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Dennis J. Schmidt, editor

TRANSLATED BY
LEONARD LAWLOR AND AMIT SEN

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LOGIC AND EXISTENCE

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CHAPTER 3

THE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE LOGIC:
BEING, ESSENCE,
CONCEPT

Hegelian Logic is the absolute genesis of sense, a sense which, to itself, is its own sense, which is not opposed to the being whose sense it is, but which is sense and being simultaneously. This genesis resembles an organic growth, a perpetual reproduction and self-amplification. There is no external purposiveness, but an immanent purposiveness whose image in nature is organic life. The contradiction of this growth is its immanent intentionality; how can it grow? Does not its beginning already contain implicitly all of what its end will be? Isn't the immediate being at the beginning already the absolute Idea of the end? An artist constantly reproduces the same faces. Across his paintings, we can follow something like an intention which becomes explicit and precise, and which nevertheless was unaware of itself in

the first works. He does not, however, repeat himself. This reproduction is creation; it is simultaneously intuitive and discursive. The totality is always immanent, the beginning indicates the end, only the end allows us to comprehend retrospectively the beginning. There is no other way to conceive Hegelian Logic. It is always the Whole that develops itself, that reproduces itself in a more profound and more explicit form. The circle of Essence takes up that of Being, and the circle of the Concept that of Essence. "The Whole possesses nothing astonishing" (PH §32); what is astonishing is that it divides itself, that it expounds itself, but as totality it is never excluded from any one of its positions. Or rather, in the medium of the Logos, no one word would be able to imply this disappearance of the Whole. The Whole is there insofar as it is excluded, sublated; it is there because it is lacking; it is there as negation in the position and as internal negativity. The Whole that we would like to put outside is in fact inside, like the exterior which is only an interior; these words of representation, *inside* and *outside*, fit a nature that realizes the absolute Idea in spatial indifference, but they are nothing but dialectical terms in the absolute form or in the element of the Logos. We happened to cite Bergson while speaking of Hegel. It is certainly difficult to imagine philosophical temperaments as different as theirs. The same creative idea is, however, present in the Hegelian Logic and in the Bergsonian dynamic schema. The idea, however, in Hegel, is truly an idea, sense, while, in Bergson, it is this side of or beyond sense. In the Hegelian Logos, genesis is comprehensive genesis; being comprehends itself and comprehends itself as far as the ontic limits of all comprehension. One has to see in Hegelian Logic this absolute medium of all comprehension, of all meaning, which is creation at the same time as it is comprehension, because it does not refer to anything other than itself (it contains this other), because it is not therefore the comprehension of something, but self-comprehension, and, by being self-comprehension, comprehension of everything, being and sense. What the Hegelian Logos alone excludes is a monadism which would limit reflection; a monadism is the existence of unsurpassable, individual structures. The Whole is indeed Singularity, but the authentic Singularity is only the Whole in the opening of its own development—the concrete universal—the understanding which is at the same time intuitive and discursive. If we do not enter into this absolute genesis, it is easy to refute it, as, for example, Léon Brunschvicg does in *Modalité du Jugement*: "Far from being the product of the dialectic, absolute spirit is on the contrary its condition and principle. Dialectical evolution owes its movement not to the point from which it starts, but to the end towards which it tends—and it is external at the same time as being parallel to being—it

is a dualism."¹ Hegel's originality, however, lies in the rejection of this calling forth by the end. Dialectical evolution is attraction and instinct; it starts from immediate being and returns to immediate being. It is truth only as engendered truth. On the other hand, it is indeed *also* dualistic, but this dualism is not, as in Spinoza, the parallelism of Logos and Nature which never encounter one another. It is the dualism of mediation. Nature and Logos are simultaneously opposite and identical. This is why the Logos can think itself and the other, contradict itself in itself, and why Nature, which is the anti-Logos, can appear as Logos.

The Logos is the absolute truth as self-genesis. However, how can we speak of a truth of the form? The logic, as the science of the absolute form, is the truth for itself, and by means of being opposed to the other philosophical sciences, those of nature and spirit, it is *pure* truth: "For this reason, this form is of quite another nature than logical form is ordinarily taken to be. It is already on its own account truth, since this content is adequate to its form, or the reality to its concept; and it is the pure truth because the determinations of the content do not yet have the form of an absolute otherness or of absolute immediacy" (GL 592–93). Truth is, as Kant said, the agreement of knowledge with its object, and this definition has the greatest, or rather the highest value. But in this case, what are we to think of Kantianism, according to which the knowledge of reason is incapable of grasping things in themselves, and actuality is alien to the concept?

If we remember this definition in connection with the fundamental assertion of transcendental idealism, that reason as knowing is incapable of apprehending things-in-themselves, that reality lies absolutely outside the concept, then it is at once evident that a reason such as this which is unable to put itself in agreement with its object, the things-in-themselves, and things-in-themselves that are not in agreement with the concept of reason, the concept that is not in agreement with reality, and a reality that does not agree with the concept, are untrue conceptions. If Kant had considered the idea of an intuitive understanding in the light of the above definition of truth, he would have treated that idea which expresses the required agreement, not as a figment of thought but rather as the truth. (GL 593)

1. Léon Brunschvicg, *La modalité du jugement* (1897), 73: "The system of the reasons of understanding only reproduce a rational system of being." [Translated from Hyppolite's French.—Tr.]

In effect, the absolute form is not contentless. Its content is itself. It has its being within itself because it is the universal. It is intuitive thought. Kant, however, stated this principle of *a priori* synthesis (in which duality could be known in unity). Therefore he would have been able to see that his critique, in regard to formalism, was genuinely lacking in scope—the critique of a criterion which would be valuable for all knowledge. “It is alleged that it would be absurd to ask for the criterion of the truth of the content of knowledge; but according to the definition it is not the content that constitutes the truth, but the agreement of the content with the concept” (GL 593). To separate in this way the content as an alien being and seek the *truth* of such a content, while forgetting that truth is *agreement*, is to turn this content into an inconceivable content, into a soulless content, a senseless content. Now, if, on the basis of this separation, we consider the logic itself as contentless, thought as purely abstract and empty, in the usual sense of formalism, then it is just as vain to speak of agreement (since in order for there to be agreement there must be two), and therefore to speak of truth. The question of truth was really posed in a much more penetrating way by Kant with his notion of an *a priori* synthetic thought, that is, with his notion of a thought capable of being its content for itself: “Logic being the science of the absolute form, this formal science, in order to be true, must possess in its own self a content adequate to its form; and all the more, since the formal element of logic is the pure form, and therefore the truth of logic must be the pure truth itself” (GL 594). What characterizes the logical element is precisely this adequation between actuality and concept which is the complete development of the form. Logic is not concrete truth, that of the Idea in nature or in spirit, but the pure truth, the development of the concept in its actuality and of actuality in its concept, the life of the concept. When we consider the forms of logic, we note that, in their isolation, they are without truth, because, insofar as they are *some* forms, they have a content inadequate to the whole thinking movement, to conception itself. For example, the affirmative Judgment is considered in its form as true, since it is referred exclusively to the content. But this Judgment is dialectical in its form. It states that the singular is universal, that being is concept. It contradicts itself in itself. It lacks what the definition of truth requires, the agreement of the concept and the object. The absolute concept (the unique form), therefore, must rediscover itself in all of its moments, in the forms which, insofar as they are manifold, present themselves as content. Then each determination of the form is nothing but a magnitude vanishing into the totality of this truth which is an absolute life, an absolute self-consciousness: “The true is thus the Bacchanalian revel in which no member is not drunk; yet because each member collapses as soon as he

drops out, the revel is just as much transparent and simple repose” (PH §47).² The science of logic therefore is the pure truth. Hegel’s difficulty lies in explaining “absolute being-other or absolute immediacy,” nature and spirit, insofar as they are also, in philosophy, concrete sciences, a philosophy of nature and a philosophy of spirit, what Hegel called at Jena *Realphilosophie*. These sciences are not the empirical sciences considered in the *Phenomenology*:

These concrete sciences do, of course, present themselves in a more real form of the idea than logic does; but this is not by turning back again to the reality abandoned by the consciousness which has risen above its mode as phenomenon to the level of science, nor by reverting to the use of forms such as the categories and concepts of reflection, whose finitude and untruth have been demonstrated in the logic. On the contrary, logic exhibits the elevation of the idea to that level from which it becomes the creator of nature and passes over to the form of a concrete immediacy whose concept, however, breaks up this shape again in order to realize itself as concrete spirit. (GL 592)

a spirit which, in the highest degree, is precisely the Logos, philosophy. The logical element shows itself therefore indeed as the supreme mediation. It is there immediately as nature and as finite spirit, but as spirit it completes itself, it returns to itself.

The Logic is the genesis of the absolute Idea. This absolute Idea, which in the element of universality contains the whole life of thought, for Hegel, “alone is being, imperishable life, self-knowing truth, and is all truth” (GL 824). It is the sole object and the sole form of philosophy: “Since it contains all determinateness within it, and its essential nature is to return to itself through its self-determination or particularization, it has various shapes, and the business of philosophy is to recognize it in these” (GL 824). Thus nature and spirit are distinct modes through which the Absolute Idea presents its Dasein—spatial indifference and temporal dispersion—just as art and religion are distinct modes through which it apprehends itself and endows the image of the self with that of a being. Philosophy, however, is the highest—the only authentic—mode of grasping the absolute Idea, because its modality is the highest, the concept, the only one in which truth exists as truth.

2. Rest is not the end—as some would speak of an end of history—but the other of the movement, and movement the other of rest, and the Truth is their dialectic.

Philosophy comprehends, therefore, the figures of real finitude, nature, and the figures of ideal finitude, spirit. Philosophy conceives them as it conceives religion and art, but it conceives itself. This self-conception is "above everything else the Logic." The qualification, *above everything else*, means that the Logic can indeed be considered as a particular mode, "but whereas mode signifies a particular kind, a determinateness of form, the logical aspect, on the contrary, is the universal mode in which all particular modes are sublated and enfolded" (GL 825). To comprehend nature and spirit in this way, for philosophy, is to see the creative source itself in the Logos; it is to see across the Logos. Language is the house (*la demeure*) of being as sense. The Logos is the primordial, originary voice (*le verbe originnaire, primordial*) which is indeed an exteriorization, but an exteriorization which, as such, disappears as soon as it appears. Hegel says that the only determination is then for this sense to hear itself, to comprehend itself. It is the pure thought in which difference (the one that will be set free in external nature and in finite spirit) is the alterity that leads thought to sublate itself.³

There are two opposite critiques made of Hegel concerning the relation of Logic to nature and spirit. Marx, for example, has accused him of always rediscovering the logical element in the philosophy of nature and history, instead of seeing in this element a reflection of concrete being, a fleshless shadow. Hegel's concrete philosophy would be impoverished and hardened by the idea which is always rediscovered and taken up instead of real content. Some indeed, however, have also said that the immense richness of Hegel's Logic comes from what he borrows from all the experiences of the concrete sciences, and that his Logic conceals a thoroughgoing empiricism. In fact, these two charges destroy one another. They can be justified in this or that particular case. Yet, on the whole, they misunderstand Hegel's concepts of the Logos and of experience, of the *a priori* and of the *a posteriori*. The Logic is opposed to experience as ontology is opposed to anthropology. Hegel does not want to do without experience but to *reduce* (in the modern sense of the term) anthropology and to show, at the very heart of the onto-logic, that "philosophy must alienate itself." Thus philosophy alone is the element of truth and of all truth.

If the Logos is the complete and organic development of intellectual intuition, the *method* of the Logic appears as the universal self-consciousness that accompanies the whole movement: "the method is nothing but the structure set forth in its pure essentiality" (PH §48). The

3. We still have to repeat that the concept is, for Hegel, sense which is at the same time its own sense, and that philosophy is not one project replacing others, but the element, the medium in which *everything* is clarified as sense.

ordinary sense of the word *method*, however, is no longer at work here and one has to dispel a false interpretation. The method, which is the universal of the Logic, does not separate the objective from the subjective. As absolute method, it is the opposite of instrumental knowledge or of external reflection, which would be merely subjective. Method is conceived through the Logic's notion of the beginning, which must be presuppositionless. The beginning can be only an immediacy. Thus the Logic's three instincts, Being, Essence, Concept, are immediacies, but the genuine beginning of the Logic is the first immediacy, Being. This is not sensible immediacy, but the immediacy of pure thought "that we can, if you like, just as well call super-sensible or inner intuition." In finite knowledge, we do not stop repeating that one has to refer thought to being, that is, that it is necessary *to show*, to delimit the being which is there, but this indication and this delimitation are already a mediation. When we require a demonstration of being, we mean thereby that we want to determine being, to make it emerge from the abstraction of pure thought, from the mere self-relation. To demonstrate being is therefore to realize the concept, to determine it. In the *Science of Logic*, from the start we rediscover this very experience of knowledge which is the realization or the determination of the concept. Being, considered as irreducible to pure thought, is the absolute self-relation which is also pure thought. Thought does not lack being; it lacks determination. And being, this mere self-relation, also lacks determination. In the form of being and nothingness, of being and the question of being, their opposition is reciprocal. What is required is the sublation of this pure self-relation.

For the method, the beginning is the universal, which is indeterminate. But this very simplicity of the beginning is its determination. Insofar as it is the consciousness of this indeterminate universality, the method knows that it is only a moment and that the concept is still not determined in itself and for itself. If the method, however, remains at the level of this subjective consciousness, it takes this beginning merely as the abstract from which something is *lacking*. It understands abstraction as the psychological process which, having at first put aside that from which it is abstracted, claims to be made complete through that from which it is abstracted. The method seeks, therefore, what one has to *add* to this beginning, as if thought, which is thought and being, was not to itself its own content, as if its progression were not immanent.

The immediacy of the beginning, because it is the beginning, is in itself its own negation and the instinct to sublate itself as beginning. The universal is not only the abstract, it is also the objectively universal, the concrete totality in itself but not for itself. Therefore, the being in itself that is not yet for itself, the Whole as immediacy and not yet as mediation is there. The beginning is therefore really the Absolute; it is

the Absolute in itself and progress is the presentation of the Absolute, its becoming for-itself. Because, however, the Absolute is still in itself, it is not the Absolute, nor the posited concept, nor the Idea. The progressive presentation is not a surplus, not an excess, the Absolute already being there before its presentation. "Progression consists rather in the universal's self-determination, the universal's becoming for-itself, that is, the Subject" (GL 829). Truth is truth only in its genesis. By positing immediacy as objective totality, we oppose the immediate to mediation. The beginning is immediacy, but its determination, its negation is there; its self-relation is not yet the unity that has become, the posited relation. The immediacy, that has not become, is *nothing*, but this nothing is already its mediation, its first position. By means of this nothing, it expounds itself and becomes. What is essential is that the absolute method finds and recognizes the determination of the universal within itself. Finite knowledge takes up what it had left out by means of the process of abstraction, but the absolute method, not being external to its object, finds in it the determination which is immanent to it. Absolute method follows the object's movement and does not work from the outside. This is why the method is *analytic*: "It adheres to the absolute objectivity of the concept of which the method is the concept's certainty. The issue is not to stray and to think the thing itself from something else than that which thinks the thing. As Plato demanded of knowledge, the issue is to think the things themselves in themselves and for themselves, to consider them just as they are" (GL 830). The method, however, is *synthetic* as well, since its object, determined in an immediate way as simple universal, shows itself as an other because of the determination of the immediacy that it possesses. This analytic (immanent) and synthetic (passage to the other) process is the dialectic. This is why the philosophic method is the *dialectic*.

We usually conceive the dialectic as ending up at a merely negative result and this result is understood in many senses. The dialectic would exhibit the non-existence of the object; thus the Eleatics deny change and movement through the dialectic. It would exhibit the emptiness of a knowledge, the emptiness or vanity of the dialectic itself. Thus Diogenes silently walks back and forth in order to oppose the dialectic that denies movement. Thereby he disdainfully claims to show the inanity of this language that proves too much, and opposes a silent response to it. Dialectic responds to dialectic; Socrates indulges in an ironic dialectic in order to oppose the unstable dialectic of the Sophists. He himself becomes the victim of this dialectic, of the anger raised against it; he is accused of disturbing the stable positions of ethics. Finally, dialectic would show the inanity of pure knowledge as a whole; hence the transcendental dialectic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Hegel

notes, however, that, since it carries on an attack against the object or against types of knowledge, we do not see clearly enough that it attacks determinations as well. We see in Kant's transcendental dialectic especially the opposition of "either . . . or . . .," which leaves each of the determinate hypotheses intact. These, however, are the determinations that are truly prey to the dialectic, and there is no stable object below them. The thing itself is dialectical in its determinations, or, if you like, the dialectical movement of the determinations constitutes the thing itself. Then we understand the positivity of the dialectic, "for every negative is the negative of that of which it is the result" (GL 834).

The first term is always the universal as immediate, but then it is determined, and this determination is the negation which it has in itself. This is why the first term passes into the second which is the negative; it is *its* other. Being is not itself; it is nothingness. This second term is the pivot of the dialectical movement; it is *doubly negative*. It is at first the other, the negation of the first; but, taken by itself, it re-establishes the first. Nothingness is always the nothingness of being; as other, it constantly re-establishes the other of which it is the other. In itself, it is the other of the other; this is why the dialectical point gets sharpened in it. It is infinite negation, the second negative, the negation of the negation or negativity. Then the first positivity reappears as the third term, as the emergence of the whole movement. But this positivity is one that has become, and, as such, it is a second positivity which is given as a new immediacy. The justification of the beginning is its new advancement, because a new immediacy and the beginning of a new cycle is there. Thus the conflict of being and nothingness exhausts itself in the instability of becoming, but what has become, the being there (*l'être là*), is a new immediateness. Somehow, the process gets congealed. In the total movement, essence is the instability of the second dialectical moment. In essence, being is negated—no longer in the immediate form of being, as nothingness—but in itself. Being appears; it is being and non-being, as essence and appearance. It appears in itself and is only this reflection. This negation of immediate being, however, negates itself. The concept which completes itself with the absolute Idea re-establishes the immediate being of the beginning. The absolute Idea is identical to nature. "The retrospective justification of the beginning and the progression towards new determinations are, essentially, only one movement" (GL 839).

Being, Essence, Concept constitute the three instincts of the Logos, the three circles which reproduce at different levels the same fundamental theme. The seed, the initial cell is being, nothingness, becoming. Being is determined only by nothingness. It is itself the nothingness of itself, as that will appear at the level of essence, because essence is the internal negation of the whole sphere of being. Nothingness was negation

in the shape of being. Nothingness is an immediate just as being is; the transition from being to nothingness, likewise from nothingness to being, is only a passage, becoming, a foreshadowing of what will be genuine passage, mediation. The sphere of essence, which is the first negation of being—then the negation of itself—is the field of reflection, of diremption. Being opposes itself to itself; it negates itself as being and it posits itself as essence. But essence is appearance. Essence is posited in appearance, that is, in negated being, and there alone. The doubling of essence and appearance is completely appearance, so that essence is itself an ontological appearance. Reflection negates itself; being as conception of being, essence of being, is not distinct from being itself, the ontological possibility of actuality. This is why the third sphere, that of the concept, takes up the same theme in the element of mediation, in the element of self-comprehension. Immediate being passes away and becomes; its conception falls outside of itself. Essence is the reflection of being, its appearance and its intelligibility. But this intelligibility, this conception, is simultaneously separated and inseparable from appearance. As reflection opposed to immediacy, essence is the non-resolved contradiction. This is why reflection reestablishes the first immediacy of being, just as this immediacy had been reflected into essence. Immediacy itself is conceived. Real actuality not only is there as in the immediacy of being, nor comprehended only by means of its essence, as in essence and reflection, but is also itself its sense, and this Sense is its being. Being is reflected in itself, and, in this reflection, it is as sense. The subjective logic, or the logic of the concept, is the logic of sense, but this sense is not a subject opposed to the object. It is the being which is its self-consciousness, its sense, and this self-consciousness, in turn, is being itself, the absolute Idea scattered into nature and into history. In the Logos, being is thought. It does not ground its intelligibility behind itself, but in itself; *it thinks itself just as much as it finds itself*. The Logos's three moments are contained in this German word: *Selbstbewußtsein*—being, appearance, the self.

The logic of being corresponds to the *transcendental aesthetic*. It is the logic of the sensible insofar as the sensible is preserved in the Logos. "Philosophy provides the conceived intellection of what the actuality of sensible being is," and it can do this because sense is sensible, is there in speech "in order not to be as soon as it is there." The Logic of essence corresponds to the *transcendental analytic*; it is the understanding of being. But the logic of essence is not only the logic of the science of the phenomenal world. It is still the logic of this metaphysics which makes essence be the condition of existence. In fact, the categories are as much the categories of experience as of the Absolute. Finally, the logic of the concept corresponds to the *transcendental dialectic*, the Idea that Kant had considered only as regulative, wanting to recognize as metaphysics only

the old dogmatism, the metaphysics of the intelligible world, and not explicitly comprehending that transcendental logic was in itself already speculative logic, that the logicity of being was replacing the being of logic. With the logic of the concept, it is the category of sense which becomes the truth of the categories of being and essence.

The logic of being is the logic of immediacy. It says this appearance and this disappearance of the sensible, which the *Phenomenology's* first chapter describes. The being of the sensible is its annihilation; it passes away. However it returns in its annihilation. Being gets continued into nothingness and nothingness into being. Becoming is permanent. Immediacy does not conceive itself. Mediation is indeed there too, but there immediately as becoming. Being negates itself and preserves itself in its negation, but at the level of immediacy contradiction and identity are not there as contradiction and identity. Being becomes another being. This collapse of the sensible is the condition of its intelligibility, of its own recollection. We can say that the becoming of the sensible is in itself its essentialization, but essentialization is not there as such. This is why the determinations in this sphere of immediacy exclude themselves or identify themselves immediately. Being is there; it is no longer there; it becomes, and becoming is the unstable exchange of being and of nothingness. Being does not pass into itself. It does not relate to itself in its other; it does not reflect itself. Contradiction and identity are there immediately just as they exist in nature with movement.⁴

The opposition of being and nothingness, and then the first concrete synthesis, becoming, constitute the base of the whole logic. But the three terms are inseparable. We can still say that being divides itself into being and nothingness and shows itself then as becoming. Hegelian logic does not start from two alien terms that it would combine, but from mediation. Explicitly, the logic of being knows only the opposition of being and nothingness; implicitly, as what follows will reveal, this opposition is just as much that of being and the thought of being, of being and the question of being. Being is its own question to itself. But in its immediate form, for example, in nature, it is pure becoming which is the existing mediation. Because being passes away, it interiorizes itself and comprehends itself. Forgetfulness and memory have an ontological signification. However, the sphere of being will have to be completely negated as the sphere of immediacy so that essence appears.

Unstable becoming re-establishes a positivity. Dasein is the being that has become. Mixture of being and nothingness, it is essentially finite,

4. "External, sensible movement itself is the immediate Dasein of contradiction" (GL 440).

but its finitude presupposes infinity. Infinity is also there immediately; it is the bad infinite, the indefinite series of a something and its other. Quality and quantity are the two fundamental categories of this Dasein, and the logic of being is a descriptive logic and a logic of pure quantity. Quality is the immediate determination which is unified with being, while quantity marks a return to the first indetermination. Their synthesis, measure, is the transition from being to essence. It is the beginning of the self-relation in immediacy. Quantitative change, the indefinite of the *quantum*, "toujours à soi pareil qu'il s'accroisse ou se nie,"⁵ is self-exteriority. Self-exteriority always leads back to intrinsic and qualitative determination. It is never anything but an oscillation around a measure. "Everything has its measure." This, Hegel says, is one of Greek philosophy's highest thoughts. In this logic of immediacy, which is the darkness or the truth of the sensible depending on how one considers it, the infinite presents itself in its immediate opposition to the finite. Indefinite progression, however, what is without end, is the immediate difference which is not reflected as identity, as self-relation. Measure is already essence in immediacy. It is the immediate return to self in exteriority.

To say that the Absolute is being is to say that it is in itself. It is the well-rounded sphere about which Parmenides speaks. But for whom is this in itself, determined as being, in itself? Being is in itself; it is solely self-relation. These judgments already sublate this immediate being. The very essence of the self-relation is a sublation of being. Being is not yet in-itself for itself. The first philosophies of nature are a naive expression of this thought of being, and Parmenides says this thought of being.

Essence is being which becomes in itself for itself. This being was in itself identical to itself in its opposite, nothingness. It was passing away but always was finding itself again, being in imperishable becoming. This return to self, however, is not accomplished at the level of immediate being. Being was not reflecting itself. We were not able to say that it was finding itself again, because this *itself* assumes a reflection as reflection, an absolute *self* of being.

The logic of essence presents this reflection. Being no longer passes indefinitely outside of itself; it passes into itself, it reflects itself. The logic of essence corresponds to knowledge, to the elaboration of the sensible. What is there, however, is merely a correspondence. Reflection

5. This is a line from Mallarmé's "Plusieurs Sonnets I" in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Gallimard, 1945), 67. Roughly, the line could be translated in the following way: "always the same as itself whether it increases or decreases." See also Jean Hyppolite, "La 'Phénoménologie' de Hegel et la Pensée Française Contemporaine," in *Figure de la pensée philosophique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971), 1:233.—Tr.

is not the external reflection of being in a knowing subject; it is being's own internal reflection. The Logos, on the contrary, is what allows the knowledge and the ontological moment of consciousness to be comprehended. Being interiorizes itself while essentializing itself. It interiorizes itself just as, in knowledge, memory interiorizes sensible intuition. The past is essence.

Essence is the negation—the first—of being, and of being in its totality such as it is presented in the prior sphere. The determinations of being will be reproduced at this level, but as reflected determinations. Immediate being, negated in its totality, becoming its own nothingness, is *essence*. It is the intelligibility of being, its in-itself for itself, but still in the element of the in-itself. It is *appearance* as well, for what is appearance other than negated-being? To speak of appearance, where we were speaking of being, is still to speak of being, because appearance really is in a certain sense. But it is also to negate the being in it, because one must say that appearance is not since it is merely appearance. These two aspects of the logic of essence—namely, immediate being negates itself and therefore posits itself behind itself fundamentally as *essence*, and immediate being, negating itself, has become *appearance*—are one and the same movement. And such is the contradiction of essence or of reflection: it is essence and appearance simultaneously. It is negation of being as immediate and, in this negation, position of being as essence. The whole logic of essence is the logic of appearance; being has entirely become *appearance* and we can just as well say "this is only appearance," and "everything is in appearance."

The distinction between the essential and the inessential is, at the level of essence, only a reminiscence of immediacy, because there are not two beings. Moreover, this distinction is arbitrary. It depends on a third term, and is relative to an external reflection. Essence, however, is the internal reflection of being which appears in itself: "Appearance is the same thing as reflection." This reflection as such is identity, difference, contradiction. These essentialities are constitutive of reflection. Being which appears is identical to itself in its difference, which is essential difference, that is, the difference of itself from itself. It is different from itself in its identity; it contradicts itself. Essence, moreover, is the non-resolved contradiction, since it is simultaneously negation of being and negation of this negation, but still abstract negativity, reduced to pure dialectical conflict. The movement of the logic of essence is a double movement in one alone. It is the movement by which being negates itself, turns itself into appearance, and the movement by which, while negating itself, it posits itself, makes itself essence in appearance.

Essence is the recoil of being into its nothingness, the *ground*, and the emergence of the ground in *appearance*. This is why its three

moments are: *Reflection*, which results in the ground; *Phenomenon*, which is being negated and grounded; *Actuality*, which is the unity of ground and phenomenon, of essence and appearance. Essence is the division of being in itself, the secret of being and the initiation into this secret, but this secret is its intelligibility, its conceivability. The secret of being is the very possibility of being, but this possibility, separated from being, is an ontological mirage which leads one to believe in a metaphysics, in a substance distinct from its accidents, in a cause distinct from its effects, in an ontological possibility distinct from ontic actuality. In order to be comprehended, in order to be posited, being alienates itself. Essence is the dialectical moment of this alienation of being. We could say that this is ontology's *unhappy consciousness*.

Immediate being plunges into essence as into its conditions of intelligibility, but these conditions are unified with the manifestation itself. Manifestation in its Totality is essence. Intelligibility exists entirely in the development of manifestation in the category of Actuality. In actuality, there is no absolute content (substance) whose form would be manifestation (*mysterium magnum revelans se ipsum*); it is the *relevans si ipsum* which is everything, and which is the *mysterium magnum* itself: "As this movement of exposition, a movement which carries itself along with it, as a way and manner which is its absolute identity-with-self, the absolute is manifestation not of an inner, nor of something other, but it is only as the absolute manifestation [*Manifestieren*] of itself for itself. As such it is actuality" (GL 536).⁶ The *Phenomenology's* preface says: "Appearance [*Erscheinung*] is the arising and passing away that does not itself arise and pass away, but is in itself and constitutes the actuality and the movement of the life of truth" (PH §47).⁷

Actuality is conceived necessity, and the analysis that Hegel provides of the relations of the possible, of the real and the necessary, is perhaps the most illuminating of all the dialectics of essence. Actuality does not have its ground in a possibility that would be beyond it. It is itself its own possibility. Certainly being is grounded, but it is grounded upon itself; it is because it is possible, but it is possible because it is. This transcendental chance, which Kant spoke of in *The Critique of Judgment* and which was the encounter of contingency and conditional necessity, is for Hegel absolute necessity, because actuality refers to nothing else, and yet

6. In this discussion, Hyppolite uses the French *manifestation* to render Hegel's *Manifestieren*. In most other cases, it seems that Hyppolite is rendering Hegel's *Darstellung* with *manifestation*. So, in those other cases, we have used "presentation."—Tr.

7. Here Hyppolite uses *manifestation* to render Hegel's *Erscheinung*. See also note 6.—Tr.

it is grounded, it is conceived. The Logos is not the possibility of the existent, outside of the existent; it is the conception of the existent, and the existent as other is included in its own conception. The possible, which is only possible, is impossible; it contradicts itself. This is why it is possible because it is, just as it is because it is possible. Actuality as Totality is truly the dialectical synthesis of possibility and actuality. This is why it is comprehended necessity.

Comprehended necessity, however, is not necessity comprehending itself. It is known but does not recognize *itself*. Essence is indeed being-in-itself-and-for-itself, but it is still in itself. Its comprehension is not its own comprehension. Essence has reintroduced the immediacy of being; this is why it is no longer essence, but concept.

In essence, being-in-itself appears, but this appearance is its appearance, its position. It is not being which appears; it is itself which appears and therefore recognizes itself. The movement of its self-position is what Hegel calls the *concept*, which we could translate by *sense*. The logic of the concept takes all the determinations of being and essence up to its level, but it takes them up in order to show how they *constitute themselves*, how they posit and engender themselves. This genesis of sense was implicit in the prior spheres; this genesis is the Logic, because the Logic is the constitution of being as sense, comprehension, not as reference to a thing comprehended distinct from the movement of comprehension, but this movement itself as intelligible genesis of the thing (and the thing itself is only this movement). The Logic is the absolute form which is its object for itself, like a poem whose object would be poetry and which would contain thereby intrinsically the particularity of every poem. This "to contain," however, has nothing spatial about it. Universal sense contains intrinsically every particular sense. This sense, however, was not yet for itself in the Logic's other parts. It was there immediately in the becoming of being; it was the ground behind the appearance as essence. It now knows itself as the sense of all the senses. Hegel calls this logic of concept or sense subjective logic, but what is at issue is the subject or self which is immanent to every object and not a subjectivity distinct from being. Its proof is the dialectic of being and sense that leads this end of Logic back to its beginning. Being is shown across essence as sense, but sense is being as well; or rather being already was referring to sense. Being is a *lost sense*; it is a *forgotten sense*, since sense is the interiority of memory taken back into being. In the field of knowledge, forgetfulness and memory correspond to this dialectical distinction of being and sense, insofar as one does not make memory congeal into an in-itself (this would be essence); one has to see in memory the movement of recollection, the comprehensive genesis that constitutes the past. Reminiscence does not refer to the first essence; rather, the essence is constituted through the

originary act of reminiscence. Sense is the essence that comprehends itself by positing itself as essence. In relation to sense, essence is what being was in relation to essence. Being was essence in itself; essence is sense in itself. It is like a second being behind the first, but when we no longer abstract from its position, when we comprehend it as self-positing, as self-constituting, then it is no longer essence but sense.⁸

The concept is at first the medium of sense in general, the medium of every comprehensive genesis. The concept is the universal sense that always remains universal in every particular sense, sublating itself, as in the word, and this sublation is there. Its self-determination is the judgment that reproduces at the level of the concept the diremption of essence, the appearance of the particular in the universal, and of the universal in the particular. The determination received into the universal is sense, but the immediate relation is developed only through mediation, only through reason which makes the relations of the particular and the universal explicit. Henceforth, sense is developed as such, and this is why it is; its being of sense is object and objectivity. *Mediation is the object itself and the object is mediation.* This unity is what Hegel calls the absolute Idea, the sense which is, and the being which is sense. Sense is not only its own object, it is also the sublated object. The absolute Idea is, as sense, the Logos, as well as, as lost sense, immediacy, nature.

The logic of the concept corresponds to the major turn that transcendental logic represents in the history of philosophy. In a letter, Kant calls it his ontology and what is at issue indeed is in effect a new ontology since it replaces a world of essence, the being of Logic, with the logicity of being. By pushing the reduction of anthropology initiated by the transcendental to its limit, Hegel's speculative Logic is the deepening of this dimension of sense. Being is its own self-comprehension, its own sense, and the Logos is being positing itself as sense. It is, however, being which posits itself as sense, and this means that sense is not alien to being, is not outside of or beyond it. This is why sense also comprehends non-sense, the anti-Logos; it is in itself just as much as it is for itself, but its in-itself is for itself, and its for-itself is in itself. The dimension of sense is not only sense, it is also the absolute genesis of sense in general, and it is self-sufficient. Immanence is complete.

8. By passing through reflection, the circle, Being-Sense, Sense-Being, is not the closure of senses, but the openness. On the contrary, it is the indefinite separation of being and sense that would be the *limit*.

CONCLUSION

LOGIC AND
EXISTENCE

We can extend Hegel's philosophy in two different directions. One direction leads to the deification of Humanity; the other, the one that we have followed in this work, leads to the Absolute's self-knowledge across man. In each of these cases, the term Existence, applied to human reality, has a different sense. Perhaps it would not be useless to outline briefly these senses.

Hegel, it is said, engendered (*genuit*) Feuerbach, who engendered (*genuit*) Marx, and this historical relationship is significant. Hegel is the author of the *Phenomenology* just as much as he is the author of the *Science of Logic*, the author of the *Philosophy of History* just as much as he is the author of the conclusion of the *Encyclopaedia*. Consequently, the absolute Idea, which actualizes itself in history, this sense of human

history, can appear not as the revelation of an absolute spirit, but as the realization of Humanity. Christian religion is revealed or manifest religion. What is revealed in it "is that the divine nature is the 'same as human nature'" (PH §759). Religion, however, is still *representation*; it presents this identity as not being our work, but the work of a mediator. Reconciliation, the transfiguration of the world, is not actual in religion. The religious spirit is still alienated from itself. Only philosophy, as concept, sublates all transcendence. Self-consciousness surmounts all alienation; and, without retreating into a vain subjectivity, it thinks itself in all content, in all objectivity. Nature and history are the presentation of the Absolute in space and time, but this Absolute thinks itself as the *Logos*; it knows itself. This *Logos* is not a divine understanding which would exist somewhere else in another world. It is the light of Being in human reality.

The religious spirit therefore is still affected with a diremption. Its self-consciousness is not reconciled with its consciousness.

Its reconciliation, therefore, is in its heart, but its consciousness is still divided against itself and its actual world is disrupted. What enters its consciousness as the in-itself, or the side of pure mediation, is a reconciliation that lies in the beyond: but what enters it as present, as the side of immediacy and *Dasein*, is the world which has still to await its transfiguration. The world is indeed in itself reconciled with essence, and regarding essence it is known, of course, that it recognizes the object as no longer alienated from it but as identical with it in its love. But for self-consciousness, this immediate presence still has not the shape of spirit. (PH §787)

Religion presents what is already there as a "beyond." It does not conceive itself; it experiences the identity but does not think it. However, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* constantly criticizes the illusion of another world, and this critique takes the form of the critique of *alienation*. This concept appears as the key concept of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Alienation is indeed the concept to which Feuerbach and Marx will fasten themselves. Not only will they extend the Hegelian critique, in the form of a critique of religion, but also they will try to show that speculative philosophy, Hegel's absolute knowledge, is itself also a form of alienation, a substitute for religion. Man believes in another world in order to escape from the hostility of the one in which he lives; he projects into the "beyond" his own essence because his essence is not realized in this world. History is, however, the realization of the universal "divine man." It is Hegel himself who has turned history into a genesis of man. Why speak then of absolute spirit? "Absolute spirit," Feuerbach says, "is

man." Marx pushes the critique of religion and of absolute knowledge found in Feuerbach farther. In his 1844 *Manuscripts*, which are written in the margins of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the works of economists, he proposes to replace the term "self-consciousness" with the term "man," and thereby to demystify Hegelianism.

This replacement, however, transforms all of Hegel's philosophy. What the *Phenomenology* unveils to us across "conceived history" is the existence of an universal self-consciousness which is "the ether of the life of spirit." This self-consciousness is not human self-consciousness, but Being's self-consciousness across human reality. Absolute knowledge is not an anthropology (one need only read Hegel's *Logic* in order to realize this); it is the knowledge which has sublated the opposition of self and being, but this absolute knowledge is what appears in history. Consequently, why not turn this revelation into a genuine end of history? Why not make this end of history coincide with the realization of the human essence? In order to bring about this coincidence, one need only unveil the deception which consists in explaining nature by the *Logos* and not the *Logos* by nature. More penetrating than that of Feuerbach, the whole Marxist critique amounts to showing, by interpreting every objectification as an alienation and every alienation as an objectification, the confusion which victimizes Hegel.

In order to show this, one has to place the Hegelian system back on its feet. This system defines the Absolute as mediation, as the mutual relation of the *Logos* and nature, but nature is first and the *Logos* only an abstraction. Marx moreover does not wonder how this abstraction is possible and how nature can reveal itself as sense, abstract itself from itself, and think itself. He takes up Feuerbach's argumentation which opposes the sensible world to the abstraction of being. What the *Logic* reveals in fact is that what is at issue is only an abstraction, and that it is necessary to emerge from it in order to rediscover finally intuition and carnal nature.

The abstract idea which becomes direct intuition is absolutely nothing other than the abstract thought which renounces itself and decides to become intuition. This entire transition from the *Logic* to the Philosophy of nature is nothing other than the transition—so difficult to establish for the abstract thinker and for that very reason described by him in a way just as strange—from abstraction to intuition. The mystical feeling, what pushes the philosophers from abstract thought to intuition, is boredom, the living desire of a content. Man alienated from himself is also the thinker alienated from his being, that is, from natural and human being. (MM 190)

It is necessary therefore to start from the natural and human being, from man produced by nature and objectifying himself in nature through work. By substituting the term "man" for the term "self-consciousness" one discovers a valuable description of the human condition in the *Phenomenology*. One discovers there this fundamental idea: "to consider the proper production of man as a process . . . to conceive therefore the essence of work, and to see in objective man, in true man because real, the result of his own work" (MM 177). Man reproduces and produces himself by increasing himself. He engenders his own history, and Hegel has laid the foundations of this philosophy of history, which is a philosophy of man grappling with nature and with his own species being. Universal self-consciousness is the realization, through the intermediary of the struggle for recognition, of human species being, what we used to call the essence of man. It is clear that Marx replaces the Hegelian absolute Idea with this species being, this essence of man. History is therefore the realization of Humanity. The Hegelian universal is immanent to each human individual, as ideal totality, "as the subjective existence of society thought and felt for itself." The individual dies because he is inadequate to this universal. "Death appears as a hard victory of the species over the individual and seems to contradict the unity of the species, but the determined individual is only a determined species being, and as such he is mortal" (MM 138). This humanity emerges from nature and transforms it in order to give it a human face:

Just as society itself produces man as man, society is produced by him. As for their content, activity and spirit, according to their mode of existence, are equally social, social activity and social spirit. The human being of nature exists only for the social man, for it is only there that nature exists for him as a connection with man, as existence for others and as existence of others for him. It is only there that his natural existence became for him his human existence and that nature became for him human. Society is therefore the achieved consubstantiality of man with nature, the true resurrection of nature, the realization of the naturalism of man and of the humanism of nature. (MM 137)

The Hegelian idea therefore becomes the idea of concrete and social man, and history is this monumental genesis of man; from Hegel, Marx retains this genetic conception of history, not according to the model of a natural history which would not be our history, but according to the model of a comprehensive creation of the self by the self. This production is not a fact of nature like others; it is—despite certain of Marx's

overly objective expressions—the Absolute which is subject, the divine universal man, the God who makes himself instead of the God contemplated in heaven:

Man appropriates his universal being in a universal manner, that is, as total man. Each of his human relations to the world—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, thinking, observing, experiencing, wanting, acting, loving—in short, all the organs of his individual being, like those organs which are directly social in their form, are in their objective orientation or in their orientation to the object, the appropriation of that object, the appropriation of human reality. The way in which the organs behave in relation to the object is the manifestation of human reality. This manifestation is as varied as the determinations and human activities, human activity and human suffering, for suffering taken in the human sense is a proper joy of man. (MM 139)

Hegel, however, has confused *objectification* and *alienation*. In objectification, he has seen an alienation of the Logos. Nature is in this way the Other of the Logos; Hegel has transposed a particular process of history into speculative philosophy and just by that he is condemned, condemned to misunderstand nature and falsify history. He has misunderstood nature because, instead of starting from it, he has seen there a relative, non-originary term. Hegel has falsified history, because to overcome alienation became for him identical to overcoming objectification. And, since he could not make the sublation of nature the issue without mystification, the sublation of alienation is reduced for him to speculative philosophy, to self-consciousness rediscovering itself in its alienation. In fact, the alienation specific to history is not thereby sublated. The worker continues to see the products of his work, and even his own work as being alien to himself. The capitalist continues to be prey to a mechanism which he believes himself to direct. Alienation is not objectification. Objectification is natural. It is not a way for consciousness to make itself alien to itself, but a way to express itself naturally:

An objective being acts objectively and he would not act objectively if the objective were not to be found in the determination of its being. He creates and posits objects only because he is posited by objects, because, from the beginning, he is nature. In the act of positing, he does not therefore emerge from his pure activity in order to create the object, but his objective product presents simply his objective activity,

his activity as the activity of a natural objective being. We see here that consistent naturalism or humanism differs from idealism as well as from materialism, and is at the same time the truth which unites them both. We see at the same time that naturalism alone is capable of understanding universal history. (MM 180–81)

This history, however, indeed became an alienation insofar as it has engendered—as a necessary moment—capital, the development of value out of value. Thereby, the objectification of man became—moreover for his greatest future good—an alienation. “Alienation appears as well in this sense, that my means of subsistence is that of another, that the object of my desire is the inaccessible good of another, that everything is itself something belonging to another, and finally that (and this holds equally for the capitalist) overall an inhuman power dominates” (MM 115). The alienation of man in history is capitalism, and not the objectification of man which is the extension of his nature. This is why the history that comprehends the genesis of this alienation, on the basis of social work and the mutual relation of men, discovers also the means of their liberation, communism, which “as fully developed naturalism, equals humanism, and as fully developed humanism equals naturalism; it is the true solution of the antagonism between man and man, the true solution of the strife between origin and being, between objectification and subjectification, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species. Communism is the riddle of history solved and it knows itself to be this solution” (MM 135).

Marx praises Feuerbach: “(1) For having provided the proof that philosophy is nothing else but religion rendered into thought and expounded by thought, hence equally to be condemned as another form and manner of existence of the alienation of the being of man; (2) For having established true materialism and real science since Feuerbach also makes the social relationship of ‘man to man’ the basic principle of the theory; (3) For having opposed to the negation of the negation, which claims to be the absolute positive, the self-supporting positive, positively based on itself” (MM 172). Undoubtedly the whole debate is concentrated on this last point. For the negation of the negation, it is necessary to substitute the first positivity of nature; it is necessary to understand man objectifying himself on the basis of this positivity. Let us not discuss this principle which is self-supporting, because the position of nature is really more than nature; all of us would be harmonized by means of this self-foundation. There is however a negation in history, an alienation; but it holds only for history and it is up to history to resolve this problem that it poses. Marx adds this historical dimension to

Feuerbach. He rediscovers then, more or less, Hegelian dialectic in the concrete conflicts of history, but he refuses to reduce the positive to the negation of the negation. The distinction is important. The Absolute, for Hegel, will never be an immobile synthesis. His position will always contain negation, the tension of opposition; but Marx, like empiricism, starts from the positive, from the immediacy which is not in itself a negation, from nature. Human objectification is not for him an alienation, because the determined object is not a negation; it is first. History then has created the conflicts and will put an end to them. We could already wonder about the source of this negation in history; why we do not remain just in nature? Undoubtedly, the response would be to speak of human nature, which did not stay put within pure nature, but which overcame itself, which created itself and continues to create itself. When we read *Capital*, we have the impression of a will to power which has built up a world, which increases value from value itself. Without, however, insisting on this ambiguous term of the will to power (there is in Hegel a struggle for pure prestige as the condition of history), one has to speak of a negativity in human self-consciousness, an existence which does not let itself be engulfed in objectivity, an existence which therefore is discovered alienated in every determination, in every manner of being in the world. We rediscover on this new level the problem of the origin of negation which we have already encountered in considering empirical reflection and critical reflection.

One is quickly tempted to grant to Marx that nature is first there in its positivity, that one has to begin with it, that the Logos is only an abstraction (but what does this abstraction mean?), that man objectifies himself by means of nature and that alienation is a secondary process, essential in order to explain our history up to the present, but, in the final account, destined to disappear. Human nature will then present itself after the resolution of historical conflicts. Positivity is first, positivity will be last, and this positivity must have no fissures in it, nothing negative. Despite being a philosophy of history, Hegelianism preserves in its immanence the negation at the heart of every position; in actual history, there is a real negation, but the Logos comprehends this negation since negation is ontological. The Logos is the thought of itself and of all actuality.

For Marx however, what is the source of this real negativity, this prodigious historical growth, an edification whose utility in the strict sense could not be explained? What is human existence such that it engenders this history? One has to admit that Hegel went a lot farther than Marx on this point. While remaining in anthropology, he opened perspectives that Marx neglected, and these perspectives bear precisely on the fact that for him every determinate objectification is an alienation. He discovered this dimension of pure subjectivity which is *nothingness*.

sublation that is the absolute Idea. In fact, self-consciousness cannot retreat into this complete freedom—the mere form of subjectivity—without dissolving itself. This freedom is the supreme abstraction; when self-consciousness retreats from every determination, it stops acting, stops making itself, it stops being-in-the-world or being-there (*être-là*, Dasein). Its being is its nothingness; it vanishes, “its light dies away little by little within it and it vanishes like a shapeless vapor that dissolves into thin air” (PH §658). Nothingness is there only as the nothingness of a particular determination of which nothingness is the soul and the sublation. Nothingness presents itself as negativity. Hegelian dialectic is not the dissolution of all the determinations, like skepticism, but their mediation. Being-for-itself must consent to mediation, to the history which thinks itself as common work, the work of all and each. This work thinks itself by making itself; this work is the history of finite, *objective* spirit, and there is a philosophy of history because it is impossible to conceive history, at least retrospectively, without determining it as sense. It is here that Hegelianism presents almost insurmountable difficulties. What is the relation between absolute knowledge, the Logos, and this philosophy of history? For Hegel, is the common work Humanity? We can respond to the second question quite clearly. Humanity as such is not the supreme end for Hegel. When man is reduced to himself, he is lost; this is how he is in Greek comedy and in the *Aufklärung*. He makes use of his freedom in order to retreat into abstract self-certainty, but this certainty is contentless and gives itself an empirical, a finite project. Man is an inter-section; he is not a natural Dasein which would have a primordial positivity. To connect abstract self-certainty to this natural Dasein is to be condemned “to know only what is finite, and, moreover, knowing it as truth, and thinking that this knowledge of the finite as true is the highest knowledge attainable” (PH §562). Man then is defined by this last platitude: “Just as everything is useful to man, so man is useful too, and his vocation is to make himself a member of the group, of use for the common good and serviceable to all. The extent to which he looks after his own interests must also be matched by the extent to which he serves others, so far is he taking care of himself: one hand washes the other. But wherever he finds himself, there he is in the right place; he makes use of others and is himself made use of” (PH §560). Here Hegel anticipates Nietzsche. Humanistic reflection is the fall into the “the human, all-too-human.” Perhaps even one can say that this reflection, which turns the human project into the Absolute, results at the reverse of what it claims to attain. Hegel indeed speaks of history having a sense, the absolute Idea, but this idea is not man. It is not the rational project of the individual. On the contrary, the individual learns to recognize a certain necessity in the destiny of history:

The individual self must discover himself in all of what he plans and does: even the pious individual wishes to be saved and happy. This pole of the antithesis, existing for itself, is—in contrast with absolute essence, the universal—a particular which knows and wills particularity. In short, it plays its part in the region of mere phenomena. This is the sphere of particular purposes in effecting which individuals exert themselves on behalf of their individuality—give it full play and objective realization. This is the sphere of happiness and its opposite. Happy is he who has made his existence conform to his character, to his will and to his fancy, and so enjoys himself in his existence. World history is not the theatre of happiness. Periods of happiness are blank pages in it. (HI 26)

Existence, however, as mere sublation, as the impossible adventure of man, is also an impasse. It defines man by the freedom of being-for-itself which is simultaneously always opposed to being-in-itself and always related to it. Man does not possess the freedom that allows him to wander from one determination to another or to be dissolved in abstract nothingness; rather, freedom possesses man. Nothingness is not then between the for-itself and the in-itself; it is the very nothingness of being or the being of nothingness. It opens to man, not the mere real negativity that makes history objective, but the dimension of the universal at the heart of which all sense is determined and engendered. Through this freedom, which Hegel says is immanent to all history, which Hegel says is the absolute Idea of history (and of course, equivocity is evident in the relation of the philosophy of history to the Logos in Hegel, and in this very term “freedom”), man does not conquer himself as man, but becomes the house (*la demeure*) of the Universal, of the Logos of Being, and becomes capable of Truth. In this opening which allows the existents of Nature, and history itself, to be clarified, to be conceived, Being comprehends itself as this eternal self-engendering; it is Logic in Hegel’s sense, absolute knowledge. Man then *exists* as the natural Dasein in which being’s universal self-consciousness appears. Man is the trace of this self-consciousness, but an indispensable trace without which self-consciousness would not be. Logic and Existence are here joined, if Existence is this human freedom which is the universal, the light of sense. In this Logos, everything has a sense, and the very sense of sense. We then have to return to our first question: what is the relation between absolute knowledge, the Logos, and the philosophy of history? Hegel’s own response is ambiguous, perhaps different in the *Phenomenology* and in the *Encyclopaedia*. This ambiguity explains the radical differences among his disciples. One has to note, however, that, like nature, history

is a presentation of the complete alienation of the Logos, a presentation that the Logos also expounds in itself: "The self-knowing spirit knows not only itself but also the negative of itself . . . spirit displays the process of its becoming spirit in the form of free contingent happening, intuiting its pure self as time outside of it, and equally its Being as space" (PH §807). But space is the indifference of determinations. Time is negativity, the pure restlessness of difference. In time, alienation alienates itself: "The negative is the negative of itself" (PH §808). Thus history is the objectivity of spirit's becoming, its temporal incarnation (*its sense, without being yet the sense of sense*).

However, absolute knowledge is the ground of the knowledge that appears in history, and history opens this dimension; history is the place of passage from temporal objective spirit to absolute spirit and to the Logos. History is the appearance of freedom, that is, the appearance of the concept through which man has access to the eternal sense. This sense, however, is not another world behind history. The Logos is there; it comprehends itself and comprehends also this nature and this history. This self-comprehension is not a plan similar to a human plan. Hegelian logic sublates every human and *moral view* of the world. Being is grounded in itself. It is because it is possible; but it is possible because it is. History's real negativity is there, and comprehends itself as the negativity of being in the Logos. The issue is not one of justifying being, because every justification is a justification of sense, and the question of Sense and Being is the Logos itself. History does not produce the Logos, the self-knowledge of the Absolute, as we produce an effect according to a plan conceived in advance. Philosophy is not a conscious end, but man exists because he is a philosopher.

This passage from history to absolute knowledge, the passage from the temporal to the eternal, is Hegelianism's most obscure dialectical synthesis; history is self-creating, like the Logos, but this creation is there temporal, here eternal. The Logos is not an essence. It is the element in which being and sense reflect one another, where being appears as sense and sense as being. The Logos is absolute genesis, and time is the image of this mediation, not the reverse. Time is the concept, but the concept in its immediate Dasein because time is the exstasis of difference, which in the Logos presents itself as the internal movement of determinations, temporality as eternal. The Hegelian eternity is not an eternity before time, but the mediating thought which presupposes itself absolutely in time. This is why history's objective spirit becomes absolute spirit; this is a becoming which seems to us difficult to conceive as an epoch of world history: "But the spirit which thinks world history, stripping off at the same time those limitations of the several national spirits and its own temporal restrictions, lays hold of its concrete universality,

and rises to apprehend absolute spirit, as the eternally actual truth in which the contemplative reason enjoys freedom, while the necessity of nature and the necessity of history are only ministrant to its revelation and the vessels of its honor" (ES §552). The leading difficulty of Hegelianism is the relation of the *Phenomenology* and the *Logic*. Today we would speak of anthropology and ontology. The one studies the properly human reflection, the other the absolute reflection that passes through man. In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel believed himself able to comprehend human reflection in the light of absolute knowledge (the work's "for us"), and it seems to us that the principle of this comprehension is contained in the meaning of the Hegelian ontology. He, however, believed himself able to exhibit human consciousness's becoming-absolute-knowledge, as if this becoming were a history. History is indeed the place of this passage, but this passage is not itself a *historical fact*. And then there is forgetfulness and memory. Existence, the relation of man to the Logos, indeed puts the Logos back where it was at the beginning:

"Mais rendre la lumière suppose d'ombre une morne moitié."¹

1. This quote comes from Paul Valéry, "La Cimetière Marin," in *Oeuvres de Paul Valéry*, 1:148. English translation by David Paul in *Paul Valéry: An Anthology*: "But to reflect the light / Bespeaks another half of mournful shade" (p. 271).—Tr.

APPENDIX

GILLES DELEUZE

REVIEW OF JEAN HYPPOLITE, *LOGIQUE ET EXISTENCE*

Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit preserved all of Hegel and was its commentary. The intention of this new book is very different. Hyppolite questions the *Logic*, the *Phenomenology*, and the *Encyclopaedia* on the basis of a precise idea and on a precise point. *Philosophy must be ontology, it cannot be anything else; but there is no ontology of essence, there is only an ontology of sense.* That, it seems, is the theme of this essential book, whose very style is extremely powerful. That philosophy must be ontology means first of all that it is not anthropology.

Gilles Deleuze's review of *Logique et existence* was originally published in *Revue philosophique de la France et l'étranger* (1954): 144, 457-60. ©1954 by Presses Universitaires de France, Paris.

Anthropology wants to be a discourse *on* man. It assumes, as such, the empirical discourse *of* man, in which the one who speaks and that of which one speaks are separated. Reflection is on one side and being on the other. Knowledge understood in this way is a movement which is not a movement of the thing. It remains outside the object. Knowledge is then a power of abstraction, and reflection is an external and formal reflection. Thus empiricism refers to a formalism, just as formalism refers to an empiricism. Empirical consciousness is a "consciousness which directs itself towards pre-existing being and relegates reflection to its subjectivity" (p. 76 above). Subjectivity will therefore be treated as a fact, and anthropology will be constituted as the science of this fact. That with Kant subjectivity becomes a principle changes nothing essentially. Critical consciousness is a consciousness which "reflects the self of knowledge by relegating being to the thing in itself" (p. 76 above). Kant indeed raises himself up to the synthetic identity of subject and object, but the object is merely an object relative to the subject: this very identity is the synthesis of imagination; it is not posited in being. Kant goes beyond the psychological and the empirical, but remains within the anthropological. As long as the determination is only subjective, we have not left anthropology. Is it necessary to leave it, and how? The two questions are the same: the means of leaving it are also the necessity for leaving it. Kant really did see that thought posits itself as presupposed: it posits itself because it thinks itself and reflects itself; and it posits itself as presupposed because the totality of objects assumes it as what makes knowledge possible. Thus in Kant, thought and the thing are identical, but what is identical to thought is only a relative thing, not the thing as being, in itself. Hegel is thus concerned to raise himself up to the genuine identity of the position and the presupposed, that is, up to the Absolute. In the *Phenomenology*, we are shown that the general difference of being and reflection, of the in-itself and the for-itself, of truth and certainty, is developed in the concrete moments of a dialectic whose very movement is to sublate this difference or to preserve it merely as a necessary appearance. In this sense, the *Phenomenology* starts from human reflection in order to show that human reflection and what follows from it lead to the absolute knowledge that they presuppose. The issue is really, as Hyppolite says, one of "reducing" anthropology, of "eliminating the hypothesis" of a knowledge whose source is alien (p. 158 above). Absolute knowledge, however, *exists* not only at the end as well as at the beginning. It was already in all the moments: a shape of consciousness is in another view a moment of the concept. The external difference between reflection and being is in another view the internal difference of Being itself, in other words, Being identical to difference, identical to mediation. "Since consciousness's difference has returned into the self,

these moments then present themselves as determinate concepts and as their organic self-grounded movement" (p. 88 above).

Some will say that there is "pride" in taking oneself for God, in ascribing absolute knowledge to oneself. One has to understand, however, what being is in relation to the datum. Being, according to Hyppolite, is not *essence*, but *sense*. To say that this world is sufficient is not only to say that it is sufficient *for us*, but that it is sufficient unto itself, and that it refers to being not as the essence beyond the appearance, not as a second world which would be the intelligible world, but as the sense of this world. Undoubtedly, one finds already in Plato the substitution of sense for essence, when he shows us that the second world itself is the subject of a dialectic which turns it into the sense of this world; it is no longer an other world. Kant, however, is still the one most responsible for the substitution, because the critique replaces formal possibility with transcendental possibility, the being of the possible with the possibility of being, logical identity with the synthetic identity of recognition, the being of logic with the logicity of being—in short, essence with sense. Thus, that there is no second world is, according to Hyppolite, the major proposition of Hegel's Logic, because it is at the same time the reason for transforming metaphysics into logic, and for the transformation of logic into the logic of sense. That there is no "beyond" means that there is no "beyond" of the world (because Being is only sense), and that in the world there is no "beyond" of thought (because being thinks itself in thought). Finally, it means that in thought itself there is nothing beyond language. Hyppolite's book is a reflection on the conditions of an absolute discourse; the chapters on the ineffable and on poetry are essential in this regard. People who engage in idle talk are the same ones who believe in the ineffable. Because Being is sense, true knowledge is not the knowledge of an Other, nor of something else. In a certain way, absolute knowledge is the closest, the simplest, it *is there*. "There is nothing to see behind the curtain" (p. 60 above), or, as Hyppolite says, "the secret is that there is no secret" (p. 90 above).

We see then what the difficulty is, a difficulty that Hyppolite emphasizes forcefully: if ontology is an ontology of sense and not of essence, if there is no second world, how can absolute knowledge still be distinguished from empirical knowledge? Do we not fall back into the simple anthropology that we had criticized? Absolute knowledge must simultaneously comprehend all empirical knowledge and comprehend nothing else, since there is nothing else to comprehend, and yet comprehend its radical difference from empirical knowledge. Hyppolite's idea is the following: despite appearances, essentialism was not what safeguarded us from empiricism and permitted us to overcome it. In the vision of essence, reflection is no less external than in empiricism or in

pure critique. Empiricism posited determination as purely subjective; essentialism only goes as far as the ground of this limitation by opposing determinations among themselves and by opposing determinations to the Absolute. One is on the same side as the other. In contrast, the ontology of sense is the total Thought knowing itself only in its determinations, which are the moments of form. In the empirical and in the absolute, it is the same being and the same thought; but the external, empirical difference of thought and being has given way to the difference identical with Being, to the difference internal to the Being which thinks itself. Thereby, absolute knowledge actually distinguishes itself from empirical knowledge, but it distinguishes itself only by also negating the knowledge of indifferent essence. In the Logic, there is no longer, therefore, as in the empirical, what I say on the one side and on the other side the sense of what I say—the pursuit of one by the other which is the dialectic of the *Phenomenology*. On the contrary, my discourse is logical or properly philosophical when I say the sense of what I say, and when in this manner Being says itself. Such a discourse, the specific style of philosophy, can be otherwise only circular. In this regard, one should take note of Hyppolite's discussion of the problem of the beginning in philosophy, a problem which is not only logical, but also pedagogical (see part III, chapter 3).

Hyppolite positions himself therefore against all anthropological or humanistic interpretations of Hegel. Absolute knowledge is not a human reflection, but a reflection of the Absolute in man. The Absolute is not a second world, and yet, absolute knowledge is actually distinguished from empirical knowledge just as philosophy is distinguished from all anthropology. Nevertheless, in this regard, if one has to consider the distinction that Hyppolite makes between the Logic and the *Phenomenology* decisive, does not the philosophy of history have a more ambiguous relation to the Logic? Hyppolite says: the Absolute as sense is becoming. Undoubtedly, this becoming is not a historical becoming; but what is the relation of the becoming of the Logic to history, the historical here designating everything other than the simple character of a fact? The relation between ontology and empirical man is perfectly determined, but not the relation between ontology and historical man. And if Hyppolite suggests that it is necessary to reintroduce finitude itself into the Absolute, are we not going to risk a return of anthropologism in a new form? Hyppolite's conclusion remains open; it creates the path of an ontology. But we would like to indicate that the source of the difficulty was perhaps already in the Logic itself. Following Hyppolite, we recognize that philosophy, if it has a meaning, can only be an ontology and an ontology of sense. The same being and the same thought are in the empirical and in the absolute. But the difference between thought

and being is sublated in the absolute by the positing of the Being identical to difference which, as such, thinks itself and reflects itself in man. This absolute identity of being and difference is called sense. But there is a point in all this where Hyppolite shows himself to be altogether Hegelian: Being can be identical to difference only insofar as difference is carried up to the absolute, that is, up to contradiction. Speculative difference is the Being which contradicts itself. The thing contradicts itself because, in being distinguished from *all* it is not, it finds its being in this difference itself; it reflects itself only by reflecting itself into the other, since the other is *its* other. This is the theme that Hyppolite develops by analyzing the three moments of the Logic, being, essence, and concept. Hegel will reproach Plato as well as Leibniz for not having gone *up to* contradiction, the one remaining with simple alterity, the other with pure difference. This assumes, at the least, not only that the moments of the *Phenomenology* and the moments of the Logic are not moments in the same sense, but also that there are two ways of self-contradiction, phenomenological and logical. The richness of Hyppolite's book could then let us wonder this: can we not construct an ontology of difference which would not have to go up to contradiction, because contradiction would be less than difference and not more? Is not contradiction itself only the phenomenal and anthropological aspect of difference? Hyppolite says that an ontology of pure difference would return us to a purely external and formal reflection, and would prove in the final analysis to be an ontology of essence. However, the same question could be posed otherwise: is it the same thing to say that Being expresses itself and that it contradicts itself? If it is true that the second and third parts of Hyppolite's book ground a theory of contradiction in Being, where contradiction itself is the absolute of difference, in contrast, in the first part (theory of language) and the allusions throughout the book (to forgetting, to remembering, to lost sense), does not Hyppolite ground a theory of expression where difference is expression itself, and contradiction its merely phenomenal aspect?