the being that lacks antithesis, while the negative (shining within itself) develops as *distinction*. Then, *becoming* presents itself in the same way as the very ground of *being-there*, which, as reflected upon the ground, is *existence*, and so on.—This part of the Logic, which is the most difficult one, contains most notably the categories of metaphysics and of the sciences generally;—it contains them as products of the reflecting understanding, which both assumes the distinctions as *independent* and at the same time posits their relationality *as well*. But it only ties the two assumptions together—and it links the two of them only in contiguity or succession, by means of an “also”; it does not bring these thoughts together; it does not unite them into the Concept.

## A Essence as Ground of Existence<sup>5</sup>

### A. THE PURE DETERMINATIONS OF REFLECTION

#### (α) IDENTITY

##### § 115

Essence shines *within itself* or is pure reflection. In this way it is only relation to self (though not as immediate but as reflected relation): *identity with itself*.

Formal identity or identity-of-the-understanding is this identity, insofar as one holds onto it firmly and *abstracts* from distinction. Or rather, *abstraction* is the positing of this formal identity, the transformation of something that is inwardly concrete into this form of simplicity—whether it be the case that a part of the manifold that is present in the concrete is *left out* (by means of what is called *analysis*) and that only *one* of these [elements] is selected, or

that, by leaving out their diversity, the manifold determinacies are *drawn together* into One.

When identity is linked with the Absolute, as the subject of a proposition, then the proposition reads: "The Absolute is what is identical with itself."—This proposition is true enough, but it is quite unclear whether it is meant in its true sense. So it is at best incomplete in its expression, for it remains undecided whether it is the abstract *identity-of-the-understanding* that is meant—i.e., [identity] in antithesis to the other determinations of Essence—or rather the identity that is inwardly *concrete*. The latter (as will be seen later) is first the *ground* and then, in its higher truth, the *Concept*.—The very word "*absolute*" itself often has no other meaning than that of "*abstract*"; thus, *absolute* space and *absolute* time do not mean anything more than abstract space and abstract time.

Taken as *essential* determinations, the determinations of Essence become predicates of a presupposed subject, which, because they are essential, is *everything*. The propositions that arise in this way have been expressed as *the universal laws of thought*. Thus *the principle of identity* reads: "Everything is identical with itself,"  $A = A$ ; and negatively: "A cannot be both A and non-A at the same time."—Instead of being a true law of thinking, this principle is nothing but the law of the *abstract understanding*. The *propositional form* itself already contradicts it, since a proposition promises a distinction between subject and predicate as well as identity; and the identity-proposition does not furnish what its form demands. Specifically, however, it is sublated by the so-called laws of thought that follow it; for these make the contrary of this law into laws.—If someone says that this proposition cannot be proven, but that *every* consciousness proceeds in accordance with it and, as experience shows agrees with it at once, as soon as it takes it in, then against this alleged experience of the Schools we have to set the universal experience that no consciousness thinks, has notions, or speaks, according to this law, and no existence of any kind at all exists in accordance with it. Speaking in accordance with this supposed law of truth (a planet is—a planet, magnetism is—magnetism, the spirit is—a spirit) is rightly regarded as silly; that is indeed a universal experience. The Schoolroom, which is the only place where these laws are valid, along with its logic which propounds them in earnest, has long since lost all credit with sound common sense as well as with reason.

*Addition.* Identity is in the first place the repetition of what we had before us earlier as being, but now as what has come to be through the sublation of immediate

determinacy; hence, it is being as ideality.—It is of great importance to reach an adequate understanding of the true significance of identity, and this means above all that it must not be interpreted merely as abstract identity, i.e., as identity that excludes distinction. This is the point that distinguishes all bad philosophy from what alone deserves the name of philosophy. In its truth, as the ideality of what immediately is, identity is a lofty determination both for our religious consciousness and for the rest of our thinking and consciousness in general. It can be said that the true knowledge of God begins at the point where he is known as Identity, i.e., as absolute identity; and this implies, at the same time, that all the power and the glory of the world sinks into nothing before God and can subsist only as the shining [forth] of *his* power and *his* glory.

Similarly, it is his identity as consciousness of himself that distinguishes man from nature in general, and particularly from animals, which do not achieve a grasp of themselves as “I,” i.e., as their pure self-unity.—As for the significance of identity in relation to thinking, this is above all a matter of not confusing true identity, which contains being and its determinations sublated within itself, with abstract, merely formal identity. All the charges of one-sidedness, harshness, lack of content, etc., which are so often levelled at thinking (especially from the standpoint of feeling and immediate intuition), have their basis in the perverse assumption that the activity of thinking is only an abstract positing of identity, and it is formal logic itself that confirms this assumption, by setting up the supposedly highest law of thought that has been elucidated in the above paragraph. If thinking were no more than that abstract identity it would have to be declared the most otiose and boring business in the world. Certainly the Concept, and furthermore the Idea, are self-identical, but they are self-identical only insofar as they at the same time contain distinction within themselves.

### (β) DISTINCTION

#### § 116

Essence is pure identity and inward shine only because it is negativity relating itself to itself, and hence by being self-repulsion from itself; thus it contains the determination of *distinction* essentially.

At this point otherness is no longer *qualitative*, i.e., no longer determinacy, or limit; but within the self-relating of essence, negation, being also relation, is at the same time *distinction*, *positedness*, *mediatedness*.

*Addition.* The question, “How does identity arrive at distinction?” presupposes that identity, taken as mere (i.e., abstract) identity is something on its own account, and that distinction, too, is something else that is equally something on its own account. But this presupposition makes it impossible to answer the question raised, for when identity and distinction are regarded as diverse, then what we have in

fact is only distinction; and for that reason the advance to distinction cannot be demonstrated, because what the advance is supposed to start from is not present at all for the one who is asking about the "how" of the advance. So when we look more closely, the question proves to be a completely unthinking one and whoever raises it should be asked first of all what he understands by "identity". It would then turn out that no thought underlies the word he uses and that identity is just an empty name for him. Moreover, as we have seen, identity is certainly something negative, though not just abstract, empty nothing; instead, it is the negation of being and of its determinations. But as this negation, identity is at the same time relation; indeed, it is negative relation to itself or a distinguishing of itself from itself.

### § 117

Distinction is (1) *immediate* distinction, *diversity*, in which each of the distinct [terms] is what it is *on its own account* and each is indifferent vis-à-vis its relation to the other, so that the relation is an external one for it. Because of the indifference of the diverse [terms] with regard to their distinction, the distinction falls outside of them in a third, that *makes the comparison*. As identity of those that are related, this external distinction is *equality*, as their nonidentity it is *inequality*.

The understanding lets these determinations themselves fall outside of each other in such a way that, although the comparison has one and the same substratum for the equality and the inequality, these are supposed to be diverse *sides* and *aspects* of it; but equality on its own is just the preceding [term], identity, and inequality on its own is distinction.

Diversity has also been transformed into a principle: "Everything is diverse," or "There are no two things that are perfectly equal to each other." Here *everything* is given the predicate opposed to the identity which was attributed to it in the first principle—and thus a law that contradicts the first one is proclaimed. All the same, inasmuch as diversity only belongs to external comparison, something *by itself* is supposed to be only *identical* with itself; and in this way the second principle is supposed not to contradict the first. But in this case the diversity does *not belong* to the something or to everything, it does not constitute an essential determination of this subject; so, the second principle cannot be proclaimed at all.—But if, in accordance with the [second] principle, the something is *itself* diverse, then it is so in virtue of *its own* determinacy; but in this case it is no longer diversity as such that is meant, but *determinate* distinction.—This is the meaning of Leibniz's principle, too.<sup>7</sup>



*Addition.* When it sets itself to consider identity, the understanding is in fact already beyond it, and has distinction before it in the shape of mere diversity. In other words, if we follow the so-called law of identity, and say: "The sea is the sea," "The air is the air," "The moon is the moon," etc., we are regarding these objects as being indifferent to one another; and hence it is not identity but distinction that we have before us. But, of course, we do not simply stop at the point of considering things as merely diverse; we *compare* them with one another instead, and in that way we obtain the determinations *equality* and *inequality*.

The business of the finite sciences consists for the most part in the application of these determinations; and when we speak of a scientific treatment nowadays, we usually and principally understand by that the procedure of comparing the objects which have been chosen for investigation. It is obvious that many very important results have been achieved by this procedure and in this connection we may recall especially the great achievements of modern times in the fields of comparative anatomy and comparative linguistics. But it must also be noted in this regard that those who think that this comparative procedure can be applied in all fields of knowledge with the same success are going too far; on the contrary, it must be particularly emphasised that the needs of science cannot ultimately be satisfied by mere comparison, and that results like those we have just recalled must be considered only as preliminary (though quite indispensable) steps toward genuinely comprehending cognition.—Besides, insofar as comparison aims at tracing back given distinctions to identity, mathematics must be regarded as the science in which this goal is most perfectly attained, and that is because distinctions of quantity are completely external distinctions. In geometry, for example, a triangle and a rectangle, which are qualitatively diverse, are equated to one another with respect to their magnitude by abstracting from this qualitative distinction. We have already said earlier (§ 99 Addition) that neither the empirical sciences nor philosophy need to be envious of this advantage of mathematics; and this follows also from the remark made earlier about the mere identity that belongs to the understanding.

We are told that on one occasion Leibniz propounded the principle of diversity [i.e., of the identity of indiscernibles] when he was at court; and the ladies and gentlemen who were strolling in the garden tried to find two leaves that could not be distinguished from one another, in order, by exhibiting them, to refute the philosopher's law of thought. This is doubtless a convenient way to busy oneself with metaphysics and one that is still popular today; but with regard to Leibniz's principle it must be noted that being distinct must not be conceived as external and indifferent diversity, but as inner distinction,<sup>a</sup> and that to be distinct pertains to things in themselves.

## § 118

Equality is only an identity of [terms] that are *not the same*, not identical with one another—and inequality is the *relation* between unequal [terms].

a. *Unterschied an sich*

So equality and inequality do not indifferently fall apart into diverse sides or aspects but each is a shining into the other. Hence diversity is distinction of reflection, or *distinction that is in its own self, determinate distinction*.

*Addition.* Whereas what is merely diverse proves to be mutually indifferent, equality and inequality, on the contrary, are a pair of determinations that are strictly related to one another, and such that neither of them can be thought without the other. This advance from mere diversity to opposition can already be found in our ordinary consciousness, too, since we admit that comparing has meaning only on the assumption that there is a distinction, and conversely, likewise, that distinguishing has a meaning only on the assumption that there is some equality. So, too, when the problem is to indicate a distinction, we do not ascribe a great degree of acuity to someone who only distinguishes objects from one another that are immediately and obviously distinct (e.g., a pen and a camel); just as we would say, on the other hand, that someone who can only compare things that are obviously alike—a beech with an oak, a temple with a church—has not advanced very far in the business of comparison.

So, where there is distinction, we require identity and, where there is identity, distinction. It frequently happens in the domain of the empirical sciences, however, that one of the two determinations diverts attention from the other, and that scientific interest is directed toward the tracing back of given distinctions to identity in one instance, and, in a similarly one-sided way, toward the discovery of new distinctions in the other. This is especially the case in the natural sciences. Natural scientists are primarily concerned with the discovery of new and ever newer substances, forces, genera, species, etc., or, in another direction, with the demonstration that bodies which had previously been taken to be simple are compound; modern physicists and chemists do indeed smile at the Ancients who were satisfied with four elements that were not even simple. But then, on the other hand, mere identity is made the centre of attention once more, and so electricity and chemical affinity are not only considered to be the same, for example, but even the organic processes of digestion and assimilation are taken to be merely chemical processes. We have noticed (§ 103 Addition) that although recent philosophy has frequently been nicknamed "Philosophy of Identity", it is precisely philosophy, and above all speculative logic, which exhibits the nullity of the mere identity that belongs to understanding, the identity that abstracts from distinction. This philosophy then also insists, to be sure, that we should not rest content with mere diversity but become cognizant of the inner unity of everything there is.

#### § 119

(2) Distinction *in its own self* is the *essential* [distinction], the *positive* and the *negative*: the positive is the identical relation to self in such a way that it is *not* the negative, while the negative is what is distinct on its own account

in such a way that it is *not* the positive. Since each of them is on its own account only in virtue of *not being the other one*, each *shines* within the other, and is only insofar as the other is. Hence, the distinction of essence is *opposition* through which what is distinct does not have an *other in general*, but *its own other* facing it; that is to say, each has its own determination only in its relation to the other: it is only inwardly reflected insofar as it is reflected into the other, and the other likewise; thus each is the other's *own other*.

Distinction in itself gives us the principle: "Everything is something essentially distinct"—or (as it also has been expressed): "Of two opposed predicates, only one belongs to something," and "There is no third."—This principle of antithesis<sup>a</sup> contradicts the principle of identity most explicitly, since according to the latter something is supposed to be only *relation to self*, while according to the former it is supposed to be an *opposite*, or *the relation to its other*. It is the peculiar absence of thought in abstraction to put two such contradictory principles side by side, without even comparing them.—The principle of *the excluded third* is the principle of the determinate understanding, which tries to avoid the contradiction and by doing so commits it. A must be either +A or –A; thus the third [term], the A which is *neither + nor –* and which is posited *also equally* as +A and as –A, is already expressed. If +W means 6 miles in the westerly direction, but –W 6 miles in the easterly direction, and + and – sublate each other, then 6 miles of road or of space remain what they were, with or without the antithesis. Even the mere plus and minus of number or of abstract direction have, if one pleases, zero for their third [term]; but one ought not to deny that the empty antithesis of the understanding between + and – also has its place, precisely in the context of such abstractions as number, direction, etc.

In the doctrine of contradictory concepts, one concept is, for instance, called *blue* (for in a doctrine of this kind even something like the sense-representation of a colour is called a concept), the other *not-blue*, so that this other would not be an affirmative (like, for instance, *yellow*), but is just the abstractly negative that has to be held fast.—That the negative is also positive within itself is shown in the following paragraph [§ 120]; but this is already implied in the determination that that which is opposed to an other is

a. Satz der Gegensatzes

*its other.*—The emptiness of the antithesis between so-called contradictory concepts had its full presentation in the grandiose expression (as we may call it) of a universal law, that of *all* such opposed predicates one applies to *each* thing and the other not—so that spirit would be either white or not white, yellow or not yellow, and so on ad infinitum.

Since it is forgotten that identity and opposition are themselves opposed, the principle of opposition is taken also for the principle of identity in the form of the principle of contradiction; and a *concept* to which neither (see above) or both of two mutually contradictory characteristics apply, is declared to be logically false, like, for instance, a square circle.<sup>8</sup> Now, although a polygonal circle or a rectilinear arc contradicts this principle just as much, geometers do not hesitate to consider and to treat the circle as a polygon with rectilinear sides. But something like a circle (its mere determinacy) is not yet a *concept*; in the concept of circle, centre and periphery are equally essential, both characteristics belong to it; and yet periphery and centre are opposed to and contradict each other.

The notion of *polarity*, which is so generally current in physics, contains within itself a more correct determination of opposition; but if physics holds onto ordinary logic as far as its thoughts are concerned, it would easily get scared, if it were to develop polarity for itself, and would thus come to the thoughts that are implied in it.

*Addition 1.* The positive is identity once more, but now in its higher truth, as identical relation to itself, and at the same time in such a way that it is not the negative. The negative on its own account is nothing but distinction itself. The identical as such is, to begin with, what lacks determination; the positive, in contrast, is what is identical with itself, but determined against an other, and the negative is distinction as such, determined as not being identity. This is the inward distinction of distinction itself.

In the positive and the negative we think we have an absolute distinction. Both terms, however, are implicitly the same, and therefore we could call the positive “the negative” if we liked, and conversely we could call the negative “the positive” as well. Consequently, assets and debts are not two particular, independently subsisting species of assets. What is something negative for the debtor is something positive for the creditor. The same applies to a road to the East: it is equally a road to the West. Thus, what is positive and what is negative are essentially conditioned by one another, and are [what they are] only in their relation to one another. There cannot be the north pole of a magnet without the south pole nor the south pole without the north pole. If we cut a magnet in two we do not have the north pole in

one piece and the south pole in the other. And in the same way, positive and negative electricity are not two diverse, independently subsisting fluids.

Quite generally, what is distinct in an opposition confronts not only *an* other, but *its* other. Ordinary consciousness treats the distinct terms as indifferent to one another. Thus we say, "I am a human being, and I am surrounded by air, water, animals, and everything else." In this ordinary consciousness everything falls outside everything else. The purpose of philosophy is, in contrast, to banish indifference and to become cognizant of the necessity of things, so that the other is seen to confront *its* other. And so, for instance, inorganic nature must be considered not merely as something other than organic nature, but as its necessary other. The two are in essential relation to one another, and each of them is [what it is], only insofar as it excludes the other from itself, and is related to it precisely by that exclusion. Or in the same way again, there is no nature without spirit, or spirit without nature. In any case, it is an important step in thinking, when we cease to say, "Well, something else is possible, too." When we say that, we are burdened with the contingent, whereas, as we remarked earlier, true thinking is the thinking of necessity.

In the natural science of the recent past, opposition that was first perceived as polarity in magnetism has come to be recognised as running through the whole of nature, or as a universal law of nature. This must without doubt be regarded as an essential step forward in science, as long as we are careful from now on not to let mere diversity take its place again beside opposition, as if nothing had happened. Colours, for instance, are rightly treated as confronting one another in polar opposition (as so-called complementary colours), on the one hand, and then, on the other hand, they are also regarded as the indifferent and merely quantitative distinction of red, yellow, green, etc.

*Addition 2.* Instead of speaking in accordance with the law of excluded middle (which is a law of the abstract understanding), it would be better to say, "Everything stands in opposition." There is in fact nothing, either in heaven or on earth, either in the spiritual or the natural world, that exhibits the abstract "either-or" as it is maintained by the understanding. Everything that is at all is concrete, and hence it is inwardly distinguished and self-opposed. The finitude of things consists in the fact that their immediate way of being does not correspond with what they are in-themselves. For instance, in inorganic nature, acid is at same time in-itself base, i.e., its being is totally and solely in its relatedness to its other. Hence also, however, acid is not something that persists quietly in the antithesis, but is rather what strives to posit itself as what it is in-itself. Generally speaking, it is contradiction that moves the world, and it is ridiculous to say that contradiction cannot be thought. What is correct in this assertion is just that contradiction is not all there is to it, and that contradiction sublates itself by its own doing. Sublated contradiction, however, is not abstract identity, for that is itself only one side of the antithesis. The proximate result of opposition posited as contradiction is the *ground*, which contains within itself both identity and distinction as sublated and reduced to merely ideal moments.

## § 120

The *positive* is that *diverse* [term], which has to be on its own account and at the same time *not* indifferent vis-à-vis its relation to its *other*. The *negative*, as negative relation to *self*, has to be equally independent. It has to be on its own account but at the same time, as strictly negative, it has to have its positive, this relation to self that belongs to it, only in the other. Both of them, therefore, are the posited contradiction, both are *in-themselves* the same. And both are the same *for-themselves*, too, since each is the sublating of the other and of itself. As a result they go to the *ground*.<sup>a</sup>—In other words, essential distinction, as distinction in and for itself, is immediately only distinction of itself from itself; it therefore contains the identical; so essential distinction itself belongs, together with identity, to the whole distinction that is in and for itself.—As relating itself to itself, essential distinction is already expressed equally as *what is identical with itself*; and *what is opposed* is precisely that which contains the *One* and its *Other*, both *itself* and its *opposite* within itself. The being-within-self of essence, determined in this way, is *ground*.

## (γ) GROUND

## § 121

*Ground* is the unity of identity and distinction; the truth of what distinction and identity have shown themselves to be, the inward reflection which is just as much reflection-into-another and vice versa. It is *essence* posited as *totality*.

The *principle of ground* reads, "Everything has its sufficient ground,"<sup>9</sup> i.e., the true essentiality of something is not the determination of it as identical with itself or as diverse, as merely positive or as merely negative, but the fact that it has its being in an other, which (as the identical-with-itself that belongs to it)<sup>b</sup> is its essence. The latter also is not abstract reflection *into self*, but reflection *into another*. Ground is the essence that is *within itself*, the latter is essentially ground, and it is ground only insofar as it is the ground of something, of an other.

*Addition.* When we say that ground is the *unity* of identity and distinction, this unity must not be understood as abstract identity, for then we would just have another name for a thought that is once more just that identity of the understand-

a. *gehen zu Grunde*

b. *als dessen Identisches-mit-sich*

ing which we have recognised to be untrue. So, in order to counter this misunderstanding, we can also say that ground is not only the unity but equally the distinction of identity and distinction, too. Ground, which we encountered first as the sublation of contradiction, therefore makes its appearance as a new contradiction. But, as such, it is not what abides peacefully within itself, but is rather the expulsion of itself from itself. Ground is ground only insofar as it grounds; but what has come forth from the ground is the ground itself, and herein lies the formalism of ground. The ground and what is grounded are one and the same content; and the distinction between them is the mere distinction of form between simple relation to self and mediation or positedness.

When we ask about the grounds of things, this is precisely the standpoint of reflection that we mentioned earlier (§ 112 Addition); we want to see the thing in question duplicated as it were: first in its immediacy and secondly in its ground, where it is no longer immediate. This is indeed the simple meaning of the so-called principle of sufficient reason or ground. **This principle only asserts that things must essentially be regarded as mediated.** Moreover, in setting up this law of thought, formal logic gives the other sciences a bad example, since it asks them not to take their content as valid in its immediacy; while, for its own part, it sets up this law of thought without deducing it and exhibiting its process of mediation. With the same right that the logician asserts when he maintains that our faculty of thinking happens to be so constituted that we must always ask for a ground, the doctor could answer that people are so organised that they cannot live under water when he is asked why a person who falls into the water drowns; and in the same way a jurist who is asked why a criminal is punished could answer that civil society is so constituted that crime cannot be allowed to go unpunished.

But even if we prescind from the demand, addressed to logic, that it should furnish a grounding for the principle of sufficient reason or ground, still it must at least answer the question of what is to be understood by “ground”. The usual explanation, that a ground is what has a consequence, appears at first sight to be more illuminating and accessible than the determination of this concept that was given above. But if we go on to ask what a consequence is, and we get the answer that a consequence is what has a ground, then it is clear that the accessibility of this explanation consists only in the fact that what in our case has been reached as the result of a preceding movement of thought is simply presupposed in that explanation. It is precisely the business of the Logic, however, to exhibit the thoughts that are merely represented, and which as such are not comprehended nor demonstrated, as stages of self-determining thinking, so that these thoughts come to be both comprehended and demonstrated.

In ordinary life, and equally in the finite sciences, we very frequently employ this form of reflection with the aim of finding out, by its use, what the situation of the objects under examination really is. And although there is nothing wrong with this way of looking at things, so long as it is only a matter of the immediate housekeeping needs of cognition, so to speak, still it should be noted at once that this method cannot provide definitive satisfaction, either in a theoretical or in a practical regard. This is because the ground still has no content that is determined

in and for itself; and in consequence of that, when we consider something as grounded, we obtain only the mere distinction of form between immediacy and mediation. Thus, for instance, when we see an electrical phenomenon and ask for its ground, we receive the answer that the ground of this phenomenon is electricity; but this is simply the same content that we had before us immediately, translated into the form of something internal.

Now, of course, the ground is also not just what is simply identical with itself; it is also distinct, and for that reason various grounds can be offered for one and the same content. So, in accordance with the concept of distinction, that diversity of grounds now leads to opposition in the form of grounds *for* and *against* the same content.—Suppose, for example, that we consider an action, let us say, for argument's sake, a theft. This is a content in which a number of aspects can be distinguished. Property has been violated by the theft; while the thief, who was in need, has obtained the means for the satisfaction of his wants. It may be the case, too, that the person from whom the theft was made did not make good use of his property. Well, it is certainly correct that the violation of property which has taken place is the decisive point of view before which the others must give way; but this decision is not entailed by the principle of thought according to which everything must have a ground.

It is certainly the case that according to the usual version of this law of thought, what is meant is not merely any ground but a *sufficient* one; and one might think therefore that, in the case of the action that has been mentioned as an example, the points of view brought forward, other than violation of property, are grounds, to be sure, although they are not sufficient grounds. But what has to be said about that is that when people speak of a sufficient ground, the predicate is either otiose, or else it is one which transcends the category of ground as such. The predicate "sufficient" is otiose and tautological if it is supposed to express only the capacity to ground something, since a ground only is a ground to the extent that it possesses this capacity. If a soldier runs away from a battle in order to save his life, he acts in a way that is contrary to his duty, of course; but it cannot be maintained that the ground which has determined him to act in this way was insufficient, for if it was he would have stayed at his post.

However, it must also be said that, just as on the one hand, all grounds are sufficient, so, on the other hand, no ground is sufficient as such. This is because, as we have already remarked, the ground does not yet have a content that is determinate in and for itself; and consequently it does not act of itself and bring forth. It is the *Concept* that will soon show itself to be a content of this kind, one that is determinate in and for itself, and hence acts on its own; and that is what *Leibniz* is concerned with when he speaks of a "*sufficient reason*" or "*ground*" and insists on considering things from this point of view. What *Leibniz* primarily had in mind here was the merely mechanical approach that many people are still so attached to even now; and he rightly declared that it is inadequate. For instance, when the organic process of circulation of the blood is traced back to the contraction of the heart, this is a merely mechanical interpretation; and the theories of criminal law that consider the purpose of punishment to be to render the criminal harmless, or



to deter, or to lie in other such external grounds are similarly mechanical. It is very unjust to Leibniz to suppose that he contented himself with something so lame as the formal principle of reason or ground. The mode of consideration that he asserted as valid is precisely the reverse of the formalism that lets the matter rest with mere “grounds”—where what is at issue is a cognition that comprehends. In this regard, Leibniz contrasted *causae efficientes* and *causae finales*, and required that we should not stop at the former but press on to the latter. According to this distinction, light, heat, and moisture, for example, must certainly be considered as *causae efficientes*, but not as the *causa finalis* of the growth of plants—the *causa finalis* being nothing else but the concept of the plant itself.

We may also remark at this point that to go no further than mere grounds, especially in the domain of law and ethics, is the general standpoint and principle of the Sophists. When people speak of “sophistry” they frequently understand by it just a mode of consideration which aims to distort what is correct and true, and quite generally to present things in a false light. But this tendency is not what is immediately involved in sophistry, the standpoint of which is primarily nothing but that of abstract argumentation. The Sophists came on the scene among the Greeks at a time when they were no longer satisfied with mere authority and tradition in the domain of religion and ethics. They felt the need at that time to become conscious of what was to be valid for them as a content mediated by thought. This demand was met by the Sophists because they taught people how to seek out the various points of view from which things can be considered; and these points of view are, in the first instance, simply nothing else but grounds. As we remarked earlier, however, since a ground does not yet have a content that is determined in and for itself, and grounds can be found for what is unethical and contrary to law no less than for what is ethical and lawful, the decision as to what grounds are to count as valid falls to the subject. The ground of the subject’s decision becomes a matter of his individual disposition and aims. In this way the objective basis of what is valid in and for itself, and recognised by all, was undermined, and it is this negative side of sophistry that has deservedly given it the bad name referred to above.

As is well known, Socrates fought the Sophists<sup>10</sup> on all fronts; but he did not do so just by setting authority and tradition against their abstract argumentation, but rather by exhibiting the untenability of mere grounds dialectically, and by vindicating against them the validity of what is just and good, the validity of the universal generally, or of the concept of willing. We prefer to go to work only in an abstractly argumentative way nowadays, not only in discussions about secular things, but also in sermons. Thus, for example, all possible grounds for gratitude to God are brought forward. Socrates, and Plato, too, would not have scrupled to declare all this to be sophistry, since sophistry is primarily a matter not of content, which may well be true, but of the form of [arguing about] grounds, an argumentation by which everything can be defended, but also everything can be attacked. In our time, rich as we are in reflection, and given to abstract argumentation, someone who does not know how to advance a good ground for everything, even for the worst and most perverse views, cannot have come far. Everything in the world that

has been corrupted, has been corrupted on good grounds. When an appeal is made to "grounds" people are at first inclined to give way to them; but if they have had experience of this procedure, they will turn a deaf ear and not let themselves be imposed upon any further.

## § 122

At first, essence is shining and mediation *within itself*; but as totality of mediation, its unity with itself is now *posited* as the self-sublation of distinction, and so of mediation. This, therefore, is the restoration of *immediacy* or of *being*, but of being inasmuch as it is *mediated through the sublation of mediation*:—*existence*.

Ground does not yet have any *content* that is determined in and for itself, nor is it *purpose*. So it is neither *active* nor *productive*; instead, an existence simply *emerges* from the ground. The *determinate* ground is therefore something formal; it is any determinacy at all, insofar as it is posited as *related to itself* (i.e., as affirmation) in its relationship to the immediate existence that is connected with it. Precisely because it is *ground*, it is also a *good ground* [or reason]: for "good", in its entirely abstract use, means no more than something affirmative, and every determinacy is good which can be expressed in any way at all as something admitted to be affirmative. Hence, it is possible to find and to indicate a ground for everything; and a *good ground* (for instance, a good motive to act) may be effective or *not*, it may have a consequence or have *none*. It becomes a motive that produces something, for instance, by being taken up by someone's will, which is what first makes it active and a cause.

## B. EXISTENCE

## § 123

Existence is the immediate unity of inward reflection and reflection-into-another. Therefore, it is the indeterminate multitude of existents as inwardly reflected, which are at the same time, and just as much, shining-into-another, or *relational*; and they form a *world* of interdependence and of an infinite connectedness of grounds with what is grounded. The grounds

are themselves existences, and the existents are also in many ways grounds as well as grounded.

*Addition.* The term “existence” (derived from *existere*) points to a state of emergence,<sup>a</sup> and existence is being that has emerged from the ground and become reestablished through the sublation of mediation. As sublated being, essence has proved in the first place to be shining within itself, and the determinations of this shining are identity, distinction, and ground. Ground is the unity of identity and distinction, and as such it is at the same time the distinguishing of itself from itself. But what is distinct from the ground is not distinction anymore than the ground itself is abstract identity. The ground is self-sublating and what it sublates itself toward, the result of its negation, is existence. Existence, therefore, which is what has emerged from the ground, contains the latter within itself, and the ground does not remain behind existence; instead, it is precisely this process of self-sublation and translation into existence.

What we have here is therefore also to be found in the ordinary consciousness: when we consider the ground of something, this ground is not something abstractly inward, but is instead itself an existent again. So, for instance, we consider the ground of a conflagration to be a lightning flash that set a building on fire, and, similarly, the ground of the constitution of a people is their customs and circumstances of life. This is the general shape in which the existing world is presented initially to reflection, namely, as an indeterminate multitude of existents which, being reflected simultaneously into themselves and into something else, are in the mutual relationship of ground and grounded with regard to each other. In this motley play of the world, taken as the sum total of all existents, a stable footing cannot be found anywhere at first, and everything appears at this stage to be merely relative, to be conditioned by something else, and similarly as conditioning something else. The reflective understanding makes it its business to discover and to pursue these all-sided relations; but this leaves the question of a final purpose unanswered, and, with the further development of the logical Idea, the reason that is in need of comprehension therefore strikes out beyond this standpoint of mere relativity.

## § 124

But the reflection-into-another of what exists is not separate from its inward reflection; the ground is the unity of these two, out of which existence has gone forth. Hence, what exists contains relationality and its own manifold connectedness with other existents in itself; and it is *reflected* within itself as *ground*. Thus what exists is *thing*.

a. *deutet auf ein Hervorgegangensein*

The *thing-in-itself*,<sup>11</sup> which has become so famous in the Kantian philosophy, shows itself here in its genesis, i.e., as the abstract reflection-into-itself that is clung to, as against reflection-into-another and against distinct determinations in general, as the empty *basis* of all of them.

*Addition.* If we are to understand by "cognition" the apprehending of an object in its concrete determinacy, then the assertion that the "thing-in-itself" is beyond cognition must be admitted to be correct, since the thing-in-itself is nothing but the completely abstract and indeterminate thing in general. But, with the same right that we speak of the "thing-in-itself," we could also speak of "quality-in-itself," "quantity-in-itself," and similarly of all the other categories, and this would be understood to mean these categories in their abstract immediacy, i.e., apart from their development and inner determinacy. So we must consider the fixating of the thing as the only "in-itself" to be a whim of the understanding. But we also have the habit of applying the term "in-itself" to the content both of the natural and of the spiritual world. Hence we speak, for example, of electricity "in-itself" or a plant "in-itself," and similarly of man or the State "in-itself;" and by the "in-itself" of these objects we understand what they rightly and properly are.

The situation here is no different than it is in respect to the thing-in-itself generally; that situation is, more precisely, that if we halt at objects as they are merely in-themselves, then we do not apprehend them in their truth, but in the one-sided form of mere abstraction. Thus, for instance, "man-in-himself" is the child, whose task is not to remain in this abstract and undeveloped [state of being] "in-itself," but to become *for-himself* what he is initially only *in-himself*, namely, a free and rational essence. Similarly, the State-in-itself is the still undeveloped, patriarchal State, in which the various political functions implied by the concept of the State have not yet become "constitutionalised" in a way that is adequate to its concept. In the same sense the germ, too, can be regarded as the plant-in-itself. We can see from these examples that all who suppose that what things are in-themselves, or the thing-in-itself in general, is something that is inaccessible to our cognition are very much mistaken. Everything is initially "in-itself," but this is not the end of the matter, and just as the germ, which is the plant-in-itself, is simply the activity of self-development, so the thing generally also progresses beyond its mere in-itself (understood as abstract reflection-into-itself) to reveal itself to be also reflection-into-another, and *as a result it has properties*.

### C. THING

#### § 125

The *thing* is the totality as the development of the determinations of ground and of existence posited all in One. According to one of its mo-

ments, that of *reflection-into-another*, it has in it the distinctions according to which it is a *determinate* and concrete thing.

(α) These determinations are diverse *from each other*; they have their inward reflection not in themselves, but in the thing. They are *properties* of the thing, and their relation to it is [its] *having* [them].

*Having*, which is a relation, replaces *being*. *Something* does, indeed, also “have” *qualities* in it, but this transference of having to what is is inaccurate, since determinacy as quality is immediately one with the something and since something *ceases to be*, when it loses its quality. The *thing*, however, is inward reflection, as the identity which is also distinct from the distinction, i.e., from its determinations.—“Having” is used in many languages to indicate the *past*, and rightly, because the past is *sublated being*, and spirit is the inward reflection of the past. Only in this reflection does the past still have subsistence; though spirit also distinguishes this being that is sublated within it from itself.

*Addition.* In the thing all the determinations of reflection recur as existent. Thus, the thing is identical with itself initially just as the thing-in-itself. But, as we have seen, there is no identity without distinction, and the properties which the thing has are its existent distinction in the form of diversity. Whereas previously the diverse terms proved themselves to be indifferent to one another, and their relation to one another was posited only through a comparison external to them, we now have, in the thing, a bond that connects the various properties with one another. Moreover, a property is not to be confused with a quality. We do certainly say also that something “has” qualities. But this way of speaking is unsuitable, insofar as “having” indicates an independence which does not yet belong to the something that is immediately identical with its quality. The something is what it is only through its quality; in contrast, although it is true that the thing likewise only exists insofar as it has properties, it is not bound up with this or that determinate property and therefore it can also lose the property without ceasing to be what it is.

## § 126

(β) But in the *ground*, reflection-into-another is in itself immediately inward reflection as well; consequently the properties are likewise self-identical, [i.e., they are] *independent* and freed from their attachment to the thing. Being inwardly reflected they are the determinacies of the thing *that are distinguished from each other*; and therefore they are not themselves things (since things are concrete), but existences reflected into themselves as abstract determinacies: they are *matters*.

The matters—for instance, magnetic, or electric matter<sup>12</sup>—are not called “things”.—They are qualities in the proper sense of the term, they are one with their being (the determinacy that has reached immediacy), but they are one with a being that is reflected or is existence.

*Addition.* The transformation of the properties that the thing “has” into independent matters or stuffs “out of” which the thing “is made up” is certainly grounded in the concept of the thing, and therefore it is found in experience. But it is as much contrary to thought as it is to experience to conclude that, because certain properties of a thing, such as, for example, its colour, its smell, etc., can be presented as a particular colour-stuff or smell-stuff, therefore that is all there is to it, and that in order to get to the bottom of how things really are, nothing more needs to be done than to break them up into the stuffs out of which they are composed.

This breaking up of things into independent stuffs has its proper place only in inorganic nature, and the chemist is within his rights when he breaks up cooking salt or gypsum, for instance, into their stuffs and then says that the former consists of hydrochloric acid and sodium, and the latter of sulphuric acid and calcium. And, in the same way, geology rightly considers granite to be composed of quartz, feldspar, and mica. These stuffs of which the thing consists are partly things themselves, too, which can, in their turn, be broken down again into more abstract stuffs (for example, sulphuric acid is made up of sulphur and oxygen).

But although these stuffs or matters can in fact be presented as subsisting in their own right, it also happens quite often that other properties of things can similarly be considered as particular matters which are not, however, independent in this way. For instance, there is talk of caloric, electrical, and magnetic stuffs and matters; but these have to be regarded as mere fictions of the understanding. This is just how the abstract reflection of the understanding always proceeds, seizing arbitrarily upon single categories which are valid only as determinate stages in the development of the Idea; and then employing them—allegedly in the service of explanation, but in contradiction to unprejudiced intuition and experience—in such a way that every object investigated is traced back to them. Indeed, the view that things consist of independent stuffs is frequently applied in domains where it has no validity.

Even within nature, this category shows itself to be inadequate in the sphere of organic life. An animal may, of course, be said to “consist of” bones, muscles, nerves, etc., but it is immediately evident that this is a state of affairs quite different from a piece of granite that “consists of” the stuffs that were mentioned. These stuffs behave in a way that is completely indifferent to their union, and they could subsist just as well without it, whereas the various parts and members of the organic body have their subsistence only in their union, and cease to exist as such if they are separated from one another.

## § 127

Thus, a *matter* is the *abstract* or indeterminate reflection-into-another. It is inward reflection that is at the same time *determinate*. Hence, it is *thinghood that is there*, or the substance of the thing.<sup>a</sup> In this way the thing has its inward reflection in the matters (the contrary of § 125); it does not subsist in itself, but consists of *the matters*<sup>b</sup> and is only their superficial connectedness, i.e., an external combination of them.

## § 128

(γ) As the *immediate unity* of existence with itself, Matter is also indifferent with regard to determinacy; the many diverse matters therefore merge into the *One matter* (or existence in the reflective determination of identity). As against this One matter, these distinct determinacies and the external *relation* which they have to each other in the thing are the *form*—the reflective determination of distinction, but as existing and as totality.

This One matter, without determination, is also the same as the thing-in-itself; but it is the thing-in-itself as inwardly quite abstract,<sup>c</sup> and it is indeterminate matter as being in itself that is also for-another, and first of all for the form.

*Addition.* The diverse matters of which the thing consists are *in-themselves* [or implicitly] the same as one another. In this way we obtain the *one* general matter with respect to which distinction is posited as something external, i.e., as mere *form*. The interpretation that things are all based upon one and the same matter, and are only externally diverse in respect of their form, occurs frequently in reflective consciousness. On this view, matter counts as something that is completely indeterminate in itself, though susceptible of all determinations, and at the same time as something utterly permanent and self-same in all change and all alteration.

Now this indifference of matter with regard to determinate forms is certainly to be found in finite things; thus, e.g., it is indifferent to a block of marble whether it be given the form of this or that statue or even of a pillar. However, it should not be overlooked in this context that matter, such as a block of marble, is indifferent to form only in a relative way (in relation to the sculptor), but is never without form altogether. Hence, the mineralogist considers this only relatively formless marble as a determinate rock formation quite distinct from other, similarly determinate formations, such as, for example, sandstone, porphyry, and the like. So it is only the abstractive understanding that fixates “matter” in isolation and as formless in itself;

a. *die daseiende Dingheit, das Bestehen des Dings*

b. *besteht nicht an ihm selbst, sondern aus den Materien*

c. *als insich ganz abstraktes*

whereas in fact the thought of matter always contains the principle of form within it, and hence no existent matter that is formless is ever met with in experience.

But the interpretation of matter as present from the beginning and as formless in itself is, in any case, very old; we meet it already among the Greeks, initially in the mythical shape of Chaos, which was represented as the formless foundation of the existing world. One consequence of this representation is that God has to be considered, not the creator of the world, but the mere architect of it, the demiurge. The deeper view, in contrast, is that God created the world from nothing. What this expresses in general is that matter as such is not independent, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that form does not accrue to matter from outside but, being [itself] totality, bears the principle of matter within itself. This free and infinite form will soon emerge for us as the *Concept*.

#### § 129

The thing thus falls apart into *matter* and *form*, each of which is the *totality* of thinghood and is independent on its own account. But (*qua* existence) matter, which is supposed to be the positive, undetermined existence, involves reflection-into-another just as much as it does being-within-self; as unity of these determinations it is itself the totality of the form. But as totality of the determinations the form already contains inward reflection, or, *as form that relates itself to itself*, it has what ought to constitute the determination of the matter. Both are *in-themselves* the same. Once *posited*, this unity of theirs is quite generally the *relation* of matter and form, which are equally distinct.

#### § 130

As this totality, the thing is the contradiction of being (according to its negative unity) the *form*—in which the matter is determined and degraded into *properties* (§ 125)—and of *consisting* at the same time of *matters*—which within the inward reflection of the thing are both independent and negated at the same time. Thus, in being the essential existence (as existence that sublates itself inwardly), the thing is [*shining forth* or] *appearance*.<sup>a</sup>

The *negation*, also *posited* in the thing as independence of the matters, occurs in physics as *porosity*.<sup>14</sup> Each of the many matters (colour-stuff, odour-stuff, and other stuff, including, according to some, sound-stuff, and further, in any case, heat-stuff, electric matter, etc.) is *also negated*, and in this negation of it—in its pores—the many other independent matters are [found], which are equally

a. Erscheinung<sup>13</sup>



porous and which thus mutually let the others exist within themselves. The pores are nothing *empirical*; they are figments of the understanding, which represents the negation of the independent matters in this way, and covers up the further development of contradictions with that nebulous confusion in which all of them are *independent* and all of them equally *negated* in one another.—When the faculties or activities are hypostatized in the same way in spirit, their living unity becomes equally the confusion of the influence<sup>a</sup> of the one upon the other.

The pores do not have their verification in observation (for we are not talking about the organic pores, in wood, or in the skin, but about the ones in the so-called matters, such as colour-stuff, heat-stuff, etc., or in metals, crystals, and the like); the same is true of matter itself, and a fortiori of any form separate from it (either the thing consisting of matters, or subsisting itself and only having properties). All of this is a product of the reflecting understanding, which, while observing and pretending to indicate what it observes, brings forth the contrary, a metaphysics instead, and one that is contradictory in all directions, though this fact remains hidden from it.

## B *Appearance*

### § 131

Essence must *appear*. Its inward shining is the sublating of itself into immediacy, which as inward reflection is *subsistence* (matter) as well as *form*, reflection-into-another, subsistence *sublating itself*. Shining is the determination, in virtue of which essence is not being, but essence, and the developed shining is [shining-forth or] appearance. Essence therefore is not *behind* or *beyond* appearance, but since the essence is what exists, existence is appearance.

*Addition.* Existence, posited in its contradiction, is appearance. The latter must not be confused with mere semblance. Semblance is the proximate truth of being or immediacy. The immediate is not what we suppose it to be, not something independent and self-supporting, but only semblance, and as such it is comprehended in the simplicity of self-contained essence.<sup>b</sup> Essence is initially a totality of inward

a. *des Einwirkens*

b. *zusammengefaßt in die Einfachheit des in sich seienden Wesens*

shining, but it does not remain in this inwardness; instead, as ground, it emerges into existence; and existence, since it does not have its ground within itself but in an other, is quite simply appearance. When we speak of "appearance" we associate with it the representation of an indeterminate manifold of existing things, whose being is mediation pure and simple, so that they do not rest upon themselves, but are valid only as moments.

At the same time, however, this implies that the essence does not remain behind or beyond the appearance; instead, it is, so to speak, the infinite goodness that releases its semblance into immediacy and grants it the joy of being-there. When posited in this way appearance does not stand on its own feet, and does not have its being within itself but within an other. Just as God, the essence, is goodness, by virtue of lending existence to the moments of his inward shining in order to create a world, so he proves himself at the same time to be the might that rules it, as well as the Righteousness that shows the content of this existing world to be mere appearance, whenever it wants to exist on its own account.

Appearance, in any case, is a very important stage of the logical Idea, and it may be said that philosophy distinguishes itself from ordinary consciousness by regarding what counts for the latter as having being and independence as mere appearance. But what matters here is to grasp the significance of appearance adequately. For, when we say of something that it is "only" appearance, this can be misunderstood as meaning that (in comparison with this thing that only appears) what *is*, or is *immediate*, is something higher. In fact the situation is precisely the reverse: appearance is higher than mere being. Appearance is precisely the truth of being and a richer determination than the latter, because it contains the moments of inward reflexion and reflexion-into-another united within it, whereas being or immediacy is still what is one-sidedly without relation, and seems to rest upon itself alone. Of course, the "only" that we attach to appearance certainly does indicate a defect, and this consists in the fact that Appearance is still this inwardly broken [moment] that does not have any stability of its own. What is higher than mere appearance is, in the first place, *actuality*, which will be treated later, being the third stage of Essence.

In the history of modern philosophy it is Kant who has the merit of having been the first to rehabilitate the distinction between the common and the philosophical consciousness that we have mentioned. Kant stopped halfway, however, inasmuch as he interpreted appearance in a merely subjective sense, and fixated the abstract essence outside it as the "thing-in-itself" that remains inaccessible to our cognition. It is the very nature of the world of immediate objects to be only appearance, and since we do know that world as appearance, we thereby at the same time become cognizant of its essence. The essence does not remain behind or beyond appearance, but manifests itself as essence precisely by reducing the world to mere appearance.

In any case, the naïve consciousness cannot be blamed, if in its desire for totality, it hesitates to acquiesce when subjective idealism asserts that we have to do strictly with mere appearances. But it easily happens that, in trying to save the objectivity of cognition, this naïve consciousness returns to abstract immediacy and, without more ado, holds fast to that, as what is true and actual. Fichte has treated the

antithesis between subjective idealism and immediate consciousness in a short work bearing the title *Report, Clear as Daylight, to the Wider Public about the Real Nature of Recent Philosophy; an Attempt to Force the Reader to Understand*.<sup>15</sup> Here we find a conversation in which the author attempts to demonstrate to the reader how the subjective idealist standpoint is justified. During the conversation the reader complains to the author that he, the reader, cannot succeed in putting himself in the idealist position; he is inconsolable about the fact that the things that surround him are supposed not to be real things but merely appearances. The reader is certainly not to be blamed for this distress, since he is required to regard himself as confined within an impenetrable circle of merely subjective representations; but then, quite apart from this merely subjective interpretation of appearance, it must be said that we all have cause to be glad that, in dealing with the things that surround us, we only have to do with appearances and not with firm and independent existences, because in that case we would soon die of hunger, both bodily and mental.

## A. THE WORLD OF APPEARANCE

exists

### § 132

What appears exists in such a way that its *subsistence* is immediately sublated, and is only One moment of the form itself; the form contains subsistence or matter within itself as one of its determinations. Thus, what appears has its ground in the form as its essence, or as its inward reflection vis-à-vis its immediacy—but that only means that it has its ground in another determinacy of the form. This ground of what appears is just as much something-that-appears,<sup>a</sup> so that appearance proceeds to an infinite mediation of its subsistence by its form, hence by nonsubsistence as well. This infinite mediation is at the same time a unity of relation to self; and existence is developed into a *totality* and a *world* of appearance, or of reflected finitude.

## B. CONTENT AND FORM

### § 133

The mutual externality of the world of appearance is totality and it is entirely contained within its *relation-to-self*. Hence, the relation of ap-

a. *ein Erscheinendes*

pearance to itself is completely determinate, it has the *form* within itself, and, because it has it in this identity, [it has the form] as its essential subsistence. Hence too, the form is *content*; and in its developed determinacy it is the *law* of appearance. The negative of appearance, that which is dependent and alterable, belongs to the form as *not reflected within-itself*: this is the indifferent, *external form*.

Regarding the antithesis of form and content it is essential to remember that the content is not formless, but that it has the *form within itself* just as much as the form is *something external* to it. We have here the doubling of the form: on the one hand, as inwardly reflected, it is the content; on the other hand, as not reflected inwardly, it is the external existence, that is indifferent to the content. What is here present *in-itself* is the absolute relationship of content and form, i.e., the reciprocal overturning of one into the other, so that "content" is nothing but the *overturning of form into content*, and "form" nothing but *overturning of content into form*. This overturning is one of the most important determinations. But it is not *posited* until we reach *absolute relationship*.

*Addition.* Form and content are a pair of determinations that are frequently employed by the reflective understanding, and, moreover, mainly in such a way that the content is considered as what is essential and independent, while the form, on the contrary, is inessential and dependent. Against this, however, it must be remarked that in fact both of them are equally essential, and that, whilst there is no more a formless content than there is a formless stuff, still the two of them (content, and stuff or matter) are distinguished from one another precisely because the matter, although it is not in itself without form, shows itself to be indifferent in its way of being with regard to form, while content as such is what it is only in virtue of the fact that it contains developed<sup>a</sup> form within itself. But we find the form, too, as an existence that is indifferent with respect to the content and external to it, and this is the case because appearance in general is still burdened with externality.

If we consider a book, for instance, it certainly makes no difference, as far as its content is concerned, whether it be handwritten or printed, whether it be bound in paper or in leather. But this does not in any way imply that, apart from the external and indifferent form, the content of the book itself is formless. Certainly, there are books enough which may without injustice be said to be formless even with respect to their content; but, as it bears upon content here, this formlessness is synonymous with deformity,<sup>b</sup> which should be understood not as the absence of form altogether, but as the lack of the *right* form. This right form is so far from being indifferent with respect to content, however, that, on the contrary, it is the

a. *ausgebildete*

b. *Unförmlichkeit*

content itself. A work of art that lacks the right form cannot rightly be called a work of art, just for that reason. It is not a true work of art. It is a bad excuse for an artist as such to say that the content of his works is certainly good (or even excellent) but that they lack the right form. The only genuine works of art are precisely the ones whose content and form show themselves to be completely identical. We can say of the *Iliad* that its content is the Trojan War or, more precisely, the wrath of Achilles; in saying this we have said everything, but also only very little, for what makes the *Iliad* into the *Iliad* is the poetic form into which that content is moulded. Similarly, the content of *Romeo and Juliet* is the ruin of two lovers brought about by strife between their families; but by itself this is not yet Shakespeare's immortal tragedy.

Moreover, as far as the relationship of content and form in the domain of science is concerned, we ought to recall here the distinction between philosophy and the other sciences. The finitude of the latter consists altogether in the fact that thinking, which is a merely formal activity in them, adopts its content as something given from outside, and the content is not known to be determined from within by the underlying thought, so that the form and content do not completely permeate one another. In philosophy, on the contrary, this separation falls by the wayside, and hence it must be called infinite cognition. But even philosophical thinking is very frequently regarded as a mere activity of the form; in regard to logic especially, which admittedly has to do only with thoughts as such, its lack of content is taken for granted. If we simply understand by content only what is palpable, what is perceptible by the senses, then it must indeed be conceded willingly that philosophy as such, and the Logic in particular, have *no* content, i.e., they have no content of this sensibly perceptible kind. But with regard to what is understood by content, even our ordinary consciousness and our general linguistic usage do not stop at what is perceptible by the senses at all, nor yet in general at what is merely there. When we speak of a book that lacks content everybody understands that this does not simply mean that the book has empty pages; it means a book whose content is as good as nil; and it will turn out, on closer consideration, that, in the last analysis, what an educated mind refers to primarily as "content" only means what is well thought out. But this means also that we must admit that thoughts are not to be considered as indifferent to their content, or as being in themselves empty forms, and that, just as in art, so too in all other domains, the truth and the solidity of the content rest essentially on the fact that this content shows itself to be identical with the form.

### § 134

*Immediate* existence, however, is a determinacy of subsistence itself as well as of the form; hence, it is just as much external to the determinacy of content as this externality, which the content has through the moment of its subsistence, is essential to the content. Posited in this way, appearance is *relationship*, in which one and the same, the content, is the developed form; i.e., both the externality and *opposition* of independent existences,

and their *identical* relation, within which alone these distinct existences are what they are.

### C. RELATIONSHIP

#### § 135

(α) The *immediate* relationship is that of the whole and *the parts*; the content is the whole and *consists* of its opposite, i.e., of the parts (of the form). The parts are diverse from each other and they are what is independent. But they are parts only in their identical relation to each other, or insofar as, taken together, they constitute the whole. But *the ensemble*<sup>a</sup> is the opposite and negation of the part.

*Addition.* Essential relationship is the determinate, quite universal mode of appearing. Everything that exists stands in a relationship, and this relationship is what is genuine in every existence. Consequently, what exists does not do so abstractly, on its own account, but only within an other; within this other, however, it is relation to self, and relationship is the unity of relation to self and relation to another.

The relationship of the whole and its parts is *untrue* inasmuch as its concept and reality do not correspond to one another. It is the very concept of a whole to contain parts; but if the whole is posited as what it is according to its concept, then, when it is divided, it ceases at once to be a whole. There certainly are things that answer to this part-whole relationship, but, just for that reason, they are only inferior and untrue existences. In this connection we should recollect the general point that when we speak of something's being "untrue" in a philosophical discussion, that should not to be understood to mean that the sort of thing spoken of does not exist; a bad State or a sick body may exist all the same, but they are "untrue" because their concept and their reality do not correspond to one another.

The relationship of whole and parts, being relationship in its immediacy, is in any case one that easily recommends itself to the reflective understanding; hence the understanding is frequently content with it where deeper relationships are in fact involved. For instance, the members and organs of a living body should not be considered merely as parts of it, for they are what they are only in their unity and are not indifferent to that unity at all. The members and organs become mere "parts" only under the hands of the anatomist; but for that reason he is dealing with corpses rather than with living bodies. This is not to say that this kind of dissection should not happen at all, but only that the external and mechanical relationship of whole and parts does not suffice for the cognition of organic life in its truth.

a. das Zusammen

The same applies in a much higher degree when the part-whole relationship is applied to spirit and to the configurations of the spiritual world. Even in psychology we do not speak expressly of “parts” of the soul or of the spirit; but still the treatment of this discipline from the point of view of the understanding also presupposes the representation of that finite relationship, because the various forms of spiritual activity are enumerated one after the other and are only described in their isolation, as so-called particular powers and capacities.

## § 136

(B) What is one and the same in this relationship, [i.e.,] the relation to self that is present in it, is thus an immediately *negative* relation to self, namely as the mediation, by virtue of which one and the same is *indifferent* with regard to the distinction and is the *negative* relation to self—the relation which, as inward reflection, repels itself into distinction, and as reflection-into-another, posits itself [as] existing, and conversely leads this reflection-into-another back into relation to self and into indifference. [This is] *force* and its *utterance*.

The *relationship of the whole and the parts* is the immediate (and therefore the thoughtless) relationship and overturning of self-identity into diversity. We pass from the whole to the parts and from the parts to the whole, forgetting in each the antithesis to the other, because we take each of them by itself—now the whole, and now the parts—as an independent existence. Or, since the parts are supposed to subsist in the whole and this [is supposed to consist] of the parts, it follows that, in one case, the whole is *what subsists*, in the other case, the parts, and each time the other [term] is correspondingly *what is unessential*. In its superficial form this is just what the *mechanical* relationship consists in: that the parts, as independent, stand over against each other and against the whole.

The *progress ad infinitum* that is involved in the *divisibility of matter* can also employ this relationship; and when it does, it becomes the thoughtless alternation of the two sides. First a thing is taken as a *whole*, and then we pass on to the *determination of its parts*; then this determination is forgotten, and we treat what was previously a part as a whole; then the determination of the part comes back, and so on ad infinitum. But when it is taken as the negative that it [really] is, this infinity is the *negative* relation of the relationship to itself; it is *force*, the whole that is identical with itself, as being-within-self—and as subsuming this being-within-self

and uttering itself—and conversely the utterance which vanishes and returns into the force.

In spite of this infinity, force is also finite; for the content, the *one and the same* of force and its utterance, is still only *in-itself* this identity; the two sides are not yet, each of them on its own account, the concrete identity of the relationship, i.e., the totality. Hence, they are diverse for each other and the relationship is a finite one. The force therefore needs solicitation from outside; it acts blindly, and, because of this defectiveness of the form, the content is restricted and contingent too. It is not yet truly identical with the form, not yet Concept and purpose, which is what is determinate in and for itself.—This distinction is most essential, but it is not easy to grasp; it has to determine itself more precisely in the concept of purpose itself. If we disregard this distinction, we are led into the confusion of grasping God as force—a confusion from which Herder's *God*<sup>16</sup> suffers quite conspicuously.

It is often said that the *nature of force* itself is *unknown* and that we are cognizant only of its utterance. But, on the one hand, the whole *determination of the content* of the *force* is just the same as the content-determination of the *utterance*; and because of this the explanation of an appearance through a force is an empty tautology. Thus, what is supposed to remain unknown is in fact nothing but the empty form of inward reflection, which is all that makes the force distinct from its utterance, and this form is likewise something that is quite well known. It adds nothing at all to the content and the law, of which we are supposed to be cognizant just from the appearance alone. We are also assured everywhere that this does not imply any assertion concerning the force [itself]; but in that case it is hard to see why the form of force was introduced into the sciences.—Yet, on the other hand, the nature of force is certainly something unknown, because both the necessity of the internal coherence of its content, and the necessity of the content insofar as it is restricted on its own account and hence has its determinacy through the mediation of an other that is outside it, are still lacking.

*Addition 1.* In comparison with the preceding immediate relationship of whole and parts, the relationship of force and its utterance should be considered infinite, because in it the identity of the two sides that was present only implicitly in “whole and parts” is now posited. Although it consists implicitly of parts, the whole does cease to be a whole when it is divided; a force, on the other hand, only proves itself to be a force by uttering itself. It returns to itself in its utterance, for the utterance is



itself a force once more. But this relationship, too, is again a finite one, and its finitude consists generally in the fact that it is mediated; just as, conversely, the relationship of whole and parts has shown itself to be finite because of its immediacy. The finitude of the mediated relationship of force and its utterance is shown, first, by the fact that any force is conditioned by something else and needs something other than itself in order to subsist. Thus we all know, for instance, that the principal vehicle of magnetic force is iron, whose remaining properties (colour, specific weight, relationship to acids, etc.) are independent of this relation to magnetism. The situation is the same with all the other forces, which show themselves always to be conditioned and mediated by something other than themselves.

The finitude of force is shown further by the fact that it requires solicitation in order to utter itself. What solicits a force is again itself the utterance of a force (which in order to be uttered must similarly be solicited). In this way we get either an infinite progression once more or a reciprocity of soliciting and being solicited; but an absolute beginning of motion is still lacking here. Unlike purpose, force is not yet something that determines itself from within; the content is something determinately given, so that force, in uttering itself, is, as we say, blind in its working; and that is what is to be understood as the difference between the abstract utterance of force and all purposive activity.

*Addition 2.* The oft-repeated assertion that there can be cognition only of the utterance of a force, and not of the force itself, must be rejected as unfounded, because a force consists precisely in its utterance, so that cognition of the totality of utterance grasped as law is cognition of the force itself. Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked here that the assertion that what forces are in-themselves is beyond cognition, involves a correct hunch about the finitude of this relationship. We first encounter the single utterances of a force as an indeterminate manifold, and in their isolation they are contingent. Then we reduce this manifold to its inner unity, which we designate as “force”, and by becoming cognizant of the law that reigns in it we become aware that what seems to be contingent is something necessary. But the various forces themselves are again manifold and, being merely juxtaposed, they appear contingent.

In empirical physics, therefore, we talk about the forces of gravity, of magnetism, of electricity, and so on; and similarly, in empirical psychology, we speak of the force of memory, the force of imagination, the force of will, and all manner of other forces of the soul. Hence, the need to become conscious of these various forces as a similarly unified whole recurs once more; and this need would not be satisfied by the simple reduction of the various forces to one primitive force that is common to them all. In fact, any such primitive force would be only an empty abstraction, as much lacking in content as the abstract thing-in-itself. Moreover, the relationship of force to its utterance is essentially a mediated one, and consequently, if we interpret the force as original or as self-subsistent, this contradicts the very concept of force.

This being the nature of force, we may well be content to let it be said that the existent world is an utterance of divine forces; but we should object to the treat-

ment of God himself as a mere force, because force is still a subordinate and finite determination. It was in this sense therefore that the church declared impious the undertaking of those who (at the time of the so-called reawakening of the sciences) set themselves to trace the singular phenomena of nature back to the same underlying force. For, if it were the forces of gravitation, of vegetation, etc., which occasion the motion of the heavenly bodies, the growth of plants, etc., then nothing would remain for the divine governance of the world to do, and God would thereby be degraded into the idle spectator of this play of forces. Certainly, the natural scientists, and especially Newton,<sup>17</sup> claimed quite expressly that, although they employed the reflective form of force for the explanation of natural phenomena, their doing so was not meant to prejudice the honour of God as the creator and governor of the world. Nevertheless, this explanation by reference to forces has the consequence that the argumentative understanding proceeds to fixate the singular forces, each one on its own account, and cleaves to them in this finitude as something ultimate; so that, over and against this finitised world of independent forces and stuffs, nothing remains for the determination of God but the abstract infinity of a highest essence in a beyond that is inaccessible to our cognition.

This is, indeed, the standpoint of materialism, and of the modern Enlightenment, whose knowledge of God reduces to the fact *that* he is and disclaims all knowledge of *what* he is. So, in the polemic of which we are speaking, the church and the religious consciousness must be said to have been right, inasmuch as the finite forms of the understanding certainly do not suffice for the cognition either of nature or of the configurations of the spiritual world in their truth. All the same, we should not overlook the formal justification of the empirical sciences by the Enlightenment. This justification consists generally in reclaiming the content of this present world in all its determinacy for our thinking cognition—instead of letting the matter end simply with the abstract faith that God created and governs the world. When our religious consciousness, supported by the authority of the church, teaches us that it is God who created the world by his almighty will, and that it is he who guides the stars in their courses, and grants all creatures subsistence and well-being, the question “why?” remains to be answered, and the answering of this question is just what constitutes the common task of science, both empirical and philosophical. Insofar as the religious consciousness does not recognise this task and the right contained in it, but appeals to the impossibility of inquiry into the divine decrees, it adopts the above standpoint of the Enlightenment itself, and does not go beyond the mere understanding. But any such appeal must be regarded as the arbitrary assurance, not of Christian humility at all, but of courtly and fanatical self-debasement, since it contradicts the express command of the Christian religion that we should [re]cognise God in spirit and truth [John 4:24].

### § 137

As the whole which in its own self is negative relation to self, force is this: the repulsion of itself from itself and the *utterance* of itself.<sup>a</sup> But since this

a. *sich zu äußern*

reflection-into-another, or the distinction of the parts, is to the same extent inward reflection, the utterance is the mediation, through which the force, which returns into itself, *is* as force. The utterance itself is the sublation of the diversity (of the two sides) that is present in this relationship, and the positing of the identity, which *in-itself* constitutes the content. Its truth is therefore the relationship whose two sides are distinct only as *what is inner* and *what is outer*.

## § 138

(γ) *What is inner* is the ground, inasmuch as the ground, as mere form, is one *side* of appearance and of the relationship, the empty form of inward reflection; over against it likewise stands existence, the form of the other side of the relationship, with the empty determination of reflection-into-another, or *what is outer*. Its identity is fulfilled, it is the *content*, the *unity* of inward reflection and of reflection-into-another that is posited in the movement of the force; both are the same *one* totality, and this unity makes them into the content.

## § 139

Hence, what is outer is, *first of all*, the same content as what is inner. What is internal is also present externally, and vice versa; appearance does not show anything that is not within essence, and there is nothing in essence that is not manifested.

## § 140

*Secondly*, however, what is inner and what is outer are also *opposed* to each other as determinations of the form; and as abstractions of identity with self and of mere manifoldness or reality they are radically opposed. But since as moments of the One form they are essentially identical, what is first posited *only* in one abstraction is also *immediately only* in the other one. Hence, what is only *something-internal*, is also (by the same token) *only something-external*; and what is *only something-external* is also as yet *only something-internal*.

The usual error of reflection is to take *essence* as what is merely *inner*. If it is taken only in this way, then this view of it is also a quite *external* one and that “essence” is the empty external abstraction.

Into the *inwardness*<sup>a</sup> of Nature—says a poet—  
 No created spirit penetrates,  
 Most fortunate, if it knows but the *outer* shell!\*

He should rather have said that, precisely when, for such a spirit, the essence of nature is determined as *what is inner*, then it only knows the *outer* shell.—Because in *being* in general, or even in mere sense-perception, the *concept* is still only what is inner, it is something outer [with regard] to being: both a being and a thinking that are subjective and without truth.—Both in nature and in spirit, too, Concept, purpose, and law, so far as they are still only *inner* dispositions, pure possibilities, are still only an external inorganic nature, what is known by a third, an alien power, etc.—The way a man is externally, i.e., in his actions (not of course just in his merely corporeal externality), that is how he is internally; and if he is *only* internally virtuous or moral, etc., i.e., *only* in his intentions, and dispositions, and his outward [behaviour]<sup>a</sup> is not identical with those, then the former is as hollow and empty as the latter.

*Addition.* As the unity of the two preceding relationships, the relationship of inward and outward is at the same time the sublation of mere relationality and of appearance altogether. But for as long as the understanding holds inward and outward fast in their separation from one another, they are a pair of empty forms, and the one is as null as the other.

Both in the study of nature and in that of the spiritual world, it is of great importance to keep the special character of the relationship between inward and outward properly in view, and to guard against the error of thinking that only what is *inward* is essential, that it is the heart of the matter,<sup>c</sup> whilst, the *outward* side, on the contrary, is what is inessential and indifferent. We first meet this error when, as often happens, the distinction between nature and spirit is traced back to the abstract distinction between outward and inward. As for the interpretation of nature that is involved here, it is certainly true that nature is what is external gener-

\*See Goethe's "Indignant Outcry" in *Zur Morphologie*, vol. 1:3:

For sixty years I hear repeated,  
 What I curse—be it in secret—:  
 Nature has no core nor crust,  
 Here everything comes all at once.<sup>18</sup>

a. *Ins Innere*

b. *sein Äußeres*

c. *worauf es eigentlich ankommt*

ally, not only for the spirit but also *in-itself*. But, this “generally” must not be taken in the sense of abstract externality, for there simply is no such thing, but rather in the sense that the Idea, which forms the common content of nature and spirit, is present in nature only in an external way, and yet, precisely for this reason, in a merely internal way too. And, however much the abstract understanding with its “either-or” may balk at this interpretation of nature, still it is one that is also found in our other modes of consciousness, and in our religious consciousness most distinctly of all. Our religion says that nature, no less than the spiritual world, is a revelation of God, and the two are distinguished from one another by the fact that, whereas nature never gets to the point of being conscious of its divine essence, it is the express task of finite spirit to achieve this. That is just why the spirit is initially finite. So those who regard the essence of nature as something merely inward and therefore inaccessible to us are adopting the standpoint of those Ancients who considered God to be jealous, a position against which Plato and Aristotle have already declared themselves.<sup>19</sup> God imparts and reveals what he is, and he does it, first of all, through nature and in it.

Furthermore, the defect or imperfection of an object consists generally in its being only something inward, and hence at the same time only something outward, or (what is the same thing) in its being only something external, and hence at the same time only something internal. Thus a child, for instance, [considered] as human in a general sense, is of course a rational essence; but the child’s reason as such is present at first only as something inward, i.e., as a disposition or vocation, and this, which is merely internal, has for it equally the form of what is merely external, namely, the will of its parents, the learning of its teachers, and in general the rational world that surrounds it. The education and formation of the child consists therefore in the process by which it becomes *for-itself* also what it is initially only *in-itself* and hence for others (the adults). Reason, which is at first present in the child only as an inner possibility, is made actual by education, and conversely, the child becomes in like manner conscious that the ethics, religion, and science which it regarded initially as external authority are things that belong to its own and inner nature.

In this connection, the situation is the same for the adult as it is for the child, to the extent that, in conflict with his vocation, he remains embroiled in the natural state of his knowing and willing; and similarly, for example, the punishment to which the criminal is subjected has for him the form of an external violence, but in fact it is only the manifestation of his own criminal will.

And from this discussion we can also gather what our attitude should be when someone appeals to his quite different inner self, and his allegedly excellent intentions and sentiments, in the face of his inadequate performances and even of his discreditable acts. There may, of course, be single instances where, through the adversity of external circumstances, well-meant intentions come to nothing and the execution of well-thought out plans is frustrated. But here, too, the essential unity of inward and outward generally holds good; and hence it must be said that a person *is* what he *does*, and the mendacious vanity that warms itself with the consciousness of inner excellence must be confronted with the saying of the Gospels that “By their fruits ye shall cognise them” [Matt. 7:16,20]. Just as it holds

good first in an ethical and a religious connection, so that great saying holds for scientific and artistic achievements, too. As far as artistic ability is concerned, a teacher of keen eye may perhaps, when he becomes aware of notable talents in a boy, express the opinion that a Raphael or a Mozart lies hidden in him; and the results will show how far that opinion was well founded. But it is cold comfort for a dauber or a poetaster to console himself with the view that his inner self is full of high ideals; and when he demands that he should be judged by his intentions rather than his achievements, his pretensions are rightly rejected as empty and unfounded. Conversely, it is also very often the case that in judging others, who have brought about something fair, square, and solid, we may employ the false distinction of inward and outward, in order to maintain that what they have done is only something external to them, and that their inner motives were completely different, because they acted to satisfy their vanity or some other discreditable passion. This is the envious disposition which, being itself unable to accomplish anything great, strives to drag greatness down to its own level and to belittle it. As against this, we may recall the fine saying of Goethe, that for the great superiorities of others there is no remedy but love.<sup>20</sup> So if in order to depreciate the praiseworthy achievements of others there is talk of hypocrisy, we must notice, on the contrary, that although a man may certainly dissemble and hide a good deal in single instances, still he cannot hide his inner self altogether; it reveals itself infallibly in the *decursus vitae* [course of life], so that even in this connection it must be said that a man is nothing but the series of his acts.

In our modern era, what we call "pragmatic historiography"<sup>21</sup> has often sinned quite notably with regard to great historical characters through this false separation between inward and outward, dimming and distorting the unprejudiced apprehension of them. Instead of contenting themselves with simply narrating the great deeds that have been accomplished by heroes of world-historical stature, and recognising that their inner selves correspond to the content of these deeds, the pragmatic historians have considered it a right and duty to scent out allegedly secret motives behind what lies open to the light of day; and their opinion has been that historical inquiry is all the deeper the more it succeeds in removing the halo of the hero who has hitherto been celebrated and praised, and degrading him, with regard to his origin and his "real" significance, to the level of common mediocrity. In the interest of this kind of pragmatic historical inquiry, the study of psychology is often recommended, too, because it is supposed to yield information about the "real" motives by which people are generally determined to act. The psychology that is here appealed to, however, is nothing but that petty expertise about human nature<sup>a</sup> which takes as the object of its study, not what is universal and essential about human nature, but principally just what is peculiar and contingent such as isolated drives, passions, and so on. Besides, although this psychological-pragmatic approach to the motives that underlie great deeds would still leave the historian the choice between the substantial interests of the fatherland, of justice, of religious truth, etc., on the one hand, and the subjective and formal interests of vanity, ambition, avarice, etc., on the other, the latter are considered the "real" moving

a. *Menschenkennterei*

forces, because otherwise the presupposed antithesis between what is inward (the disposition of the person acting) and what is outward (the content of the action) would not be borne out. But since inward and outward have in truth the same content, it must be expressly asserted, against all such schoolmasterly cleverness, that if the historical heroes had been only concerned with subjective and formal<sup>22</sup> interests, they would not have accomplished what they did; and with reference to the unity of inward and outward, it must be recognised that the great men willed what they did and did what they willed.

## § 141

The empty abstractions, because of which the one identical content is still supposed to be in relationship, sublate themselves, through their immediate passing-over, into one another; the content is itself nothing but their identity (§ 138); they are the semblance of essence, posited as semblance. Through the utterance of force, what is inward is *posited* in existence; this *positing* is a *mediation* through empty abstractions; it vanishes within itself into the *immediacy*, in which what is *inner* and what is *outer* are identical *in and for themselves* and where their distinction is determined as mere positedness. This identity is *actuality*.

## C *Actuality*

## § 142

Actuality is the unity, become immediate, of essence and existence, or of what is inner and what is outer. The utterance of the actual is the actual itself, so that the actual remains still something-essential in this [utterance] and is only something-essential so far as it is in immediate external existence.

*Being* and *existence* presented themselves earlier as forms of the immediate; *being* is quite generally unreflected immediacy and *passing-over* into another. *Existence* is immediate unity of being and reflection, and hence *appearance*; it comes from the ground and goes to the ground. The actual is the *positedness* of that unity, the relationship that has become identical with itself; hence, it is ex-

empted from *passing-over*, and its *externality* is its energy; in that externality it is inwardly reflected; its being-there is only the *manifestation of itself*, not of an other.

*Addition.* Actuality and thought—more precisely the Idea—are usually opposed to one another in a trivial way, and hence we often hear it said therefore that, although there is certainly nothing to be said against the correctness and truth of a certain thought, still nothing like it is to be found or can actually be put into effect. Those who talk like this, however, only demonstrate that they have not adequately interpreted the nature either of thought or of actuality. For, on the one hand, in all talk of this kind, thought is assumed to be synonymous with subjective representation, planning, intention, and so on; and, on the other hand, actuality is assumed to be synonymous with external, sensible existence.

These assumptions may be all very well in common life where people are not very precise about categories and their designation; and it may of course happen to be the case that the plan, or the so-called “idea”, of a certain method of taxation, for example, is quite good and expedient in itself, but that nothing of the sort can be found in what is called (in the same ordinary usage) “actuality”—and that in the given circumstances it cannot be put into effect. All the same, when the abstract understanding takes control of these categories and exaggerates their distinction to the point of regarding them as a hard and fast antithesis, such that in this actual world we must knock ideas out of our heads, then it is necessary, in the name of science and sound reason, to reject such stuff decisively. For, on the one hand, ideas are not just to be found in our heads, and the Idea is not at all something so impotent that whether it is realised or not depends upon our own sweet will; on the contrary, it is at once what is quite simply effective and actual as well. On the other hand, actuality is not so bad or so irrational as it is imagined to be by “practical men” who are devoid of thoughts or at odds with thinking and intellectually derelict. As distinct from mere appearance, actuality, being initially the unity of inward and outward, is so far from confronting reason as something other than it, that it is, on the contrary, what is rational through and through; and what is not rational must, for that very reason, be considered not to be actual. This agrees, for that matter, with the usage of educated speech, in that, for example, we would object to recognising someone who does not know how to bring about something valid and rational as being “actually” a poet or a statesman.

The ground of a widespread prejudice about the relationship between the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato must also be looked for in the common interpretation of actuality that we are here discussing, and in the confusion of actuality with what is tangible and immediately perceptible. According to this prejudice, the difference between Plato and Aristotle is supposed to be that, whereas the former recognises the Idea and only the Idea as what is true, the latter, in contrast, rejects the Idea, and clings to what is actual; for that reason he should be considered the founder and leader of empiricism. On this head it must be remarked that actuality certainly does form the principle of Aristotle’s philosophy, but his actuality is that of the Idea itself, and not the ordinary actuality of what is immediately present.



More precisely, therefore, Aristotle's polemic against Plato consists in his designation of the Platonic Idea as mere *dynamis*, and in urging, on the contrary, that the Idea, which is recognised by both of them equally to be what is alone true, should be regarded essentially as *energeia*, i.e., as the inwardness that is totally to the fore,<sup>a</sup> so that it is the unity of inward and outward. In other words, the Idea should be regarded as Actuality in the emphatic sense that we have given to it here.<sup>23</sup>

### § 143

As this concreteness, actuality contains those determinations [i.e., essence and existence, what is inner and what is outer] and their distinction; and it is therefore their development, too, so that they are at the same time determined in it as semblance, or as merely posited (§ 141). (1) As *identity* in general it is, first, *possibility*—the inward reflection that is posited as the *abstract* and *unessential essentiality*, in contrast to the *concrete* unity of the actual. Possibility is what is *essential* to reality, but in such a way that it is at the same time *only* possibility.

It was probably the determination of *possibility* that allowed Kant to regard it—together with actuality and necessity—as *modalities*, “since these determinations do not in the least enlarge the concept as object, but only express its relationship to the faculty of cognition.”<sup>24</sup> Possibility is indeed the empty abstraction of inward reflection—what was earlier called the inner, except that now it is determined as sublated, *merely posited*, external inwardness;<sup>b</sup> and so it is certainly now also *posited* as a mere modality, as an inadequate abstraction, or taken more concretely, as belonging only to subjective thinking. Actuality and necessity, on the contrary, are truly anything but a mere *mode or manner*<sup>c</sup> for something else; they are rather just the opposite, [for] they are posited as the concrete that is not only posited, but inwardly completed.—Since possibility is at first the mere form of *self-identity*, in contrast to the concrete as what is actual, the rule for it is only that something shall not inwardly contradict itself; consequently *everything is possible*, for this form of identity can be given to every content through abstraction. But *everything* is just as much *impossible* too; for in every content, since it is something-concrete, its determinacy can be grasped

a. *heraus*

b. *das . . . äußerliche Innre*

c. *Art und Weise*

as a determinate opposition and hence as a contradiction.—For this reason there is nothing emptier than the talk about possibilities and impossibilities of this kind. And in particular, there should be no talk in philosophy of proving *that something is possible*, or *that something else is possible*, too; and that something, as people also say, is “thinkable.” And the warning not to use this category which has already been shown up as untrue even on its own account applies just as immediately to the historian. But the subtlety of the empty understanding takes the greatest pleasure in this pointless invention of possibilities, and right many of them at that.

*Addition.* The notion of possibility appears initially to be the richer and more comprehensive determination, and actuality, in contrast, as the poorer and more restricted one. So we say, “Everything is possible, but not everything that is possible is on that account actual too.” But, in fact, i.e., in thought, actuality is what is more comprehensive, because, being the concrete thought, it contains possibility within itself as an abstract moment. We find this accepted in our ordinary consciousness, too: for when we speak of the possible, as distinct from the actual, we call it “merely” possible.

It is usually said that possibility consists generally in thinkability. But thinking is here understood to mean just the apprehending of a content in the form of abstract identity. Now, since any content can be brought into this form, providing only that it is separated from the relations in which it stands, even the most absurd and nonsensical suppositions can be considered possible. It is possible that the moon will fall on the earth this evening, for the moon is a body separate from the earth and therefore can fall downward just as easily as a stone that has been flung into the air; it is possible that the Sultan may become Pope, for he is a human being, and as such he can become a convert to Christianity, and then a priest, and so on. Now in all this talk of possibilities it is especially the principle<sup>a</sup> of “grounding” that is applied in the way discussed earlier: according to this principle, anything for which a ground (or reason) can be specified is possible. The more uneducated a person is, the less he knows about the determinate relations in which the objects that he is considering stand and the more inclined he tends to be to indulge in all manner of empty possibilities; we see this, for example, with so-called pub politicians in the political domain.

Moreover, it happens not infrequently in practical matters that evil will and inertia hide behind the category of possibility, in order to avoid definite obligations in that way; what we said earlier about the use of the principle of “grounding” holds good here, too. Rational, practical people do not let themselves be impressed by what is possible, precisely because it is only possible; instead they hold onto what is actual—and, of course, it is not just what is immediately there that should

a. *Denkgesetz*

be understood as actual. For that matter, there is no shortage of all manner of proverbs in common life in which the justly low estimation of abstract possibility is expressed. For instance, we say that “A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”

And, furthermore, just as everything can be considered possible, so we can say with equal right that everything can be considered impossible, since any content (which, as such, is always something-concrete) contains not only diverse but also opposite determinations. Thus, for example, nothing is more impossible than the fact that I exist, for “I” is at once simple self-relation as well as, unconditionally, relation to another. The same situation holds for every other content in the natural and spiritual world. We can say that matter is impossible, because it is the unity of repulsion and attraction. The same holds for life, for law, for freedom, and, above all, for God himself as the true, i.e., triune God; indeed the Trinity is a concept that has been rejected by the abstract Enlightenment of the understanding in accordance with its principle, because it is allegedly an expression that cannot be thought without contradiction. In any case it is the empty understanding that roams around in these empty forms, and the business of philosophy with regard to them consists simply in exhibiting their nullity and lack of content. Whether this or that is possible or impossible depends on the content, i.e., on the totality of the moments of actuality, an actuality which, in the unfolding of its moments, proves to be Necessity.

#### § 144

(2) But, in its distinction from possibility as inward reflection the actual is itself just the *externally* concrete, i.e., the immediate that is *inessential*. Or immediately, insofar as it is to begin with (§ 142) the simple unity of *what* is inner and what is outer, a unity which is itself immediate, the actual is [actual] as something-outer that is *inessential*. Thus, it is at the same time (§ 140) what is *only* internal, the abstraction of inward reflection; hence it is itself determined as something *only* possible. When it is given this value of a mere possibility, the actual is *something-contingent*, and conversely, possibility is mere *chance* itself.

#### § 145

Possibility and contingency are the moments of actuality, what is inner and what is outer, posited as mere forms that together constitute the *externality* of the actual. They have their inward reflection in the actual that is determinate *within-itself*, i.e., in the *content*, as their essential ground of determination. Hence, the finitude of the contingent and the possible consists more precisely in the distinctness of the form-determination from the content, and *for that reason whether something is contingent and possible depends on the content*.

*Addition.* Being just the inwardness of actuality, possibility is, precisely for that reason, merely external actuality or *contingency* as well. The contingent is generally what has the ground of its being not within itself but elsewhere. This is the shape in which actuality first presents itself to consciousness, and which is frequently confused with actuality itself. But the contingent is only the actual in the one-sided form of reflection-into-another or the actual considered as what is merely possible. We consider the contingent, therefore, as what either can be or can also not be, as what can be thus or otherwise too, i.e., as that whose being or not being, being thus or otherwise, is grounded not within itself but in another. It is, on the one hand, the general task of cognition to overcome the contingent, whilst, on the other hand, in the domain of the practical, the point is not to remain at the stage of the contingency of willing or of [simple] *freedom of choice*.<sup>a</sup> All the same, it has often happened, particularly in modern times, that contingency has been improperly elevated, and a value that it does not have has been ascribed to it, both in reference to nature and to the spiritual world as well. To begin with nature, it is very often admired chiefly on account of the richness and the multiplicity of its configurations alone. But, apart from the unfolding of the Idea that is present in it, that wealth (taken as it stands) offers nothing of higher rational interest; and the great multiplicity of inorganic and organic configurations affords only the intuition of a contingency that loses itself in indeterminateness. In any case, the motley play of single varieties of animals and plants, the ever-changing figures and groupings of clouds and so on, all conditioned by external circumstances, should not be rated higher than the equally contingent brain waves of a spirit that indulges itself in its own arbitrariness; and the admiration devoted to these phenomena is a very abstract mode of behaviour, from which we ought to advance to a closer insight into the inner harmony and lawfulness of nature.

In the next place, it is particularly important to make an adequate evaluation of contingency in respect of the will. When people speak of freedom of the will, they frequently understand by this simply freedom of choice, i.e., will in the form of contingency. Now, freedom of choice, as the capacity to determine oneself in this way or that, is certainly an essential moment of the will, which by its very concept is free. But it is not freedom itself at all; on the contrary, it is still only freedom in the formal sense.<sup>b</sup> The will that is genuinely free, and contains freedom of choice sublated within itself, is conscious of its content as something steadfast in and for itself; and at the same time it knows the content to be utterly its own. In contrast, the will that does not go beyond the level of freedom of choice, even when it decides in favour of what is, as regards its content, true and right, remains infected with the conceit that, had it so pleased, it could also have decided in favour of something else. For the rest, when we look at it more closely, freedom of choice proves to be a contradiction, because the form and content are here still opposed to one another. The content of freedom of choice is something given, and known to be grounded, not within the will itself, but in external circumstances. For this

a. *Willkür*

b. *die formelle Freiheit*

reason, freedom in relation to such content consists only in the form of choosing; and this formal freedom must be regarded as a freedom that is only supposed to be such<sup>a</sup> because it will be found, in the final analysis, that the same external sort of circumstances in which the content given to the will is grounded must also be invoked to explain the fact that the will decides in favour of just this and not that.

Although it follows from discussion so far that contingency is only a one-sided moment of actuality, and must therefore not be confused with it, still as a form of the Idea as a whole it does deserve its due in the world of objects. This holds first for nature, on the surface of which contingency has free rein, so to speak. This free play should be recognised as such, without the pretension (sometimes erroneously ascribed to philosophy) of finding something in it that could only be so and not otherwise. Similarly, as we have already noted in respect to the will, the contingent also asserts itself in the world of spirit, since will contains the contingent within itself in the shape of freedom of choice, though only as a sublated moment. In regard to the spirit and its activity, we also have to be careful that we are not misled by the well-meant striving of rational cognition into trying to show that phenomena that have the character of contingency are necessary, or, as people tend to say, into “constructing them a priori.”<sup>25</sup> For example, although language is the body of thinking, as it were, still chance indisputably plays a decisive role in it, and the same is true with regard to the configurations of law, art, etc. It is quite correct to say that the task of science and, more precisely, of philosophy, consists generally in coming to know the necessity that is hidden under the semblance of contingency; but this must not be understood to mean that contingency pertains only to our subjective views and that it must therefore be set aside totally if we wish to attain the truth. Scientific endeavours which one-sidedly push in this direction will not escape the justified reproach of being an empty game and a strained pedantry.

#### § 146

More precisely, this *externality* of actuality implies that contingency (as immediate actuality) is essentially what is identical with itself only as *positedness*; but this positedness is equally sublated, it is an externality that is there. Thus it is *something-presupposed*, whose immediate way of being is at the same time a *possibility*, and is destined<sup>b</sup> to be sublated—i.e., to be the possibility of an other: the *condition*.

*Addition.* Being actuality in its immediacy, the contingent is at the same time the possibility of an other. But it is no longer the merely abstract possibility that we began with; instead it is the possibility that *is*; and as such it is *condition*. When we speak of the condition for this or that matter, this has a double implication: namely,

a. *eine bloß gemeinte Freiheit*

b. *die Bestimmung hat*

first, something-there, an existent, or in general something immediate; and secondly, the destination of this immediate being is to be sublated and to serve for the realisation of another one.

Now, immediate actuality as such is quite generally not what it ought to be; on the contrary, it is a finite actuality, inwardly fractured, and its destination is to be used up. But then the other side of actuality is its essentiality. Initially this is what is inward, which, being mere possibility, is similarly destined to be sublated. As sublated possibility it is the emergence of a new actuality, for which the first immediate actuality was the presupposition. This is the alternation that the concept of Condition contains within itself. When we consider the conditions of a matter, they appear to be something quite without bias.<sup>a</sup> But, in fact, any such immediate actuality contains within it the germ of something else altogether. Initially, this other is just something possible; but this form then sublates and translates itself into actuality. The new actuality that emerges in this way is the specific inwardness of the immediate actuality, which the new actuality uses up. So what comes to be is quite another shape of things, and yet it is not another one either: for the first actuality is now simply posited in accordance with its essence. The conditions that sacrifice themselves, go under and are used up, only come together with themselves in the other actuality.—This is just what the process of actuality is like. Actuality is not just something that is immediately; but, as the essential being, it is the sublation of its own immediacy, and in this way it mediates itself with itself.

### § 147

(3) When it is developed in this way, this externality is a *circle* of the determinations of possibility and immediate actuality; the reciprocal *mediation* of these determinations is *real possibility* in general. As this circle, moreover, it is the totality, i.e., the *content*, the *matter* [i.e., *thing in question*]<sup>b</sup> that is determined in and for itself; and, according to the distinction of the determinations within this unity, it is likewise the concrete *totality of the form* for-itself, the immediate self-translation of the inner into the outer and of the outer into the inner. This self-movement of the form is *activity*, activation<sup>c</sup> of the *matter* [itself], as the *real ground*, which sublates itself into actuality, and the activation of the contingent actuality, i.e., of the conditions: their inward reflection and their self-sublation into another actuality, the actuality of the *matter*. When *all conditions* are present, the matter *must* become actual, and the matter is itself one of the conditions; for, as what is inner, it is at first itself only something-presupposed. *Devel-*

a. *etwas ganz Unbefangenes*

b. *die Sache*<sup>26</sup>

c. *Betätigung*

*oped* actuality as the coincident<sup>a</sup> alternation of what is inner and what is outer, or the alternation of their opposed movements which are united into One movement, is *necessity*.

It is true that necessity has been rightly defined as the unity of possibility and actuality. But when it is expressed only in this way, this determination is superficial, and therefore unintelligible. The concept of necessity is very difficult, precisely because it is the Concept itself, but its moments are still actualities, which have to be grasped at the same time only as forms, or as inwardly broken and in passage.<sup>b</sup> For this reason, the exposition of the moments that constitute necessity must be given in more detail in the following two paragraphs.

*Addition.* When it is said of something that it is necessary, what we ask in the first place is: “Why?”. So, what is necessary should prove to be something posited, something mediated. If we stop at simple mediation, however, we do not yet have what is understood by necessity. What is merely mediated is what it is not through itself but through an other, and therefore it is also merely something-contingent. In contrast, we require of what is necessary that it be what it is through itself, and so, although it may be mediated, it must at the same time also contain mediation sublated within itself. We say of what is necessary, therefore, that it *is*, and hence that it counts for us as a simple relation to self, within which its being conditioned by an other falls away.

It is usually said about necessity that it is “blind,” and this is quite right, inasmuch as *purpose* is still not present *explicitly* as such in the process of necessity. The process of necessity begins with the existence of dispersed circumstances that seem to have no concern with one another and no inward coherence. These circumstances are an immediate actuality that collapses inwardly; and from this negation a new actuality emerges. We have here a content that has a dual character within it in respect to its form: first, as the content of the matter that is at issue,<sup>c</sup> and secondly, as the content of the dispersed circumstances that appear to be something positive, and initially assert themselves as such. Because of its inward nullity, this content is inverted into its negative, and so becomes the content of the matter. As conditions, the immediate circumstances go under, but at the same time they are also preserved as the content of the matter. We say then that something quite different has emerged from these circumstances and conditions, and hence the necessity that constitutes this process is called “blind.” By contrast, if we consider purposive activity, then the content is a purpose of which we knew beforehand, so that this activity is not blind but sighted.

a. *in Eins fallende*

b. *übergewende*

c. *als Inhalt der Sache*

When we say that the world is governed by Providence, this implies that, being predetermined in and for itself, purpose is what is at work generally, so that what is to come corresponds to what was previously known and willed. In any case, the interpretation of the world as determined by necessity, and the faith in a divine Providence, do not have to be considered reciprocally exclusive at all. What underlies the divine Providence<sup>27</sup> at the level of thought will soon prove to be the *Concept*. The Concept is the truth of necessity and contains the latter sublated within itself, just as, conversely, necessity is *implicitly* the Concept. Necessity is blind only insofar as it is not comprehended, and hence there is nothing more absurd than the reproach of blind fatalism that is levelled against the Philosophy of History because it regards as its proper task the cognition of the necessity of what has happened. In this perspective, the Philosophy of History takes on the significance of a theodicy; and those who think to honour divine Providence by excluding necessity from it by this abstraction actually degrade Providence to the level of blind, irrational arbitrariness. The naïve religious consciousness speaks of God's eternal and immutable decrees, and in that there lies the express recognition that necessity belongs to the essence of God. As distinct from God, man with his particular opining and willing carries on according to his mood and caprice, and so it happens to him that when he acts, what comes forth is something quite different from what he intended and willed; on the contrary, God knows what he wills, he is not determined in his eternal willing by inward or outward chance, and what he wills he also irresistibly brings about.

In relation to our disposition and behaviour generally, the standpoint of necessity is in any case of great importance. When we consider what happens as necessary, we seem at first sight to be in a completely unfree situation. As we all know, the Ancients viewed necessity as *destiny*, whereas the modern standpoint, on the contrary, is that of *consolation*. The general meaning of this "consolation" is that when we give up our purposes and interests, we do it in the expectation of receiving some compensation for them. Destiny, in contrast, is without consolation. But when we consider the matter more carefully, we find that the disposition of the Ancients with regard to destiny does not bring us face to face with unfreedom at all, but rather with freedom.<sup>28</sup> This is because unfreedom is grounded upon firmly cleaving to the antithesis, in such a way that we consider that what *is* and does happen stands in contradiction with what *ought* to be and to happen. The disposition of the Ancients, on the contrary, was to say: It is so, *because* it is, and it ought to be just *the way* it is. So there is no antithesis here, and hence no unfreedom, no pain, and no suffering.

Of course, as we remarked before, this attitude to destiny is without any consolation; but a disposition of this kind was never in need of consolation either, just because subjectivity had here not yet attained its infinite significance. This is the standpoint that must be kept in view, as what is decisive, when we compare the ancient frame of mind with our modern Christian disposition. Suppose that we first understand by subjectivity just the finite immediate subjectivity with the contingent and arbitrary content of its private inclinations and interests, or, in short, what we call a person, as distinct from the matter<sup>a</sup> in the emphatic sense of the

a *Sache*



word (in the sense in which we usually say—and rightly so—that it is the “matter” that matters,<sup>a</sup> not the person). When we do that, we cannot but admire the serene submission of the Ancients to destiny, or fail to recognise this disposition as one that is higher and worthier than the modern one, which stubbornly pursues its subjective purposes, and, when it sees itself forced to renounce their attainment after all, can only console itself with the prospect of receiving compensation in another shape. But in addition, subjectivity is not really just that first subjectivity which, as opposed to the matter, is bad and finite; no, in its truth, subjectivity is immanent in the matter, and, being therefore infinite Subjectivity, it is the truth of the matter itself. When we interpret it in this way, the standpoint of consolation acquires quite another and higher significance, and it is in this sense that the Christian religion should be regarded as the religion of consolation and indeed of absolute consolation. As we all know, Christianity contains the doctrine that God wills that all men should be saved [1 Tim. 2:4], and that means that subjectivity has an infinite value. More precisely then, the consoling power of the Christian religion consists in the fact that God himself is known as absolute Subjectivity, and this Subjectivity contains the moment of particularity within itself. Hence, *our* particularity, too, is recognised to be something that is not just to be abstractly negated; it must at the same time be preserved.

Or again the gods of the Ancients were likewise regarded as personal, of course; but the personality of Zeus, or of Apollo and of the others, is not an actual personality but only an imaginary one. Or, to put it in another way, these gods are merely personifications; they do not *know themselves* as such; they are only *known about* instead. We also find this defect and this impotence of the ancient gods in the religious consciousness of the Ancients, in that they regarded the gods themselves, and not only human beings, as subject to destiny (to the *peprōmenon* or *heimarmenē*)—a destiny that had to be represented as unrevealed necessity, and hence as what is thoroughly impersonal, without self, and blind. The Christian God, in contrast, is not merely known, but utterly self-knowing, and not a merely imaginary personality, but rather the absolutely actual one.

For the rest, although we must refer to the Philosophy of Religion for a more developed explanation of the points touched upon here, we can add one more comment on how important it is that everyone should interpret whatever happens to him in the spirit of the old proverb that says, “Everyone is the smith who forges his own fortune.” What this means, in general, is that man has the enjoyment only of himself.<sup>b</sup> The opposite view is the one where we shift the blame for what befalls us onto other people, onto unfavourable circumstances, and the like. But that is just the standpoint of unfreedom once more, and the source of discontent as well. By contrast, when we recognise that whatever happens to us is only an evolution of our own selves, and that we carry only the burden of our own debts, we behave as free men, and whatever may befall us, we keep the firm faith that nothing unjust can happen to us. People who live in discord with themselves and their lot get involved in much that is wrong and awry, precisely because of the false opinion

a. *daß es auf die Sache ankommt*

b. *Hierin liegt, daß der Mensch überhaupt nur sich selbst zu genießen bekommt*

that injustice has been done to them by others. Now, certainly, there is much that is contingent in what happens to us. But this contingency is grounded in the natural dimension of man. And, since we also have the consciousness of our freedom, the harmony of our souls and our peace of mind will not be destroyed by the misfortunes that befall us. Thus, it is our own view of necessity that determines our human contentment and discontent, and thereby our very destiny.

#### § 148

Among the three moments, *condition*, *matter* [i.e., thing in question], and *activity*:

(a) The *condition* is ( $\alpha$ ) what is presupposed; as only *posited* it is only in relation to the matter; but as *pre*[supposed] it is by itself: it is a contingent, external circumstance that exists without reference to the matter. What is presupposed here is (in this contingency, but at the same time with reference to the thing in question, which is the totality) a *complete circle of conditions*. ( $\beta$ ) The conditions are *passive*; they are used as material for the matter and in that way they enter into the *content* of the matter; they are also in conformity with this content and already contain its *entire determination* within themselves.

(b) The *matter* [itself] is equally ( $\alpha$ ) something-presupposed: as *posited* it is still only something-inner and possible, and as *pre*[supposed] it is a content that is independent on its own account; ( $\beta$ ) through the employment of the conditions it acquires its external existence, the realisation of its content determinations, which correspond on their side to the conditions, so that it also establishes itself as [the] thing in question on the basis of these conditions and emerges from them.

(c) The *activity* is ( $\alpha$ ) likewise existent on its own account, independently (a man, a character); and at the same time it has its possibility only in the conditions and in the matter [itself]; ( $\beta$ ) it is the movement of translating the conditions into the matter, and the latter into the former as the side of existence; more precisely [it is the movement] to make the matter [itself] go forth from the conditions, in which it is *implicitly* present, and to give existence to the matter by sublating the existence that the conditions have. Insofar as these three moments have the shape of *independent existence* vis-à-vis one another, this process is *external* necessity.—This necessity has a *restricted* content as its matter. For the matter [itself] is this whole in *simple* determinacy; but since the whole is external to itself in its form, it is also inwardly and in its content external to itself, and this externality belonging to the matter is the restriction of its content.

#### § 149

Hence, necessity is in-itself the *One essence* that is identical *with itself* but full of content, which shines within itself in such a way that its distinctions have

the form of *independent actualities*; and as absolute *form* this identical [essence] is at the same time the *activity* of the sublating [of immediacy] into mediatedness and of mediation into immediacy.—What is necessary is so through an *other* that has fallen apart into the *mediating ground* (the matter and the activity), and an *immediate* actuality, something-contingent which is at the same time [its] condition. As what is through an other, the necessary is not in and for itself, but is something that is merely *posited*. But this mediation is just as immediately the sublating of itself; the ground and the contingent condition is translated into immediacy,<sup>29</sup> whereby that positedness is sublating into actuality, and the matter has *gone together with itself*. In this return into itself the necessary *simply is*, as [an] unconditioned actuality.—The necessary is so, [because it is] *mediated* by a circle of circumstances: it is so, because the circumstances are so; and at the same time<sup>a</sup> it is so *without mediation*—it is so, because it is.

### A. RELATIONSHIP OF SUBSTANTIALITY

#### § 150

Inwardly the necessary is *absolute relationship*; i.e., it is the *developed* process (see the preceding paragraphs), in which relationship sublating itself equally into absolute identity.

In its immediate form it is the relationship of *substantiality* and *accidentality*. The absolute identity of this relationship with itself is *substance* as such. As necessity substance is the negativity of this form of inwardness,<sup>b</sup> and therefore it posits itself as *actuality*. But it is equally the *negativity* of this external [side], for through this negativity the actual, as immediate, is only *something-accidental*, which in virtue of this [very status of] mere possibility passes into another actuality; and this *passing-over* is substantial identity as *activity-of-form* (§§ 148, 149).

#### § 151

Substance, therefore, is the totality of the accidents; it reveals itself in them as their absolute negativity, i.e., as the *absolute might* and at the same time as the *richness of all content*. The content, however, is *nothing but this manifestation itself*, since the determinacy that is inwardly reflected into

a. *in Einem*

b. *Innerlichkeit*

content is itself only a moment of the form, which passes over into the *might* of the substance. Substantiality is the absolute activity-of-form and the might of necessity, and every content is just a moment that belongs to this process alone—the absolute overturning of form and content into one another.

*Addition.* In the history of philosophy, we meet with *substance* as the principle of Spinoza's philosophy. About the significance and value of this philosophy, which has been as much praised as decried, there has been from the first much misunderstanding, and much argument pro and con. The charge that is raised as a rule against Spinoza's system is principally that of atheism, and then, on top of that, there is the charge of pantheism. The reason in both cases is that in Spinoza's system God is apprehended as substance and only as substance. What we should think about these charges follows directly from the position that substance occupies in the system of the logical Idea. Substance is an essential stage in the process of development of the Idea, but it is not the Idea itself; it is not the absolute Idea, but only the Idea in the still restricted form of necessity. Now, God is certainly necessity or, as we can also say, he is the *absolute matter*,<sup>a</sup> but at the same time he is the absolute *Person*, too. This is the point that Spinoza never reached, and it must be admitted that in this respect his philosophy fell short of the true concept of God which forms the content of the Christian religious consciousness. Spinoza was by descent a Jew, and on the whole it is the Oriental intuition, according to which everything finite appears as something merely transient and ephemeral, that has found in his philosophy its expression at the level of thought. It is true, of course, that this Oriental intuition of the unity of substance forms the foundation of all genuine further development, but we cannot stop at that; what it still lacks is the Occidental principle of individuality, which first emerged in its philosophical shape in the monadology of Leibniz, at the same time as Spinozism itself.<sup>30</sup>

If we review the charge of atheism levelled at the philosophy of Spinoza from the point of view that we have reached, we must reject it as ungrounded, because not only is God not denied in this philosophy, but, on the contrary, he is recognised as what alone truly *is*. Nor can it be maintained that, although Spinoza certainly speaks of God as the uniquely true, still this God of his is not the true one, and is therefore as good as no God at all. For in that case, if they remained at a subordinate stage of the Idea in their philosophising, we would have to charge all the other philosophers with atheism as well; and we should have to charge not only the Jews and the Mohammedans, because they know of God only as the *Lord*, but all the many Christians, too, who regard God only as the unknowable, the supreme and otherworldly Essence. When we look at it more closely, the charge of atheism levelled against the philosophy of Spinoza reduces to the point that his philosophy does not give the principle of difference (or finitude) its due; and this means that this system should be called, not atheism, but "acosmism" instead. For there is not, properly speaking, any world at all in it (in the sense of something that positively is).

a. *die absolute Sache*

What we ought to hold about the charge of *pantheism* follows from this too. If we accept a view that is widely held, and understand pantheism to be the doctrine that considers finite things as such, and the complex of them, to be God, then we shall be forced to acquit Spinoza's philosophy of the charge of pantheism, because no truth at all is ascribed to finite things or to the world as a whole in that philosophy. Nevertheless, this philosophy is certainly pantheistic, precisely because of its acosmism. Thus, the defect that we have recognised with respect to its *content* does at the same time prove to be a defect with respect to its *form*, in the first place because Spinoza places Substance at the head of his system and defines it as the unity of thinking and extension, without demonstrating how he arrives at this distinction and how he succeeds in tracing it back to the unity of Substance. The further treatment of the content then takes place according to the so-called mathematical method, which involves the initial setting-up of definitions and axioms, from which a series of theorems follow in sequence, the proof of which consists simply in deriving them in the manner of the understanding, from those unproven presuppositions. Spinoza's philosophy is usually praised for the strict consistency of its method, even by those who completely reject its content and its results. But this unconditional recognition of the form is, in fact, just as unjustified as the unconditional rejection of the content. On the side of content, the defect of Spinoza's philosophy consists precisely in the fact that the form is not known to be immanent to that content, and for that reason it supervenes upon it only as an external, subjective form. Substance, as it is apprehended immediately by Spinoza without preceding dialectical mediation—being the universal might of negation—is only the dark, shapeless abyss, so to speak, in which all determinate content is swallowed up as radically null and void, and which produces nothing out of itself that has a positive subsistence of its own.

## § 152

In the first form of necessity substance is [simply] substance. Then, as absolute might, substance is the might that *relates itself to itself* as a merely inner possibility, and hence determines itself to accidentality. According to this moment [of might], from which the externality that is thereby posited is distinguished, Substance is *relationship* in the most proper sense: the *relationship of causality*.

## B. RELATIONSHIP OF CAUSALITY

## § 153

Substance is *cause*, because—in contrast to its passing-over into accidentality—it is inwardly reflected; and in this way, it is the *originating*

*Thing*.<sup>a</sup> But it is cause also because it equally sublates the inward reflection (or its mere possibility); i.e., because it posits itself as the negative of itself, and in that way produces an *effect*: an actuality which is therefore only a *posited* one, although at the same time it is a necessary one in virtue of the causal process.<sup>b</sup>

As the *originating Thing* the cause has the determination of absolute independence and of a subsistence that preserves itself against the effect; but in the necessity, the identity of which constitutes that originality itself, it has merely passed over into the effect. Inasmuch as we can speak again of a determinate content, there is no content in the effect that is not in the cause. That identity is the absolute content itself; but it is equally the form-determination as well: the originality of the cause is sublated in the effect, where it *makes* itself into a *positedness*. But this does not mean that the cause has vanished, so that only the effect would be actual. For this *positedness* is just as immediately sublated; it is rather the inward self-reflection of the cause, or its originality: it is only in the effect that the cause is actual, and is [truly] cause. In and for itself therefore the cause is *causa sui*.—Holding firmly to the one-sided representation of the *mediation*, *Jacobi* took this absolute truth of the cause, the *causa sui* (which is the same as the *effectus sui*), to be a mere formalism (*Letters on Spinoza*, 2d ed., 416).<sup>31</sup> He also declared that God must not be determined as ground, but essentially as cause; that this does not establish the point he was concerned about, however, would have become evident through a more thorough meditation on the nature of “cause.” Even in the *finite* cause and in its representation this identity with regard to the content is present; the rain, which is the cause, and the wetness, which is the effect, are one and the same existing water. With regard to the form the cause (rain) is lost in the effect (wetness); but by the same token the determination of the effect [as “effect”] is lost, too, for the effect is nothing without the cause; and there remains only the undifferentiated wetness.

In the usual sense of the causal relationship the cause is *finite*, inasmuch as its content is finite (just as it is in the finite substance) and inasmuch as the cause and the effect are represented as two diverse independent existences—but that is only what they are when we abstract from the causal relationship in considering

a. *die ursprüngliche Sache*

b. *Prozess des Wirkens*

them. In the realm of the finite, we do not get beyond the *distinction* of the form-determinations within their relation; hence, it is the turn of the cause to be *also* determined as *something-positing* or as an *effect*; this effect then has yet an *other* cause; and in this way the progress ad infinitum, from effects to causes, arises once more. A *descending* progress arises in the same way, since it follows from the identity of the effect with the cause that the effect is itself determined as a cause and at the same time as an *other* cause, which has again other effects, and so on forever.

*Addition.* Just as the understanding tends to balk at substantiality, so, on the contrary, it is quite comfortable with causality, i.e., the relationship of cause and effect. When it is a case of interpreting some content as necessary, the reflective understanding makes a special point of tracing it back to the relationship of causality. This relationship certainly has the character of necessity, but it is itself only one side of the process of necessity. This process is just as much the sublation of the mediation that is contained in causality, and the demonstration that it [i.e., necessity] is simple self-relation. If we stop short at causality as such we do not have causality in its truth, but only a finite causality instead; and the finitude of this relationship then consists in holding fast to cause and effect in their distinction. Cause and effect, however, are not only distinct, but are just as much identical too, and this is even registered in our ordinary consciousness, when we say that the cause is a cause only because it has an effect, and the effect is an effect only because it has a cause. Thus, cause and effect have, both of them, one and the same content, and the distinction between them is primarily just that between *positing* and *being posited*; but then this difference of form sublates itself again, too, since the cause is not only the cause of an other, but is also the cause of itself, and the effect is not only the effect of an other, but also the effect of itself. So, the finitude of things consists in the fact that, although cause and effect are conceptually identical, the two forms occur separated in just *this* way: that although the cause is indeed an effect too and the effect is also a cause, nevertheless, the cause is not an effect in the same relation in which it is cause, and the effect is not a cause in the same relation in which it is an effect. This then gives us once again an infinite progression in the shape of an endless series of causes, which exhibits itself at the same time as an endless series of effects.

#### § 154

The effect is *diverse* from the cause; as such the effect is *positedness*. But this positedness is likewise inward reflection and immediacy; and insofar as we hold onto the diversity of the effect from the cause, the effective action of the cause, its positing, is at the same time a *presupposing*. Hence, there is an *other substance* present, upon which the cause happens to work. As *immediate*, this [other] substance is not a negativity relating itself to

itself; it is not *active*, but *passive*. Yet as substance it is active, too; it sublates the presupposed immediacy and the effect that is posited in it: it *reacts*, i.e., it sublates the activity of the first substance; but the first substance is likewise this sublation of its immediacy or of the effect posited in it, so that it sublates the activity of the second, too, and reacts. As a result causality has passed over into the relationship of *reciprocal action*.

Although causality is not yet posited in its genuine determination, the progress, as an infinite progress from causes to effects, is truly sublated as progress in reciprocal action, because the rectilinear progression from causes to effects and from effects to causes is *curved* and *bent back* upon itself. As in every other case, this curving of the infinite progress into a relationship that is self-enclosed is the simple reflection that in all those unthinking repetitions there is only one and the same relation: namely, *this* cause and that *other* one, and their relation to each other. Reciprocal action, however, being the development of this relation, is itself the alternation of the *distinguishing*, not now of causes, but of the moments: *in each of which on its own* (again in accordance with the *identity* that the cause is cause in the effect, and vice versa, i.e., in accordance with this inseparability) *the other* moment, too, is posited equally.

### C. RECIPROCAL ACTION

#### § 155

The determinations that are maintained firmly as distinct in reciprocal action are ( $\alpha$ ) *in-themselves* the same; each side is the cause, original, active, passive, etc., just as much as the other one. Similarly, the presupposing of an other and the working upon it, the immediate originality and the positedness through the exchange, are one and the same. In virtue of its immediacy, the cause that is taken as the *first one* is *passive*, *positedness* and *effect*. The distinction between the causes that are said to be *two* is therefore empty, and there is *in-itself* only One cause present, which both sublates itself as substance in its effect and equally gives itself independence only in this effective action.<sup>a</sup>

a. *in diesem Wirken*



## § 156

(β) But this unity is also *for-itself*, since the whole exchange is the cause's own *positing*, and since only this positing of it is its *being*. The nullity of the distinctions is not only in-itself or [due to] our reflection (see the preceding paragraph). On the contrary, the reciprocal action is itself also the sublating-again of each of the posited determinations and its conversion into the opposite one; and hence it is the positing of the nullity (which is [at first] in-itself) of the moments. In the originality there is posited an effect, i.e., the originality is sublated; the action of a cause becomes reaction, and so on.

*Addition.* Reciprocal action is the relationship of causality posited in its complete development, and hence it is to this relationship that reflection tends to have recourse when the consideration of things from the standpoint of causality proves to be unsatisfactory because of the infinite progression discussed above. In the case of historical studies, for instance, the question discussed first is whether the character and the customs of a people are the cause of its constitution and laws, or whether, conversely, they are the effect of the constitution. Then the discussion moves on to the interpreting of both terms, character and customs on the one hand, and constitution and laws on the other, from the standpoint of reciprocal action, so that the cause is also the effect, in the same relation in which it is cause, and the effect is at the same time the cause, in the same relation in which it is effect. Or again, the same thing happens in the study of nature, and especially in that of the living organism, where single organs and functions likewise turn out to stand to one another in the relationship of reciprocal action.

Of course, reciprocal action certainly is the proximate truth of the relationship of cause and effect, and it stands on the threshold of the Concept, so to speak; but, just for this reason, we must not be satisfied to employ this relationship, when what is at issue is conceptually comprehensive cognition. If we stop at considering a given content just from the point of view of reciprocal action, we are in fact proceeding quite unconceptually; we are then dealing just with a dry fact, and the requirement of mediation, which is what is at issue when we start to use the relationship of causality, still remains unsatisfied. Looked at more closely, the use of the relationship of reciprocal action is unsatisfactory because, instead of being able to count as an equivalent of the Concept, this relationship itself still requires to be comprehended. And comprehension comes when its two sides are not left as something immediately given, but (as we have shown in the two preceding paragraphs) when they are recognised as the moments of a third, a higher [whole], which is, in fact, precisely the Concept. To consider the customs of the Spartans, for example, as the effect of their constitution, and then, conversely, to regard the constitution as the effect of their customs, may be correct so far as it goes. But this interpretation does not give us any ultimate satisfaction, because neither the constitution nor the customs of this people are in fact comprehended by this approach.

Comprehension comes about only when both of them, and similarly all of the other particular aspects that the life and the history of the Spartans display, are recognised as grounded in their concept.

#### § 157

(γ) Hence, this pure exchange with itself is *unveiled* or *posited necessity*. The bond of necessity as such is the identity that is still *inner* and hidden; for it is the identity of those [terms] which count as *actual*, although their independence should precisely be the necessity. Hence, the course of substance through causality and reciprocal action is just the *positing* [of the fact] that *independence* is the infinite *negative relation to self*—*negative* indeed [because] distinction and mediation become in it the originality of *actualities* that are *independent* vis-à-vis each other—infinite *relation to itself* because the independence of these [terms] is just nothing but their identity.

#### § 158

This *truth of necessity* is thereby *freedom*, and the *truth of substance* is the *Concept*, i.e., the independence, that is the repulsion of itself from itself into distinct independent [terms], [but] which, as this repulsion, is identical with itself, and which is this movement of exchange *with itself* alone that remains at home *with itself*.

*Addition.* Necessity is usually called hard, and indeed rightly so, to the extent that we do not go beyond it as such, i.e., beyond it in its immediate shape. We have here a state of things, or in general a content, that subsists on its own account; and necessity implies, in the first place, that this content is overcome by another which brings it to the ground. That is what is hard and sorrowful about immediate or abstract necessity. The identity of the two things which appear as bound to one another in necessity, and which, for that reason, lose their independence, is at first only an inner identity that is not yet present to those who are subject to necessity. And from this point of view, freedom, too, is, initially, just the abstract freedom that can only be saved by renouncing what we immediately have and are.

But again, as we have seen already, the process of necessity is the overcoming of what is present at first as rigid externality, so that its inwardness is revealed. What this process shows is that the terms that appear initially to be bound together are not in fact alien to one another; instead, they are only moments of *one* whole, each of which, being related to the other, is at home with itself, and goes together with itself. This is the transfiguration of necessity into freedom, and “freedom” now is not just the freedom of abstract negation, but concrete and positive freedom instead. From this we can also gather how absurd it is to regard freedom and neces-

sity as mutually exclusive. To be sure, necessity as such is not yet freedom; but freedom presupposes necessity and contains it sublated within itself. The ethical person is conscious of the content of his action as something necessary, something that is valid in and for itself; and this consciousness is so far from diminishing his freedom, that, on the contrary, it is only through this consciousness that his abstract freedom becomes a freedom that is actual and rich in content, as distinct from freedom of choice,<sup>a</sup> a freedom that still lacks content and is merely possible. A criminal who is punished may regard the punishment meted out to him as a restriction of his freedom; in fact, however, the punishment is not an alien violence to which he is subject, but is only the manifestation of his own deed; and it is when he recognises this that he behaves as a free person. Generally speaking, the highest independence of man is to know himself as totally determined by the absolute Idea; this is the consciousness and attitude that Spinoza calls *amor intellectualis Dei* [the intellectual love of God].<sup>32</sup>

## § 159

The *Concept*, therefore, is the *truth of being and essence*, since the shining of reflection within itself is, at the same time, independent immediacy, and this *being* of [a] diverse actuality is immediately just a shining *within itself*.

In that the Concept has proven itself to be the truth of being and essence, which are both *returned* into it as their *ground*, it has also, *conversely*, *developed* itself out of *being* as out of its *ground*. The first side of the progression can be considered as a *deepening* of being into itself, whose inwardness<sup>b</sup> has been unveiled through this progression; while the second side can be considered as a going forth of *the more perfect from the imperfect*. Where this development has been considered only from the latter side, philosophy has been criticised for it. The more determinate import, which the superficial thoughts about imperfect and more perfect have here, is the distinction of *being*, as *immediate* unity with itself, from the *concept*, as *free mediation* with itself. Since *being* has shown itself to be a *moment* of the Concept, the latter has thereby proven itself to be the truth of being; as its inward reflection and as the sublating of mediation, the Concept is the *presupposing* of the *immediate*—a presupposing which is identical with the return-into-self: the identity that constitutes freedom and the concept. Hence, if the *moment*

a. *Willkür*b. *Innere*

is called the imperfect, then the Concept, as what is perfect, is more precisely its own self-development from the imperfect, for it is essentially this sublating of its presupposition. But at the same time it is the Concept alone which, by positing itself, makes the presupposition. This has been shown to be the case in causality in general and more precisely in reciprocal action.

Thus, the Concept is determined in relation to being and essence as *essence that has returned to being as simple immediacy*. Through this return the shining of essence has actuality, while its actuality is at the same time a *free shining within itself*. In this way the Concept has being as its simple self-relation or as the immediacy of its unity, *within itself*; being is a determination that is so poor that it is the very least that can be exhibited in the Concept.

The passage from necessity to freedom, or from the actual into the Concept, is the hardest one, since independent actuality has to be thought of as having its substantiality only in its passing into, and its identity with, the independent actuality that is *other* than itself; thus the Concept is also the hardest, because it is itself precisely this identity. Actual substance as such, however (the cause, which in its being-for-itself will not allow anything to penetrate into it), is already subjected to the *necessity*, or to the destiny, of passing-over into positedness, and it is this subjection that is really the hardest. The *thinking* of necessity, on the contrary, is rather the dissolution of this hardness; because it is its<sup>a</sup> going-together with *itself* in the other—the *liberation*, which is not the flight of abstraction, and not the having of itself in that other actuality (with which the actual is bound together through the might of necessity) as something-other, but the having of its very own being and positing in it. As *existing for-itself*, this liberation is called “*I*,” as developed into its totality, it is *free spirit*, as feeling, it is *love*, as enjoyment, *beatitude*.—The great intuition of Spinoza’s substance is the *liberation* from finite being-for-itself, but only *implicitly*; however, it is the Concept itself that is *for-itself* the might of necessity as well as *actual* freedom.

*Addition.* When the Concept is called the truth of being and of essence (as it is here), we must be prepared for the question of why we did not start with it. A sufficient reply is that, when what is in question is cognition in the mode of thinking, we cannot begin with the truth, because truth, when it forms the beginning, rests on bald assurance, whereas the truth that is thought has to prove itself

to be truth at the bar of thinking. If the Concept were posted at the head of the Logic, and defined as the unity of being and essence (which would be quite correct from the point of view of its content), then the question would arise about what is meant by "being" and by "essence", and how the two of them come to be brought together into the unity of the Concept. This would mean that we were beginning with the Concept in name only and not in actual fact. We would then really begin with "being," just as we did here; and the only difference would be that the determinations of being, and likewise those of essence too, would have to be taken up directly from representation, whereas we have here considered being and essence in their own dialectical development and have recognised how they sublate themselves into the unity of the Concept.