



## Stoicism—Skepticism—The Unhappy Consciousness

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### Free Self-Consciousness

197. Independent self-consciousness partly finds its essential reality in the bare abstraction of Ego. On the other hand, when this abstract ego develops further and forms distinctions of its own, this differentiation does not become an objective inherently real content for that self-consciousness. Hence this self-consciousness does not become an ego which truly differentiates itself in its abstract simplicity, or one which remains identical with itself in this absolute differentiation. The repressed and subordinate type of consciousness, on the other hand, becomes, in the formative activity of work, an object to itself, in the sense that the form, given to the thing when shaped and moulded, is his object; he sees in the master, at the same time, self-existence as a real mode of consciousness. But the subservient consciousness as such finds these two moments fall apart — the moment of itself as an independent object, and the moment of this object as a mode of consciousness, and so its own proper reality. Since, however, the form and the self-existence are for us, or objectively in themselves, one and the same, and since in the notion of independent consciousness the inherent reality is consciousness, the phase of inherent existence (Ansichsein) or thinghood, which received its shape and form through labour, is no other substance than consciousness. In this way we have a new attitude or mode of consciousness brought about: a type of consciousness which takes on the form of infinitude, or one whose essence consists in unimpeded movement of consciousness. It is one which thinks or is free self-consciousness. For thinking does not mean being an abstract ego, but an ego which has at the same time the significance of inherently existing in itself; it means being object to itself or relating itself to objective reality in such a way that this connotes the self-existence of that consciousness for which it is an object. The object does not for thinking proceed by way of presentations or figures, but of notions, conceptions, i.e. of a differentiated reality or essence, which, being an immediate content of consciousness, is nothing distinct from it. What is presented, shaped and constructed, and existent as such, has the form of being something other than consciousness. A notion, however, is at the same time an existent, and this distinction, so far as it falls in consciousness itself, is its determinate content. But in that content is, at the same time, a conceptually constituted, a comprehended (begriffener) content, consciousness remains immediately aware within itself of its unity with this determinate existent so distinguished; not as in the case of a presentation, where consciousness from the first has to take special note that this is its idea; on the contrary, the notion is for me eo ipso and at once my notion. In thinking I am free, because I am not in an other, but remain simply and solely in touch with myself; and the object which for me is my essential reality, is in undivided unity my self-existence; and my procedure in dealing with notions is a process within myself.

It is essential, however, in this determination of the above attitude of self-consciousness to keep hold of the fact that this attitude is thinking consciousness in general, that its object is immediate unity of the self's implicit, inherent existence, and of its existence explicitly for self. The self-same consciousness which repels itself from itself, becomes aware of being an element existing in itself. But to itself it is this element to begin with only as universal reality in general, and not as this essential reality appears when developed in all the manifold details it

contains, when the process of its being brings out all its fullness of content.

## Stoicism

198. This freedom of self-consciousness, as is well known, has been called Stoicism, in so far as it has appeared as a phenomenon conscious of itself in the course of the history of man's spirit. Its principle is that consciousness is essentially that which thinks, is a thinking reality, and that anything is really essential for consciousness, or is true and good, only when consciousness in dealing with it adopts the attitude of a thinking being.

199. The manifold, self-differentiating expanse of life, with all its individualization and complication, is the object upon which desire and labour operate. This varied activity has now contracted itself into the simple distinction which is found in the pure process of thought. What has still essential reality is not a distinction in the sense of a determinate thing, or in the shape of a consciousness of a determinate kind of natural existence, in the shape of a feeling, or again in the form of desire and its specific purpose, whether that purpose be set up by the consciousness desiring or by an extraneous consciousness. What has still essential significance here is solely that distinction which is a thought-constituted distinction, or which, when made, is not distinguished from me. This consciousness in consequence takes a negative attitude towards the relation of lordship and bondage. Its action, in the case of the master, results in his not simply having his truth in and through the bondsman; and, in that of the bondsman, in not finding his truth in the will of his master and in service. The essence of this consciousness is to be free, on the throne as well as in fetters, throughout all the dependence that attaches to its individual existence, and to maintain that stolid lifeless unconcern which persistently withdraws from the movement of existence, from effective activity as well as from passive endurance, into the simple essentiality of thought. Stubbornness is that freedom which makes itself secure in a solid singleness, and keeps within the sphere of bondage. Stoicism, on the other hand, is the freedom which ever comes directly out of that spheres and returns back into the pure universality of thought. It is a freedom which can come on the scene as a general form of the world's spirit only in a time of universal fear and bondage, a time, too, when mental cultivation is universal, and has elevated culture to the level of thought.

200. Now while this self-consciousness finds its essential reality to be neither something other than itself, nor the pure abstraction of ego, but ego which has within it otherness-otherness in the sense of a thought-constituted distinction-so that this ego in its otherness is turned back directly into itself; yet this essential nature is, at the same time, only an abstract reality. The freedom of self-consciousness is indifferent towards natural existence, and has, therefore, let this latter go and remain free. The reflexion is thus duplicated. Freedom of thought takes only pure thought as its truth, and this lacks the concrete filling of life. It is, therefore, merely the notion of freedom, not living freedom itself; for it is, to begin with, only thinking in general that is its essence, the form as such, which has turned away from the independence of things and gone back into itself. Since, however, individuality when acting should: show itself to be alive, or when thinking should grasp the living world as a system of thought, there ought to lie in thought itself a content to supply the sphere of the ego, in the former case with what is good, and, in the latter, true, in order that there should throughout be no other ingredient in what consciousness has to deal with, except the notion which is the real essence. But here, by the way in which the notion as an abstraction cuts itself off from the multiplicity of things, the notion has no content in itself; the content is a datum, is given. Consciousness, no doubt, abolishes the content as an external, a foreign existent, by the fact that it thinks it, but the notion is a determinate notion, and this determinateness of the notion is the alien element the notion contains within it. Stoicism, therefore, got embarrassed, when, as the expression went, it was asked for the criterion of truth in general, i.e properly speaking, for a content of thought itself. To the question, what is good and true, it responded by giving again the abstract, contentless thought; the true and good are to consist in reasonableness. But this self-identity of thought is simply once more pure form, in which nothing is determinate. The general terms true and

good, wisdom and virtue, with which Stoicism has to stop short, are, therefore, in a general way, doubtless elevating; but seeing that they cannot actually and in fact reach any expanse of content, they soon begin to get wearisome.

201. This thinking consciousness, in the way in which it is thus constituted, as abstract freedom, is therefore only incomplete negation of otherness. Withdrawn from existence solely into itself, it has not there fully vindicated itself as the absolute negation of this existence. It holds the content is held indeed to be only thought, but in doing so also takes thought as a specific determinate thought, and at the same time the general character of the content.

## Scepticism

202. Scepticism is the realisation of that of which Stoicism is merely the notion, and is the actual experience of what freedom of thought is; it is in itself and essentially the negative, and must so exhibit itself. With the reflexion of self-consciousness into the simple, pure thought of itself, independent existence or permanent determinateness has, in contrast to that reflexion, dropped as a matter of fact out of the infinitude of thought. In Scepticism, the entire unessentiality and unsubstantiality of this “other” becomes a reality for consciousness. Thought becomes thinking which wholly annihilates the being of the world with its manifold determinateness, and the negativity of free self-consciousness becomes aware of attaining, in these manifold forms which life assumes, real negativity.

203. It is clear from the foregoing that, just as Stoicism answers to the notion of independent consciousness, which appeared as a relation of lordship and bondage, Scepticism, on its side, corresponds to its realization, to the negative attitude towards otherness, to desire and labour. But if desire and work could not carry out for self-consciousness the process of negation, this polemical attitude towards the manifold substantiality of things will, on the other hand, be successful, because it turns against them as a free self-consciousness, and one complete within itself beforehand; or, expressed more definitely, because it has inherent in itself thought or the principle of infinitude where the independent elements in their distinction from one another are held to be merely vanishing quantities. The differences, which, in the pure thinking of self are only the abstraction of differences, become here the whole of the differences; and every differentiated existent becomes a difference of self-consciousness.

With this we get determined the action of Scepticism in general, as also its mode and nature. It shows the dialectic movement, which is sense-certainty, perception, and understanding. It shows, too, the unessentiality of that which holds good in the relation of master and servant, and which for abstract thought itself passes as determinate. That relation involves, at the same time, a determinate situation, in which there are found even moral laws, as commands of the sovereign lord. The determinations in abstract thought, however, are scientific notions, into which formal contentless thought expands itself, attaching the notion, as a matter of fact in merely an external fashion, to the existence independent of it, and holding as valid only determinate notions, albeit they are still pure abstractions.

204. Dialectic as a negative process, taken immediately as it stands, appears to consciousness, in the first instance, as something at the mercy of which it is, and which does not exist through consciousness itself. In Scepticism, on the other hand, this negative process is a moment of self-consciousness, which does not simply find its truth and its reality vanish, without self-consciousness knowing how, but rather which, in the certainty of its own freedom, itself makes this other, so claiming to be real, vanish. Self-consciousness here not only makes the objective as such to disappear before the negations of Scepticism but also its own function in relation to the object, where the object is held to be objective and made good — i.e. its function of perceiving as also its process of securing what is in danger of being lost, viz. sophistry and its self-constituted and self-established truth. By means of this self-conscious negation, self-consciousness procures for itself the certainty of its own freedom, brings about the experience of that freedom, and thereby raises it into the truth. What vanishes is what is determinate, the difference which, no matter what its nature or whence it comes, sets up to be fixed and

unchangeable. The difference has nothing permanent in it, and must vanish before thought because to be differentiated just means not to have being in itself, but to have its essential nature solely in an other. Thinking, however, is the insight into this character of what is differentiated; it is the negative function in its simple, ultimate form.

205. Sceptical self-consciousness thus discovers, in the flux and alternation of all that would stand secure in its presence, its own freedom, as given by and received from its own self. It is aware of being this of self-thinking thought, the unalterable and genuine certainty of its self. This certainty does not arise as a result out of something extraneous and foreign which stowed away inside itself its whole complex development; a result which would thus leave behind the process by which it came to be. Rather consciousness itself is thoroughgoing dialectical restlessness, this *mêlée* of presentations derived from sense and thought, whose differences collapse into oneness, and whose identity is similarly again resolved and dissolved — for this identity is itself determinateness as contrasted with non-identity. This consciousness, however, as a matter of fact, instead of being a self-same consciousness, is here neither more nor less than an absolutely fortuitous embroglio, the giddy whirl of a perpetually self-creating disorder. This is what it takes itself to be; for itself maintains and produces this self-impelling confusion. Hence it even confesses the fact; it owns to being, an entirely fortuitous individual consciousness — a consciousness which is empirical, which is directed upon what admittedly has no reality for it, which obeys what, in its regard, has no essential being, which realizes and does what it knows to have no truth. But while it passes in this manner for an individual, isolated, contingent, in fact animal life, and a lost self-consciousness, it also, on the contrary, again turns itself into universal self-sameness; for it is the negativity of all singleness and all difference. From this self-identity, or rather within its very self, it falls back once more into that contingency and confusion, for this very self-directed process of negation has to do solely with what is single and individual, and is occupied with what is fortuitous. This form of consciousness is, therefore, the aimless fickleness and instability of going to and fro, hither and thither, from one extreme of self-same self-consciousness, to the other contingent, confused and confusing consciousness. It does not itself bring these two thoughts of itself together. It finds its freedom, at one time, in the form of elevation above all the whirling complexity and all the contingency of mere existence, and again, at another time, likewise confesses to falling back upon what is unessential, and to being taken up with that. It lets the unessential content in its thought vanish; but in that very act it is the consciousness of something unessential. It announces absolute disappearance but the announcement is, and this consciousness is the evanescence expressly announced. It announces the nullity of seeing, hearing, and so on, yet itself sees and hears. It proclaims the nothingness of essential ethical principles, and makes those very truths the sinews of its own conduct. Its deeds and its words belie each other continually; and itself, too, has the doubled contradictory consciousness of immutability and sameness, and of utter contingency and non-identity with itself. But it keeps asunder the poles of this contradiction within itself; and bears itself towards the contradiction as it does in its purely negative process in general. If sameness is shown to it, it points out unlikeness, non-identity; and when the latter, which it has expressly mentioned the moment before, is held up to it, it passes on to indicate sameness and identity. Its talk, in fact, is like a squabble among self-willed children, one of whom says A when the other says B, and again B, when the other says A, and who, through being in contradiction with themselves, procure the joy of remaining in contradiction with one another.

206. In Scepticism consciousness gets, in truth, to know itself as a consciousness containing contradiction within itself. From the experience of this proceeds a new attitude which brings together the two thoughts which Scepticism holds apart. The want of intelligence which Scepticism manifests regarding itself is bound to vanish, because it is in fact one consciousness which possesses these two modes within it. This new attitude consequently is one which is aware of being the double consciousness of itself as self-liberating, unalterable, self-identical, and as utterly self-confounding, self-perverting; and this new attitude is the consciousness of this contradiction within itself.

In Stoicism, self-consciousness is the bare and simple freedom of itself. In Scepticism, it

realizes itself, negates the other side of determinate existence, but, in so doing, really doubles itself, and is itself now a duality. In this way the duplication, which previously was divided between two individuals, the lord and the bondsman, is concentrated into one. Thus we have here that dualizing of self-consciousness within itself, which lies essentially in the notion of mind; but the unity of the two elements is not yet present.

### **The Unhappy Consciousness**

207. Hence the Unhappy Consciousness (1) the Alienated Soul which is the consciousness of self as a divided nature, a doubled and merely contradictory being.

208. This unhappy consciousness, divided and at variance within itself, must, because this contradiction of its essential nature is felt to be a single consciousness, always have in the one consciousness the other also; and thus must be straightway driven out of each in turn, when it thinks it has therein attained to the victory and rest of unity. Its true return into itself, or reconciliation with itself, will, however, display the notion of mind endowed with a life and existence of its own, because it implicitly involves the fact that, while being an undivided consciousness, it is a double-consciousness. It is itself the gazing of one self-consciousness into another, and itself is both, and the unity of both is also its own essence; but objectively and consciously it is not yet this essence itself — is not yet the unity of both.

Since, in the first instance, it is the immediate, the implicit unity of both, while for it they are not one and the same, but opposed, it takes one, namely, the simple unalterable, as essential, the other, the manifold and changeable as the unessential. For it, both are realities foreign to each other. Itself, because consciousness of this contradiction, assumes the aspect of changeable consciousness and is to itself the unessential; but as consciousness of unchangeableness, of the ultimate essence, it must, at the same time, proceed to free itself from the unessential, i.e. to liberate itself from itself. For though in its own view it is indeed only the changeable, and the unchangeable is foreign and extraneous to it, yet itself is simple, and therefore unchangeable consciousness, of which consequently it is conscious as its essence, but still in such wise that itself is again in its own regard not this essence. The position, which it assigns to both, cannot, therefore, be an indifference of one to the other, i.e. cannot be an indifference of itself towards the unchangeable. Rather it is immediately both itself; and the relation of both assumes for it the form of a relation of essence to the non-essential, so that this latter has to be cancelled; but since both are to it equally essential and are contradictory, it is only the conflicting contradictory process in which opposite does not come to rest in its own opposite, but produces itself therein afresh merely as an opposite.

209. Here then, there is a struggle against an enemy, victory over whom really means being worsted, where to have attained one result is really to lose it in the opposite. Consciousness of life, of its existence and action, is merely pain and sorrow over this existence and activity; for therein consciousness finds only consciousness of its opposite as its essence — and of its own nothingness. Elevating itself beyond this, it passes to the unchangeable. But this elevation is itself this same consciousness. It is, therefore, immediately consciousness of the opposite, viz. of itself as single, individual, particular. The unchangeable, which comes to consciousness, is in that very fact at the same time affected by particularity, and is only present with this latter. Instead of particularity having been abolished in the consciousness of immutability, it only continues to appear there still.

210. In this process, however, consciousness experiences just this appearance of particularity in the unchangeable, and of the unchangeable in particularity. Consciousness becomes aware of particularity in general in the immutable essence, and at the same time it there finds its own particularity. For the truth of this process is precisely that the double consciousness is one and single. This unity becomes a fact to it, but in the first instance the unity is one in which the diversity of both factors is still the dominant feature. Owing to this, consciousness has before it the threefold way in which particularity is connected with unchangeableness. In one form it comes before itself as opposed to the unchangeable essence, and is thrown back to



the beginning of that struggle, which is, from first to last, the principle constituting the entire situation. At another time it finds the unchangeable appearing in the form of particularity; so that the latter is an embodiment of unchangeableness, into which, in consequence, the entire form of existence passes. In the third case, it discovers itself to be this particular fact in the unchangeable. The first unchangeable is taken to be merely the alien, external Being, (2) which passes sentence on particular existence; since the second unchangeable is a form or mode of particularity like itself (3), it, i.e. the consciousness, becomes in the third place spirit (Geist), has the joy of finding itself therein, and becomes aware within itself that its particularity has been reconciled with the universals. (4)

211. What is set forth here as a mode and relation of the unchangeable, came to light as the experience through which self-consciousness passes in its unhappy state of diremption. This experience is now doubtless not its own onesided process; for it is itself unchangeable consciousness; and this latter consequently, is a particular consciousness as well; and the process is as much a process of that unchangeable consciousness, which makes its appearance there as certainly as the other. For that movement is carried on in these moments: an unchangeable now opposed to the particular in general, then, being itself particular, opposed to the other particular, and finally at one with it. But this consideration, so far as it is our affair, (5) is here out of place, for thus far we have only had to do with unchangeableness as unchangeableness of consciousness, which, for that reason, is not true immutability, but is still affected with an opposite; we have not had before us the unchangeable per se and by itself; we do not, therefore, know how this latter will conduct itself. What has here so far come to light is merely this that to consciousness, which is our object here, the determinations above indicated appear in the unchangeable.

212. For this reason, then, the unchangeable consciousness also preserves, in its very form and bearing, the character and fundamental features of diremption and separate self-existence, as against the particular consciousness. For the latter it is thus altogether a contingency, a mere chance event, that the unchangeable receives the form of particularity; just as the particular consciousness merely happens to find itself opposed to the unchangeable, and therefore has this relation per naturam. Finally that it finds itself in the unchangeable appears to the particular consciousness to be brought about partly, no doubt, by itself, or to take place for the reason that itself is particular; but this union, both as regards its origin as well as in its being, appears partly also due to the unchangeable; and the opposition remains within this unity itself. In point of fact, through the unchangeable assuming a definite form, the “beyond,” as a moment, has not only remained, but really is more securely established. For if the remote “beyond” seems indeed brought closer to the individual by this particular form of realization, on the other hand, it is henceforward fixedly opposed to the individual, a sensuous, impervious unit, with all the hard resistance of what is actual. The hope of becoming one therewith must remain a hope, i.e. without fulfilment, without present fruition; for between the hope and fulfilment there stands precisely the absolute contingency, or immovable indifference, which is involved in the very assumption of determinate shape and form, the basis and foundation of the hope. By the nature of this existent unit, through the particular reality it has assumed and adopted, it comes about of necessity that it becomes a thing of the past, something that has been somewhere far away, and absolutely remote it remains.

213. If, at the beginning, the bare notion of the sundered consciousness involved the characteristic of seeking to cancel it, qua particular consciousness, and become the unchangeable consciousness, the direction its effort henceforth takes is rather that of cancelling its relation to the pure unchangeable, without shape or embodied form, and of adopting only the relation to the unchangeable which has form and shape. (6) For the oneness of the particular consciousness with the unchangeable is henceforth its object and the essential reality for it, just as in the mere notion of it the essential object was merely the formless abstract unchangeable: and the relation found in this absolute disruption, characteristic of its notion, is now what it has to turn away from. The external relation, however, primarily adopted to the formed and embodied unchangeable, as being an alien extraneous reality, must be transmuted and raised to that of

complete and thoroughgoing fusion and identification.

214. The process through which the unessential consciousness strives to attain this oneness, is itself a triple process, in accordance with the threefold character of the relation which this consciousness takes up to its transcendent and remote reality embodied in specific form. In one it is a pure consciousness; at another time a particular individual who takes up towards actuality the attitude characteristic of desire and labour; and in the third place it is a consciousness of its self-existence, its existence for itself. We have now to see how these three modes of its being are found and are constituted in that general relation.

215. In the first place, then, regarded as pure consciousness, the unchangeable embodied in definite historical form seems, since it is an object for pure consciousness, to be established as it is in its self-subsistent reality. But this, its reality in and for itself, has not yet come to light, as we already remarked. Were it to be in consciousness as it is in itself and for itself, this would certainly have to come about not from the side of consciousness, but from the unchangeable. But, this being so, its presence here is brought about through consciousness only in a one-sided way to begin with, and just for that reason is not found in a perfect and genuine form, but constantly weighted and encumbered with imperfection, with an opposite.

216. But although the “unhappy consciousness” does not possess this actual presence, it has, at the same time, transcended pure thought, so far as this is the abstract thought of Stoicism, which turns away from particulars altogether, and again the merely restless thought of Scepticism — so far, in fact, as this is merely particularity in the sense of aimless contradiction and the restless process of contradictory thought. It has gone beyond both of these; it brings and keeps together pure thought and particular existence, but has not yet risen to that level of thinking where the particularity of consciousness is harmoniously reconciled with pure thought itself. It rather stands midway, at the point where abstract thought comes in contact with the particularity of consciousness qua particularity. Itself is this act of contact; it is the union of pure thought and individuality; and this thinking individuality or pure thought also exists as object for it, and the unchangeable is essentially itself an individual existence. But that this its object, the unchangeable, which assumes essentially the form of particularity, is its own self, the self which is particularity of consciousness—this is not established for it.

217. In this first condition, consequently, in which we treat it as pure consciousness, it takes up towards its object an attitude which is not that of thought; but rather (since it is indeed in itself pure thinking particularity and its object is just this pure thought, but pure thought is not their relation to one another as such), it, so to say, merely gives itself up to thought, devotes itself to thinking (*geht an das Denken hin*), and is the state of Devotion (*Andacht*). Its thinking as such is no more than the discordant clang of ringing bells, or a cloud of warm incense, a kind of thinking in terms of music, that does not get the length of notions, which would be the sole, immanent, objective mode of thought. This boundless pure inward feeling comes to have indeed its object; but this object does not make its appearance in conceptual form, and therefore comes on the scene as something external and foreign. Hence we have here the inward movement of pure emotion (*Gemüth*) which feels itself, but feels itself in the bitterness of soul-diremption. It is the movement of an infinite Yearning, which is assured that its nature is a pure emotion of this kind, a pure thought which thinks itself as particularity — a yearning that is certain of being known and recognized by this object, for the very reason that this object thinks itself as particularity. At the same time, however, this nature is the unattainable “beyond” which, in being seized, escapes or rather has already escaped. The “beyond” has already escaped. for it is in part the unchangeable, thinking itself as particularity, and consciousness, therefore, attains itself therein immediately, — attains itself, but as something opposed to the unchangeable; instead of grasping, the real nature consciousness merely feels, and has fallen back upon itself. Since, in thus attaining itself, consciousness cannot keep itself at a distance as this opposite, it has merely laid hold of what is unessential instead of having seized true reality. Thus, just as, on one side, when striving to find itself in the essentially real, it only lays hold of its own divided state of existence, so, too, on the other side, it cannot grasp that other [the essence] as particular or as concrete. That “other” cannot be found where it is sought; for it is meant to be

just a “beyond,” that which can not be found. When looked for as a particular it is not universal, a thought-constituted particularity, not notion, but particular in the sense of an object, or a concrete actual, an object of immediate sense-consciousness, of sense certainty; and just for that reason it is only one which has disappeared. Consciousness, therefore, can only come upon the grave of its life. But because this is itself an actuality, and since it is contrary to the nature of actuality to afford a lasting possession, the presence even of that tomb is merely the source of trouble, toil, and struggle, a fight which must be lost. (7) But since consciousness has found out by experience that the grave of its actual unchangeable Being has no concrete actuality, that the vanished particularity qua vanished is not true particularity, it will give up looking for the unchangeable particular existence as something actual, or will cease trying to hold on to what has thus vanished. Only so is it capable of finding particularity in a true form, a form that is universal.

218. In the first instance, however, the withdrawal of the emotional life into itself is to be taken in such a way that this life of feeling, in its own regard, has actuality qua particular existence. It is pure emotion which, for us or per se, has found itself and satiated itself, for although it is, no doubt, aware in feeling that the ultimate reality is cut off from it, yet in itself this feeling is self-feeling; it has felt the object of its own pure feeling, and this object is its own self. It thus comes forward here as self-feeling, or as something actual on its own account. In this return into self, we find appearing its second attitude, the condition of desire and labour, which ensures for consciousness the inner certainty of its own self (which, as we saw, it has obtained) by the process of cancelling and enjoying the alien external reality, existence in the form of independent things. The unhappy consciousness, however, finds itself merely desiring and toiling; it is not consciously and directly aware that so to find itself rests upon the inner certainty of its self, and that its feeling of real being is this self-feeling. Since it does not in its own view have that certainty, its inner life really remains still a shattered certainty of itself; that confirmation of its own existence which it would receive through work and enjoyment, is, therefore, just as tottering and insecure; in other words, it must consciously nullify this certification of its own being, so as to find therein confirmation indeed, but confirmation only of what it is for itself, viz. of its disunion.

219. The actual reality, on which desire and work are directed, is, from the point of view of this consciousness, no longer something in itself null and void, something merely to be destroyed and consumed; but rather something like that consciousness itself, a reality broken in sunder, which is only in one respect essentially null, but in another sense also a consecrated world. This reality is a form and embodiment of the unchangeable, for the latter has in itself preserved particularity; and because, qua unchangeable, it is a universal, its particularity as a whole has the significance of all actuality.

220. If consciousness were, for itself, an independent consciousness, and reality were taken to be in and for itself of no account, then consciousness would attain, in work and enjoyment, the feeling of its own independence, by the fact that its consciousness would be that which cancels reality. But since this reality is taken to be the form and shape of the unchangeable, consciousness is unable of itself to cancel that reality. On the contrary, seeing that, consciousness manages to nullify reality and to obtain enjoyment, this must come about through the unchangeable itself when it disposes of its own form and shape and delivers this up for consciousness to enjoy.

Consciousness, on its part, appears here likewise as actual, though, at the same time, as internally shattered; and this diremption shows itself in the course of toil and enjoyment, to break up into a relation to reality, or existence for itself, and into an existence in itself. That relation to actuality is the process of alteration, or acting, the existence for itself, which belongs to the particular consciousness as such. But therein it is also in itself; this aspect belongs to the unchangeable “beyond.” This aspect consists in faculties and powers: an external gift, which the unchangeable here hands over for the consciousness to make use of.

221. In its action, accordingly, consciousness, in the first instance, has its being in the relation of two extremes. On one side it takes its stand as the active present (Diesseits), and opposed to it stands passive reality: both in relation to each other, but also both withdrawn into



the unchangeable, and firmly established in themselves. From both sides, therefore, there is detached merely a superficial element to constitute their opposition; they are only opposed at the surface, and the play of opposition, the one to the other, takes place there.

The extreme of passive reality is sublated by the active extreme. Actuality can, however, on its own side, be sublated only because its own changeless essence sublates it, repels itself from itself, and hands over to the mercy of the active extreme what is thus repelled. Active force appears as the power wherein actual reality is dissolved. For that reason, however, this consciousness, to which the inherent reality, or ultimate essence, is an "other," regards this power (which is the way it appears when active), as "the beyond," that which lies remote from its self. Instead, therefore, of returning out of its activity into itself, and instead of having confirmed itself as a fact for its self, consciousness reflects back this process of action into the other extreme, which is thereby represented as purely universal, as absolute might, from which the movement in every direction started, and which is the essential life of the self-disintegrating extremes, as they at first appeared, and of the process of change as well.

222. In that the unchangeable consciousness contemns, its specific shape and form, and abandons it entirely, while, on the other hand, the individual consciousness "gives thanks," i.e. denies itself the satisfaction of being conscious of its independence, and refers the essential substance of its action to the "beyond" and not to itself: by these two moments, in which both parts give themselves up the one to the other, there certainly arises in consciousness a sense of its own unity with the unchangeable. But, at the same time, this unity is affected with division, is again broken within itself and out of this unity there once more comes the opposition of universal and particular. For consciousness, no doubt, in appearance renounces the satisfaction of its self feeling, but it gets the actual satisfaction of that feeling, for it has been desire, work, and enjoyment; qua consciousness it has willed, has acted, has enjoyed. Its thanks similarly, in which it recognizes the other extreme as its true reality, and cancels itself, is itself its own act, which counterbalances the action of the other extreme, and meets with a like act the benefit handed over. If the former yields to consciousness merely its superficial content, yet consciousness still expresses thanks; and since it gives up its own action, i.e. its very essence, it, properly speaking, does more thereby than the other, which only renounces an outer surface. The entire process, therefore, is reflected into the extreme of particularity, not merely in actual desire, labour, and enjoyment, but even in the expression of thanks, where the reverse seems to take place. Consciousness feels itself therein as this particular individual, and does not let itself be deceived by the semblance of its renunciation; for the real truth of that procedure is that it has not given itself up. What has come about is merely the double reflection into both extremes; and the result is to repeat the cleavage into the opposed consciousness of the unchangeable and the consciousness of a contrasted opposite in the shape of willing, performing, enjoying, and of self-renunciation itself, or, in general, of self-existent particularity.

223. With this has come to light the third stage in the movement of this consciousness, a situation which follows from the second and one which in truth has, by its will and by its performance, proved itself independent. In the first situation we had only a "notion" of actual consciousness, the inward emotion, which is not yet real in action and enjoyment. The second is this actualization, as an external express action and enjoyment. With the return out of this stage, however, it is that which has got to know itself as a real and effective consciousness, or that whose truth consists in being in and for itself. But herein the enemy is discovered in its special and most peculiar form. In the battle of emotion this individual consciousness has the sense of being merely a tune, an abstract moment. In work and enjoyment, which are the realization of this unsubstantial existence, it can readily forget itself, and the consciousness of its own proper life found in this realization is overborne by grateful recognition. But this overthrow of its proper distinctiveness is in truth a return of consciousness into itself, and moreover into itself as the general reality.

224. This third attitude, wherein this genuine reality is one term, consists in so relating this reality to absolute universal Being, as to show it to be mere nothingness.(8) The course of this relation we have still to consider.

225. To begin with, as regards the contrasted relation of consciousness, in which its reality is taken to be immediately naught, its actual performance thus becomes a doing of nothing at all; its enjoyment becomes a feeling of its own unhappiness. In consequence, activity and enjoyment lose all universal content and significance; for in that case they would have a substantiality of their own: and both withdraw into the state of particularity, to which consciousness is directed in order to cancel them. Consciousness discovers itself as this concrete particular in the functions of animal life. These latter, instead of being performed unconsciously and naturally as something which, per se, is of no significance, and can acquire no importance and essential value for spirit, these latter, since it is in them that the enemy is seen in his proper and peculiar shape, are rather an object of strenuous concern and serious occupation, and become precisely the most important consideration.(9) Since, however this enemy creates itself in its very defeat, consciousness, by giving the enemy a fixedness of being and of meaning, instead of getting rid of him, really never gets away from him and finds itself constantly defiled. And since, at the same time, this object of its exertions, instead of being something essential, is the very meanest, instead of being a universal, is the merest particular — we have here before us merely a personality confined within its narrow self and its petty activity, a personality brooding over itself, as unfortunate as it is pitifully destitute.

226. But all the same both of these, both the feeling of its misfortune and the poverty of its own action, are points of connection to which to attach the consciousness of its unity with the unchangeable. For the attempted immediate destruction of its actual existence is affected through the thought of the unchangeable and takes place in this relation to the unchangeable. The mediate relation constitutes the essence of the negative process, in which this consciousness directs itself against its particularity of being, which, however, qua relation, is at the same time in itself positive, and will bring this its unity to light as an objective fact for this consciousness itself.

227. This mediate relation is consequently a connected inferential process (Schluss), in which particularity, establishing itself at first in opposition to the inherent essence, is bound together and united with this other term only through a third term. Through this middle term the one extreme, unchangeable consciousness, has a being for the unessential consciousness, in which, at the same time, is also involved that the latter likewise has a being for the former, solely through that middle term; and this middle term is thus one which presents both extremes to one another, and acts as the minister of each in turn in dealing with the other. This medium is itself a conscious being, for it is an action mediating consciousness as such; the content of this action is the destruction and annihilation, which consciousness has in view in dealing with its particularity.

228. In the middle term, then, this consciousness gets freed from action and enjoyment, in the sense of its own action and enjoyment. It puts away from itself, qua self-existent extreme, the substance of its will, and throws on to the mediating term, or the ministering agency,(10) its own proper freedom of decision, and herewith the guilt of its own act. This mediator, being in direct communication with the unchangeable Being, renders service by advising what is just and right. The act, since this follows upon obedience to a deliverance enunciated by another, ceases, as regards the performance or the willing of the act, to be the agent's own proper deed. There is still left, however, to the subordinate consciousness, its objective aspect, namely, the fruit of its labour, and enjoyment. These, therefore, it casts away as well, and just as it disclaimed its own will, so it contemns such reality as it received in work and in enjoyment. It renounces these, partly as being the accomplished truth of its self-conscious independence, when it seeks to do something quite foreign to itself, thinking and speaking what, for it, has no sense or meaning;(11) partly, too, as being external property — when it demits somewhat of the possession acquired through its toil. It also gives up the enjoyment it had — when with its fastings and its mortifications it once more absolutely denies itself that enjoyment.

229. Through these moments — the negative abandonment first of its own right and power of decision, then of its property and enjoyment, and finally the positive moment of carrying on what it does not understand-it deprives itself, completely and in truth, of the consciousness

of inner and outer freedom, or reality in the sense of its own existence for itself. It has the certainty of having in truth stripped itself of its Ego, and of having turned its immediate self-consciousness into a “thing,” into an objective external existence.

It could ensure its self-renunciation and self-abandonment solely by this real and vital sacrifice [of its self]. For only thereby is the deception got rid of, which lies in inner acknowledgment of gratitude through heart, sentiment, and tongue — an acknowledgment which indeed disclaims all power of independent self-existence, and ascribes this power to a gift from above, but in this very disclaimer retains for itself its own proper and peculiar life, outwardly in the possession it does not resign, inwardly in the consciousness of the decision which itself has resolved upon and in the consciousness of its own self-constituted content, which it has not exchanged for a content coming from without and filling it with meaningless ideas and phrases.

230. But in the sacrifice actually accomplished, while consciousness has cancelled the action as its own act, it has also implicitly demitted and put off its unhappy condition. Yet that this demission (12) has implicitly taken place, is effected by the other term of the logical process (Schluss) here involved, the term which is the inherent and ultimate reality, That sacrifice of the subordinate term, however, was at the same time not a onesided action; it involves the action of the other. For giving up one's own will is only in one aspect negative; in principle, or in itself, it is at the same time positive, positing and affirming the will as an other, and, specifically, affirming the will as not a particular but universal. This consciousness takes this positive significance of the negatively affirmed particular will to be the will of the other extreme, the will, which, because it is simply an “other” for consciousness, assumes the form of advice, or counsel, not through itself, but through the third term, the mediator. Hence its will certainly becomes, for consciousness, universal will, inherent and essential will, but is not itself in its own view this inherent reality. The giving up of its own will as particular is not taken by it to be in principle the positive element of universal will. Similarly its surrender of possession and enjoyment has merely the same negative significance, and the universal which it thereby comes to find is, in its view, not its own doing proper. This unity of objectivity and independent self-existence which lies in the notion of action, and which therefore comes for consciousness to be the essential reality and object — as this is not taken by consciousness to be the principle of its action, neither does it become an object for consciousness directly and through itself. Rather, it makes the mediating minister express this still halting certainty, that its unhappy state is only implicitly the reverse, i.e. is only implicitly action bringing self-satisfaction in its act or blessed enjoyment; that its pitiable action too is only implicitly the reverse, namely, absolute action; that in principle action is only really action when it is the action of some particular individual. But for its self, action and its own concrete action remain something miserable and insignificant, its enjoyment pain, and the sublation of these, positively considered, remains a mere “beyond.” But in this object, where it finds its own action and existence, qua this particular consciousness, to be inherently existence and action as such, there has arisen the idea of Reason, of the certainty that consciousness is, in its particularity, inherently and essentially absolute, or is all reality.

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G.F.W. Hegel. *The Philosophy of Mind*. Trans. J.B. Baillie (1910).

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