

Hegel's Psychology Of Freedom

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I. Introduction

Since Plato correlated virtues in the state with those in the soul, the idea of a reciprocity between politics and psychology is as old as philosophy. For the possibility of the state as an ethically founded community rests on a concept of the individual as actually free, not some hybrid being who is in some sense free, in another not so. Correspondingly, any psychology which does not know personality to be the truth of human nature, which cannot comprehend human action as prompted by self-generated rather than instinctive ends, stands as a formidable obstacle to the very idea of a free community. To paraphrase Plato, where freedom remains psychologically ambiguous, so too must the ideal of free polity remain in principle unfulfilled.

Every account of ethical life implies a parallel psychology and *vice versa*. In traditional systems this reciprocity was assumed: Aristotle's psychology of habit and intellect, for example, plays into an ethics of moral and political virtue which supports a definition of man as a political animal who has its proper life in a state. After Kant this linkage was to become more problematical; the moral appears dissociated from the psychological, the practical from the theoretical; even the possibility of a psychological science of freedom is written off as an illusion of reason. Fichte's school would seek to heal the breach by assimilating nature wholly to moral self-consciousness -- I simply am what I do -- thereby providing the speculative model for the radical moral and technological pragmatism which has come to form one main current in later ultra-modernist culture. Schelling provided the converse model of an identification of self-consciousness and nature which was to inspire later existential forms of ethics and psychology. These twin movements now mostly dominate ultra-modernist thinking:¹ on the one side revolutionary humanism with its radically practical account of the human and on the other the existential aestheticism which brings everything into the perspective of the immediate being-for-self of the natural or finite subject.

20th century psychologies chiefly draw their inspiration from these humanistic and counter-humanistic sources. Both represent a certain appeal to human freedom but in such an extreme and one-sided way as to render that concept wholly problematical and

¹ F. L. Jackson, "The Revolutionary Origins of Contemporary Philosophy", *Dionysius*. ix, 1985

ambiguous. For example, the appeal of evolutionary psychology or its neurological and genetic extensions lies not so much in the plausibility of its actual mechanistic theories as in the faith that 'man' is somehow a work in progress, an unfinished nature capable of modification, cure and improvement through technical, psychological and political intervention. The neo-Pavlovian experimentalist, B.F. Skinner, went so far as to suggest the term 'psychology' be dropped altogether from our vocabulary to be replaced by the more appropriate 'behavioral technology'. The other main stream of 20th century psychology, having its watershed in the pan-psychism of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, was to develop various forms of psycho-social analysis which view culture in general as a system of emotional, social and linguistical structures that are 'repressive' of the individual's aboriginal freedom, producing thereby a kind of spiritual sickness whose cure lies in some form of radical 'disinhibition'. Existential, psychoanalytical and phenomenological psychologies from Freud, Lacan, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty to popular neo-Adlerian notions of self-estimation and empowerment have accordingly set themselves resolutely against the kind of pragmatic-scientific psychology defended by such as Skinner or Rorty. The presumption on both sides is, however, the same: individuals are not in possession of their freedom; it is rather something to be brought about in them, whether through social or scientific conditioning or through therapeutic catharsis. Freedom is seen as a condition to be externally imposed on an otherwise unfree nature, or else it is a stifled or corrupted subjectivity needing to be emancipated. *In neither case is freedom considered actual in human nature as such.*

The fundamental ambiguity clinging to most modern psychologies is thus that in the general interest of freedom they appeal to descriptions of the human condition and nature such as are in themselves deterministic, that is, that imply that human beings are in their nature unfree, or if free, only in an essentially conflicted and conditional sense. If in tradition the *psyche* was an unquestioned and vivid reality and psychology concerned chiefly with its understanding and proper care, in the present time the notion of a free inner life has been thrust in the background as an archaic notion, psychology seeing its proper role to lie in the service of a freedom conceived wholly pragmatically as endless human mastery over the natural, material and social conditions of life, or existentially as the affirmation of a wholly subjective freedom against the bondage of its finite world.

In both forms the *intent* and the *content* of psychology are in conflict with one another. This may be seen in the simple paradox which each implies: were their claims true, it would be impossible to make them. Were it literally the case, for example, that human actions are entirely conditioned, then scientific activity itself is only a form of high-level reflex reactivity, thus without any objective authority. Again, if every objective human judgement literally has a non-objective, unconscious source, then a psychology of the unconscious is in principle inaccessible since in it the psychoanalyst would only be rationalizing his own depths. Likewise, were thinking literally brain activity, then the EEG is the measure of this truth too; if 'world' were but the correlate of subjectivity there can be no context in which to communicate this fact; if theory expresses nothing more than the bias of some covert power structure, so is this claim also a prejudice. As much could be said of the standpoint of modern science generally -- it tends to describe reality in ways which exclude the possibility of science itself. But the

contradiction is more obvious in psychology since it is the freedom of human thought and action themselves that are directly compromised in and by its own theories.²

Hegel stands at the crossroads of this ultra-modernist division into psychological extremes wherein freedom is assumed as the primary principle and at once is compromised or denied. In what follows I will seek first to outline the general background and presuppositions of Hegel's psychology of freedom and then to sketch its overall structure.

II. "Human Nature"

(a) The Concept of Spirit

The key to Hegel's thought is the concept of 'spirit'. If the term is found vexatious by many, it can most simply be described as a synonym for 'freedom': where the latter is commonly thought of adjectively as a sort of property or condition, 'spirit' is the substantive which denotes freedom as an actual life. "The essence of spirit" writes Hegel, "is freedom", or conversely, spirit is life so far as it has freedom for principle. Linguistic convention has had a lot to do with obscuring otherwise plain Hegelian distinctions. English translators, for example, have routinely rendered the German '*Geist*' as 'mind' or '*the* mind' with the intent of avoiding the term 'spirit' as if nothing more than a poetic or religious metaphor, with superstitious overtones, unsuited to strict philosophical usage. The Hegelian spirit, however, is far from a metaphor and certainly not a '*spuk*' as in Stirner's jibe,³ nor does it appeal to a spirit-world in the skies. Not only does the blanket use of the English term 'mind' have a reifying effect that turns a living activity into a thing; not only does it introduce a definite psychological, British-empiricist bias which entirely loses the sense of Hegel's conceptual approach; but when it comes to capitalizing expressions like Mind or 'Absolute Mind' the whole Hegelian argument is cast in a ridiculous and entirely inappropriate metaphysical light.

Hegel himself uses the word *Geist* in its ordinary everyday German meaning embracing all three of the fore-mentioned connotations: psychological, practical and speculative (*EN 385*). Spirit as subjective has the simple meaning of a reference to the merely inward or mental life of the individual person. This is distinguished from spirit in its objective sense, the '*esprit*' of the moral, political and historical community (the 'American spirit'). These are presented as partial forms of an 'absolute' or explicitly self-conscious spiritual life, a life bearing direct witness to freedom as its essential constitutive principle, which idea finds specific articulation in the explicitly spiritual

² G.W.F. Hegel, *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences (hereinafter abbreviated 'EN')*, s.482., tr Miller (Oxford, 1971). I have frequently modified Miller's translations on the basis of Moldenhauer-Michel (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1970) to bring out arguments and nuances he misses and get rid of distracting anglicizations such as capitalization of substantives and spurious terms such as 'notion' for 'concept', 'ming' for 'spirit' etc..

³ Max Stirner. *The Ego and His Own*, (Western world, 1982).

disciplines of fine art, religion and philosophy. The argument of the philosophy of spirit overall thus consists in explicating the distinction and connection between the finite psychological and practical forms of freedom within an infinite perspective in which the idea of freedom itself is explicitly enunciated, developed and comprehended as their common unifying principle.

There is good reason, indeed, to view the Hegelian system as a whole as nothing less than the system of freedom. Considered logically, freedom is simply the principle as such of infinite self-determination, the *Begriff* or 'concept'. As having the implication of a sublimation of otherness and necessity, freedom is the animating principle of nature, attaining to its highest potentiality in organic life and in the human animal in particular. Finally, in and as human self-conscious thought and action, freedom is an actual, self-realized, self-sustaining life, whose psychological and practical forms are to be seen as dialectically relative moments within spirit in its absolute sense of a self-conscious life in which freedom is explicitly known and willed as its own very nature, substance and aim. Indeed, spirit is 'finite' -- a 'merely' human spirit -- so far as it takes itself to be no more than a subjective or psychological state or no more than a political condition, rather than as an 'infinite' life which is actual in itself. This is because, Hegel argues, freedom as infinite *self*-determination cannot be reconciled with a view of it as determinate, that is as some existential or circumstantial condition. An actual or absolute freedom demands that subjectivity pass freely over into determinate action, while on the other hand, that only that objective order of life be thought legitimate which has its animation in and through individual freedom.

It is Hegel's persuasion that only in a psychology which considers the human being to be a person or spirit, thus as a being in whom liberation from natural form is constitutive of what individual, self-conscious life is, can it make sense at all to contemplate the possibility of an institutional life founded in freedom. For where necessity and freedom remain conflicted in human being itself, where individuals know themselves as at once free and unfree, a fatal ambiguity is introduced into the pursuit of an objective human freedom and no ethical stability is attainable. It is in this regard that Hegel found most extant ethical philosophies wanting and why he thought the development of a psychology of freedom crucial (*EN* 379).

Hegel's psychology belongs to a larger philosophy of freedom in all its categorial, metaphysical and psycho-social implications: freedom as concept, freedom prefigured in nature, freedom as human freedom. The summary explication of this freedom-idea is of course the burden of *The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, Part III, on 'spirit', which deals with freedom as the essence and theme of human psychological, ethical and intellectual life. The same argument is further elaborated in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, *The Philosophy of Right* and the published lectures on world history, art, religion and the history of philosophy.⁴

⁴ "The essential feature ... or substance of spirit is freedom, i.e., the absence of dependence on an other, relation of self to self. Spirit is the actualized concept which is for itself and has itself for object... Or as Christ said, the truth makes spirit free and freedom makes spirit true (*EN* 382).

Hegel's philosophy of the subjective spirit -- his psychology -- is one of the least known segments of his system, perhaps in great measure because what is known of Hegel has been largely due to the impact of his political philosophy upon a left-hegelian legacy which chose either to ignore the psychological doctrine or regard it as a bourgeois vestige. Marx insisted it is only necessary to assume that individuals exist and are self-active beings; all else is superfluous. Hegel, however, is everywhere adamant that a psychological 'proof' of freedom is indispensable to any legitimate legal, moral and political philosophy since any presumption of human free agency would otherwise be inherently controvertible. His own *Philosophy of Right*, accordingly, begins with a recapitulation of the concluding sections (469-482) of the *Encyclopedia* psychology expounding the concept of free personality in relation to, and indeed as, the consummate principle of human individuality as such.

However commonplace the everyday intuition of personal freedom, the attempt to formulate an actual science of free subjectivity has long suffered from a persisting perplexity as to the proper status of the object of psychological inquiry.⁵ The older metaphysical solutions -- psycho-physical dualism, pan-psychism, pan-physicalism, double-aspect monism etc. -- all took the division between the realms of the *physis* and *psyche* for granted and saw the question as one of establishing their proper relation. Pan-psychism, for example, the generally prevailing outlook in pre-scientific cultures where a clear spirit/nature distinction remains unarticulated, insists on the priority of the spiritual over the natural and thus on a 'superstitious' understanding of nature itself. The wish to reunite spirit with nature became the theme of modern romanticism, generating various forms of psychological absolutism wherein inwardness or subjectivity is made the unconditioned fact and "world" as Heidegger put it, "is always and only world for the spirit".⁶ A certain feeling of freedom finds satisfaction in a speculative poetry of quasi-natural inner energy, of the recovery of an aboriginal life in which the sources of a 'natural' spirituality might be reappropriated through diet, body-cultivation, activism on the part of the 'environment', or ritualistic healing.⁷

Physicalism, on the other hand, draws everything into the category of natural fact, dismissing any notion of supra-physical life as mere superstition. From the atomism of Protagoras to contemporary experimentalism, its tactic has always been to conduct psychological inquiry as an extension of the science of nature, thus to explain psychological events and activities in physical or physiological terms, the latter conceived exclusively in terms of material necessitation. In a sort of parody of Descartes' search for the seat of the soul, neuropsychology still seeks to 'locate' intelligence in the brain. Physiological psychology remains in its very conception a sort of sophisticated phrenology: the cross-categorical identification of one mode of reality in terms of another. In thus eschewing all recognition of the subjective dimension in human experience a

⁵ Husserl's phenomenology attempted to lay the ground for such a science, spawning a tradition of phenomenological psychology of which better known popular works include; M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, (tr. Smith, 1990); F.J. Buytendijk, *The Mind of the Dog*, (1973); J-P Sartre, *L'imaginaire: la psychologie phenomenologique de l'imagination* (1970).

⁶ M. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, (tr. Manheim, NY, 1961) p.37.

⁷ The complex psychoanalytical theories of Freud, Lacan or Reich and 'new age' popular mysticism differ only in intellectual subtlety. The assumptions are the same.

priori, the experimental reduction of psychological events to biological or physical causes inevitably fails to capture just what is uniquely psychological about them. In principle preemptive of insight into the plain facts of ordinary psychological experience, physicalist explanation is obfuscating to the very degree it is 'scientific', its only real claim to authority lying rather in the practical utility of its various findings.

Psycho-physicalism finally, which attempts to let the distinction between psychic and organic simply stand and merely to correlate them, yields psychological methodologies which endlessly vacillate between 'explaining' events of one class in terms of another. The method of 'correlation' is a two-way street: one alters physical conditions noting any correlative psychological change, or the other way round, and then does the mathematics. The advantage, of course, is that questions of body-mind dualism and causality can appear to be put aside (as in Skinner's 'black box') but only to the extent they are at the same time assumed as essential to the method itself: one assumes a physical range of data, a corresponding psychological one, and their undefined mutual interaction. Mainstream contemporary experimental psychology generally takes this approach.⁸ Earlier psychophysics (the James-Lange theory of emotion for example) was content to argue psycho-somatic or somato-psychic correlations indifferently. Later psychologies tended to lean to one extreme or the other: Pavlovian-Skinnerian conditioning sought correlational reduction of mental events to physical terms, the phenomenological experimentalism of Buytendijk or Merleau-Ponty a correlational reduction of bodily behaviour to conscious intentionality. By postponing recognition of the dualism which is nonetheless assumed, it appears possible either way to carry out endless experimental research into feelings, attitudes, behaviour, perception, cognition and so forth, without committing to any actual overall theory of mental life or arriving at any insights and conclusions as to individuality itself and its principle.

In spite of its achieved cultural influence, ubiquity and centrality and its own self-image as a distinctly scientific or at least post-metaphysical inquiry, it is not clear at all that contemporary psychology has rid itself of its metaphysical baggage of a more or less rigid distinction between organic and mental. If one traces the various schools of contemporary psychology to their historical roots what is remarkable is how this distinction remains the common *unreasoned* point of departure. A distinction between nature and freedom remains the source of the conceptual parameters which determine what psychology itself can be and shall be about, whether one says there is only the natural universe and mental life but a dimension of, or a way of speaking about it; whether being is subjectivity and reality what is constituted in it; or whether the whole question of psychic-organic polarity is pragmatically suspended and the focus kept simply on describing and tabulating correlations across this categorial gulf.

(b) Freedom and Nature

If it is to surmount this ambiguity, a psychology of freedom will first of all require an account of nature different both from the enlightenment view which still predominates in

⁸ Accordingly, experimental-psychology has in recent times turned almost entirely to correlational methods with psychological 'facts' reported in statistical terms

natural science as well as from that of the continuing reaction against it born in romanticism. It will neither assume the exclusion of spirit from nature or their radical identification but seek to comprehend both as expressive of one idea. Such is the simplest statement of the logic behind the Hegelian psychology as of the conception of nature it presupposes.

It is hardly surprising then that, historically, Hegel's account of nature has been judged 'speculative' in the most pejorative sense by critics from both sides of the fence, even by those who might otherwise regard themselves Hegelians.⁹ Much misunderstanding is avoided if it is at least clear that for Hegel a philosophical consideration of nature neither does nor should pretend to compete with empirical-scientific knowledge and on the contrary must remain open to and take account of whatever the extant knowledge is. The two inquiries simply have different interests: enlightened empirical science has an essential pragmatic thrust; it no more intends to be a metaphysics of nature than should philosophy pretend, in the manner of romanticism, to substitute a mystified version of nature as against it. The whole interest of philosophy should rather be, in Hegel's view, to comprehend nature from the standpoint of freedom, that is, of thought, and that means getting hold of the *concept* of nature, employing and applying to this end whatever empirical knowledge is available.

As the philosophy of nature is a *conceptual* treatment, it has the same *universal* for object [as does empirical science] but considers it as it is *for itself*, in its *own immanent necessity*, that is, consistent with the principle of *self-determination* ... Not only must philosophy be in agreement with our experience of nature, but the *origin* and *formation* of the philosophical science thereof has empirical physics as both presupposition and precondition ... [even though] the latter cannot be thought its *foundation* ... which ought rather to lie in the necessity of the concept itself (*EN 246*).¹⁰

For an age schooled in technocratically oriented modern science -- 'real science with real results' -- the idea of a freely conceptual view of nature is bound to appear alien. The practical relation to nature¹¹ requires that natural things and events have nothing within, behind or beyond them but be taken simply as they are, given and there for our thoughtful observation, an order of determinate and determinable 'necessary contingencies' (*EN 248*) as the measure of all mere hypotheses. There could, of course, be no *scientific* evidence that the experimental view of nature is 'correct' any more than 'empiricism' itself could be validated by appealing to the facts; such a view of things simply belongs to the natural-scientific method as its founding assumption. For natural science to oppose its empirical standard to philosophical science -- as 'scientism' does -- would be to adopt the character of a metaphysics, a role it otherwise adamantly eschews. For Hegel, that the interest and

⁹ G.E. Mueller, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (NY, 1959) frequently intervenes parenthetically in the course of his translation to declare this or that statement or argument of Hegel's utterly unintelligible or ridiculous in his view, omitting large segments of the text.

¹⁰ There follows an extended criticism of *Naturphilosophie*, the romanticist mysticism from which, even more than from empiricism, he wished to disassociate his own conceptual physics.

¹¹ *EN 246* and *Zusatz* for Hegel on the relation of theoretical to practical views of nature.

assumptions of empirical and philosophical science of nature differ does not mean they are at all inconsistent. In the one, nature is assumed as outside and before thinking with thinking brought into play after the fact; in the other, thinking resolves directly to engage the concept of nature itself.

For Hegel, the prime point at issue is the so-called 'externality' of nature. The commonplace modern view of the meaning of this is that nature stands external *to us*, the consequence of an empiricist bias for which thinking deems itself scientific only so far as it views things and events as already there before it, standing over against it, as 'objective', *gegen-ständlich*. But it is really one and the same thinking which withdraws into itself to assume the role of detached observer and in the same act construes nature as a world objectively independent of our thinking about it. Hegel sees this subjective-objective division as both the essence and limit of the empirical view. It masks the deeper sense of the externality of nature exemplified in the ordinary insight that things and events are not simply external to us, but external *to one another*. That is to say, the 'otherness', 'outsidedness', 'endlessness' etc. of natural things and events belong to their very being as natural. 'External nature' thus does not describe how the universe exists relative to thinking beings but the essence of the being of nature as such. It is to say that what is characteristic of any entity, structure or occurrence *qua* natural, is that it has its origin, ground or cause, not from itself, but through something other than itself, this again through another and so on. This endless dependency of finite things and events, not upon themselves, but on another and yet another, *in infinitivum*, is what one calls 'natural necessity'.

From the point of view of its *concept*, then, nature is indeed the 'external world', but in a far more compelling sense than simply what is 'out there' for an observing subject 'in here'. The philosophical idea of nature, for Hegel, rather springs from this characteristic of other-determinateness or being-through-another which belongs to the natural as such. 'The external world', *Ausserlichkeit*, is the commonsense shorthand for the concept of nature as such and as a whole, so constituted, that is, as universal self-externalizing, self-differentiating activity.¹² For Hegel, this insight also provides a unique approach as to how the 'order' of nature is properly to be viewed, in contrast, for example, to the classical representations of it according to principles of emanation or evolution which posit some primal form or event and has everything else flowing serially from it from higher to lower or from lower to higher. Typically such alleged primal events, since never themselves presently evident, are relegated to the past, to an divine act of creation or a 'big bang' at the nether reach of cosmic history.¹³ Hegel brands such views as "inept" (249 *EN. Remark*) for the simple reason they interpret nature as if it were itself a natural phenomenon with its own origin in space and time etc., a view not only contradictory but

¹² The extreme, one-sided development of this principle has its most vivid articulation in Schopenhauer's expressivist principle of *Wille*, which concept was to have many subsequent imitators: the Unconscious, the Inexpressible, the Unknowable, Being etc, variations on the romanticist assimilation of freedom to nature as the latter's absolute, unmediated, and therefore irrational spontaneity..

¹³ Hegel's observation that the origin of nature cannot itself be a natural phenomenon is surely devastating to the arguments both of classical evolutionism as to the contemporary 'creationism' which opposes it, the latter itself a superstitious or para-naturalistic version of 'emanation' having little to do with what the Judeo-Christian tradition meant by the divine creation of the world.

which ignores what is equally obvious, namely that nature is as much spontaneous proliferation as it is orderly sequence, as much endless differentiation as homology of form; that nature advances, as the adage has it, by leaps and bounds, not in any tidy series.

Philosophically the order of nature is rather to be found, Hegel argues, in the differing modes in which the principle of external necessity is manifest throughout the whole; how it progresses from the 'pure' externality represented by space and time to more complex relations in which the form of sheer otherness is progressively sublimated and rendered complex. In physico-chemical interactions, for example, events and processes at once produce and react to one another, exist therefore in the explicit form of 'other for another', of *relational* externality, as reflected in the typically reciprocities in which mechanical laws or chemical formulae are expressed. In organic life this sublimation is yet more nearly complete so far as the organism sustains and reproduces *itself*, produces another which is at the same time its own, and is thus in principle a self-externalizing being. These 'stages' are not to be seen, however, as springing from or causing each other in any literal or natural sense; they are rather moments or stages which belong to the concept of the natural whole as such:

Nature is to be viewed as a 'system of stages', emerging of necessity one from another as its proximate truth, though by no means such that one stage springs *naturally* from the other but only within the terms of the idea [*logos*] which constitutes the basis of 'nature' itself. (*EN 249*)

The clue to this division of stages in nature lies in the recognition that more is involved in the concept of 'externality' than would appear when considered only in the abstract, namely, as externality as such, 'pure' externality. Properly considered, the possibility that things and events, *qua* natural, are external to one another lies in they themselves, in the law of their finitude according to which their 'otherness' belongs to them essentially, as their very own, and not as a limit or property imposed on them (paradoxically, surely) from outside. Externality, that is, presupposes *self*-externality and 'pure' externality is the simple abstraction from the latter. The manifestation of abstract externality in nature is of course space and time, and Hegel shows straight away how these dimensions are constituted, not as a fixed and static otherness of thing to thing or event to event but as self-sublating dynamics wherein what is other is other to another, this again to another, and so on *ad infinitum*. The 'necessity' ruling in nature, accordingly, is not the inevitability that everything be reducible to space and time, but the converse: the generative process whereby mere abstract differentiation is overcome, elaborated through a manifold of more and more complex and concrete forms to the point where the true principle and *telos* of nature as *self*-differentiated existence, being-other-for-self, becomes progressively more explicit.

The emergence of self-externality out of externality or self-differentiation out of difference is thus the deeper significance of the order and necessity of nature. Since externality and difference are modes of determination, what is revealed in and through nature itself is that all determination is self-determination. If in terms of logical principle

determination is necessity and self-determination freedom, then the striking upshot of Hegel's argument is that what is chiefly made manifest in the order of nature is that natural necessity has its ground in freedom, that nature itself is a moment in freedom, that the other-determinateness everywhere characteristic of natural process has self-determinateness as its underlying *telos*. And this is so, even though freedom *as such* is nowhere to be witnessed in nature itself, rather only universal contingency, eternal recurrence of the same, endless iteration which never seems to attain completion.¹⁴ Yet in its endless self-differentiating, self-othering activity, nature attains to completeness nonetheless in the generation of a particular natural being, an animal, in and for whom self-determination, self-conscious freedom, a *telos* otherwise hidden in nature generally, emerges as an explicit actuality.

In this view Hegel steps quite beyond both metaphysical and empirical accounts of nature, bearing explicit witness to nature conceived as an *active* living whole; a system whose surging cosmic and nuclear energies, gravitational and electro-magnetic dynamics, physico-chemical interactions and self-reproductive organic life, prefigure a freedom finally consummated in the self-conscious, self-active human form. Nature is thus ordered, is a 'system', so far as in and through its manifold forms and processes mere passive otherness is resolved to an active self-othering wherein nature comes to exist *for itself*. The sub-systems of nature -- cosmic, physical, chemical, organic, human -- evidence the stages through which abstract determination is progressively abated and the principle of self-determination comes more fully to the fore.

Nature is *as such* a living whole. The movement through its stages is precisely this: that ... out of an immediacy and externality which represents its 'death' the *idea* [of freedom] reverts *into itself*, in the first instance as the *living being*, but then also as overcoming this determinateness in which it is only life, and bringing itself to explicit existence as spirit, which is the truth and final end of nature as also the genuine actuality of the idea (*EN 251*).

The *philosophy* of nature thus seeks more than simply to observe and theorize about the detail of nature as natural science does but to *comprehend* nature as in its very concept a system of external necessity which both has its presupposition in freedom and is the latter's self-generated foundation. This is the meaning of the ancient doctrine of *nous* as nature's indwelling principle: nature as intelligence self-realized as a progressive liberation from external form, a liberation culminating in the living, animate being whose characteristic activity is precisely the active co-option and assimilation-to-self of what is found external to it.¹⁵ In the living form the whole of nature is comprehended, though it remains a finite natural entity in so far as it reproduces and dies. This limit of this animal species-life is surpassed, in Hegel's account, in human self-conscious life in which nature is both consummated and also sublimated, and an actual freedom comes on the scene as the fully realized end of a nature which nonetheless has no end in itself. In the emergence

¹⁴ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, s.708

¹⁵ An 'external world' first comes into existence for the living animal, explains Hegel (*EN 352*), since it as an organic self that it confronts non-organic nature as its own proper otherness. .

of self-conscious life there is thus implied both the death of nature itself and the advent of free personality;

(c) A Science of Human Nature

As freedom has its foundation in natural necessity, so natural necessity is only adequately comprehended as the prefiguration of freedom. The two must be thought as one idea. A psychology of human freedom is possible only where nature itself is understood as self-consummating in a being capable of thought and action, in which being the form of natural determination, external necessity, is virtually set aside, subordinated to a principle of self-conscious life emergent in it. This latter life cannot come to birth from a stone, nor inhabit inanimate nature like a ghost in a machine; it is, to employ Aristotle's word, the 'actuality of a possibility' already latent in the human animal as such.¹⁶ Correspondingly, the othering which constitutes nature's general mode acquires in human individuality the explicit status of a *self*-othering relative to a free being-for-self. For such a being, otherness is not absolute but exists as its very own other-being, and for Hegel such a being is *spirit*.

The intent of a philosophical psychology is the verification of freedom as the actuality of personal life, the true 'human nature'. "The philosophy of spirit can neither be empirical nor metaphysical but is concerned with the concept of spirit [developed] into the system of its own activity."¹⁷ Hegel's psychology thus makes its beginning where his philosophy of nature concludes, namely with the human animal as unique in having its own species for object;¹⁸ a being who, in the consciousness of death, already knows both the limit of its own and of all nature, but knows also another inward and self-active life in relation to which natural life is set in abeyance. From this starting point it seeks to comprehend systematically the complex of psychological modes constitutive of this inward life, and for Hegel no real progress can be made in psychology without this initial recognition of the 'ideality' of natural form in relation to mental or spiritual life. This ideality of nature is not to be understood as its literal overcoming on the part of a pre-existing, triumphant spiritual being, but as a possibility latent and prefigured in nature itself, become actual in the human animal. It is only in a qualified sense, not absolutely, that one should speak of the life of spirit, soul or mind as 'beyond' nature or as a 'conquest' of it, for the reason that *its link with nature is essential to what spirit is*.

¹⁶ *De Anima* 412a, from Book II of which work it is clear Aristotle had quite the same view as did Hegel on the essential inseparability of the soul-body conjunction.

¹⁷ From Hegel's script of 1822/25 (M.J. Petry, *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* (Dordrecht, 1978), v.1, p.102 (my translation). Hegel continues: "The empirical consideration of spirit stays fixed on cognition of its phenomena without reference to its concept, the metaphysical will have only to do with the concept to the exclusion of its phenomena, the concept thereby turned into a mere *abstractum* whose determinations are still more lifeless concepts. But spirit is essentially this; to be active, and that means to bring itself and its concept phenomenally to light, to reveal it."

¹⁸ Feuerbach, Marx, Engels *et al* were attached to the definition of man as a 'species-being', in which their naturalistic, romanticist leanings are betrayed. Hegel, however, (e.g., EN 376) held that it is in the death of the individual *qua* species-being that freedom commences, in the free, self-conscious individual who has his 'species' for object-- i.e., is a free spirit.

If from *our* point of view spirit has nature for *presupposition*, in absolute terms the former is the latter's 'truth' and *prior* to it. In this truth nature has vanished and spirit attained to its own sought-after idea, the identity whose object no less than whose subject is just the concept [of freedom] ... If in nature [freedom] has a completely external objectivity, in attaining to the self-identity of spirit this externality is overcome (*aufgehoben*), and it then *is* this identity as reversion-into-self-out-of-nature. (EN 381)

The philosophy of nature ... must therefore have as its final result the proof of the concept of spirit, while the science of spirit must in turn verify this concept through its own development and implications. (*Ibid.*, *Add.*)

'Ideality' is another of those Hegelian terms which exercise translators but crucial since expressing a key principle.¹⁹ What exists as 'ideal' has nothing to do with what lies beyond reality or which ought to be but is not. The term is used in the context of the logic of *Aufheben* -- , superseding, sublimating, assimilating, incorporating, comprehending -- and specifically designates the activity whereby anything whatever, once appropriated or assimilated into a further context inclusive of it, acquires the altered status and meaning of a mere element, moment or function. It is the surgeon who performs the operation, not his scalpel which plays only an 'ideal' role in his hand. Language functions 'ideally' within communication: one hears, reads or thinks what is meant, not the sounds or squiggles which are only 'moments' in the act of signification. Organic processes have their life 'ideally' within the larger life of the body whose organs they are; hormones have no chemical life of their own nor is a severed hand a hand. Hegel similarly describes economic activity as 'ideal' within the life of the state, not that the former is anything less than compellingly real but in that it can have status and scope only where there is first institutional order.

The 'ideality' of nature in mental life is meant in this specific sense and no other. For self-conscious individuality natural existence is already *aufgehoben*, a relative, not an unconditional otherness: "there can be no absolute other for spirit". The spatio-temporal material world certainly persists in the eternal, immaterial life of the soul, but as 'ideal', and this is quite simply what any psychological feeling, habit, perception or recollection is: some external determinateness appropriated to become the object and content of a self-relational mental life. This is not at all to diminish the reality of nature or its vaunted 'independence' -- it is physicalism and mentalism which bring that sort of thing into question. With Hegel, 'independently real' is too often exploited as a weak metaphor for nature construed as absolute, while there is nothing conceptually inconsistent with viewing nature both as real and yet subordinate to some other actuality. Blades, brains,

¹⁹ In Hegel literature, confusion caused by gratuitous translations of simple terms is legendary; the use of 'Notion' for the ordinary German word for concept, *Begriff*, a case in point. Derrida has written whole books 'deconstructing' Hegel's concept of *Aufheben* as a wilful unification of opposites, a deciding of undecidables, completely missing the *dialectical* character essential to that unification (see EN 79-82) as well as Hegel's account of difference and opposition themselves (EN 117-120), far more radical than Derrida's and impervious to his criticism

words, the marketplace are real enough in themselves, but still have their actuality, in Hegel's terms, in contexts extending beyond and incorporating them.

So with the ideality of nature in spirit. However 'real' in themselves, natural determinations do not exist *as natural* within mental life; rather *ideally*, as a content given or expressed.²⁰ Accordingly, the organization of Hegel's philosophical psychology springs from three principal considerations: 1) that natural determination, reference to an empirical world, is an ineradicable feature of all mental life as such; 2) that the essence of mental life is nonetheless freedom, or infinite self-relation; 3) that actual mental life is the activity of unifying just these factors. Psychology is correspondingly not a single inquiry but tripartite. Partly it will be inquiry into the empirical-behavioural or psycho-physical characteristics of the human animal as such, a science of man or 'anthropology' in the sense this term had in Hegel's day. Partly also psychology will be inquiry into the individual *qua* self or subject in relation to an objective world, a psychology of experience: 'phenomenology' as Hegel calls it. Finally, philosophical psychology proper will be inquiry into the inwardly given mental world of free personality, a world existing in and for a self which explicitly knows and makes it its own: a psychology of the subjective spirit as such.

Hegel's psycho-physics or anthropology corresponds with what one now generally calls experimental psychology, including characterology, developmental and abnormal psychology, physiological psychology, behavioural psychology and so forth -- sciences which have in view the individual as an intelligent organism, a natural but in some sense 'animated' being. The traditional hypostatization of this animation is of course *psyche* or soul, and no matter how militantly they insist on dealing only in brains and biochemistry, all empirical psychologies presuppose this dimension at least to the extent they assume a distinction between psychological and physiological sciences and evidence. Phenomenological psychology on the other hand has been revived this past century by Husserl and others though in a very different form than Hegel's.²¹ Existential psychology, depth psychology, psychoanalysis are other examples of this approach whose chief interest is to discover the ground of the overt, objective relation to one's world and to others as lying in the individual's own non-objective relation to self, to disclose and describe this so-called 'unconscious self',²² a human underlife perhaps construed physiologically in terms of infantile sexuality or other species-impulse, or by appeal to some other social, linguistic or cultural *Urwelt*.

Experimental and phenomenological psychologies thus satisfy one or other pre-mental aspects of psychological life, the first the aspect of intelligent organicity, the second the

²⁰ Descartes way of speaking in *Meditations II* is of the 'objective reality of the idea'

²¹ Husserl radicalized consciousness by treating it as an *absolute* standpoint whose content, seen as also given absolutely, that is, existentially, is disclosed by a methodological *epoché*, a suspension of judgement which renders possible a 'positive' science (his word) of subjective experience - '*Erlebnis*'. The *epoché* is thus, as it were, the epistemological equivalent of the psychoanalytical method of regression. Hegel knew of earlier forms of this view in Rheinhold's theory of the 'facts of consciousness', a view he roundly rejected

²² Hegel viewed modern philosophy to Kant as essentially theory of consciousness, thus a phenomenology not a philosophy of spirit (*EN 37-61 and espec. 415*). What phenomenological philosophy is has its formal definition in the second of the three 'syllogisms' of EN 576.

aspect of self-referentiality. Typically in practice they find themselves acutely at odds, resting their case as they do on disparate starting-points; their tendency being to stress those particular psychological modes which most clearly appear to exemplify their case. Experimental psychology emphasizes the obvious impact on sensory-motor reactions of altered organic or other external conditions on human behaviour, tending to reduce other aspects of mental life to this pattern. Phenomenology stresses rather the aspect of subjective intent in human acts, the gestalt effect in perception for example, then proceeds to describe all other psychological modes in terms of such 'intentional experience' in which outward acts are interpreted as expressive of unconscious acts.

In Hegel's accounting, however, it is important to recognize that psycho-physics and phenomenology do not have standing as independent sciences but only as subordinate to the more inclusive psychology of free personality as such. The paradigm here is neither the quasi-natural life of the animated organism nor the experience of the self of its world. Rather these represent abstract fixations which have their proper, interrelated status as moments within the individual's actual or self-conscious mental life which Hegel calls spirit.²³ And this alone is the proper subject matter of a philosophical psychology. It belongs to the autonomy of mental life, so considered as 'subjective spirit', that in it psycho-physical affectivity acquires subjective spontaneity while what is outwardly experienced takes on the character of an inwardly self-determining content.

The paradigm evidences in the psychology of spirit proper will accordingly be those mental activities whose content is 'absolutely' objective in the sense of self-objective, of being given in and for the subject who knows this givenness as its own. And it is precisely a unity in reciprocity of subjective and objective, of self and givenness, that especially characterizes such free mental activities as insight, imagination, symbolic memory, thinking, desiring, willing and so forth.

Psychology [proper] treats of the faculties or universal modes of *mental activity as such* -- intuition, ideation, memory and so forth -- taken apart from their empirical content ... as also from the forms in which they are given in the soul as physical determinations or in consciousness itself as an object present and given for it. This is no arbitrary abstraction on the part of psychology, since mental life is itself, in its very concept, just this elevation above nature and natural determinateness, as also liberation from entanglement with an external object. What alone is left for it to do is realize this freedom which is its very concept ... that any content that is raised to the status of its own intuitions, which become *its* 'sensations', be further transmuted into representations, these into thoughts and so forth. (EN 440)

Obviously, a philosophical psychology of this kind will not treat these 'higher' mental activities as if they were given phenomena available for empirical description and

²³ I have used 'mental life' or 'mental activity' throughout as synonyms for 'spirit' in its subjective sense, avoiding substantives like 'mind', 'the mind' etc. to emphasize that spirit is no thing or entity but free, self-cognitive activity, and that in a most essential sense.

analysis or explainable by reference to something other than themselves -- brains, language or whatever. That would be again to imply a dogmatic mentalism which would fail to ask the real question, which is what these activities are in themselves, in their concept *qua* mental; as well as how all the other forms of psychic life -- physiognomy, temperament, sensation, habit, the experience of consciousness etc. -- are prefigured and consummated in them. In short, Hegel's philosophy of subjective spirit, like his philosophy of nature, seeks to give every psychic form its own place and due, while bringing all together into one systematic view of personality as a dynamic whole, revealing the actualization of freedom to be the operative principle throughout.

III. Psychology Of The Human Animal

As it appears in Hegel's philosophy of subjective spirit, 'anthropology' is neither a survey of the findings of empirical psychology nor a substitute for it. Though covering the same ground as conventional psycho-physics, bio-psychology, characterology or behavioural psychology, as a *philosophical* anthropology it is concerned only with the key concept of freedom so far as implicit even in those psychological modes which specifically have a physiological component, that is, which of their nature manifest an ambiguous conjunction of mental and physical aspects. More commonly in such cases it is the distinction between these mental and physical aspects that is stressed; the metaphysical psychologies earlier mentioned mainly rest on such an assumption. But Hegel notes that what is really remarkable about psycho-physical states is not the separation, but the *inseparability* of mental and physical components, and this is what is chiefly of interest for a philosophical psychology. For what is principally true about an inherited trait, a sensation, an emotion, a habit etc. is precisely that *neither* the physical nor the psychological aspect can be ignored or denied. Fear is felt in the pit of one's stomach: not only does one never feel it apart from some such physical state, but, contrariwise, what it is one feels in one's stomach is not a physiological state (like indigestion) but *fear*. In feeling the psychic *is* physical and the physical *is* psychic, and it is just this ambiguous *identity* that must be kept in view.

The aim and logic of Hegel's anthropology consists in showing how even psychological states which have the character of psycho-physical conjunctions belong to the concept of spirit, which is to say, express freedom in a certain mode. Psycho-physical identity is how self-determination appears immediately in the animated individual. Were such indeed not the case, one's freedom would be a meaningless fiction, a disembodied autonomy, and so it is important for Hegel that mind-body conjunction be recognized as an essential, not a coincidental or imperfect feature of mental life. In it is reflected the necessity that there is no mental life without a bodily life, that freedom has existence only in and as a living human being. But it is even more important to recognize the converse as equally true: in the human being, soul is the *destiny* of the organism, organic life having its fulfilment and actuality only in and as mental life. This mutuality and interaction of natural and spiritual is how freedom appears in the individual as a naturally existing being, as an 'empirically' free being.

Correspondingly a philosophical anthropology must show how and why the claim that mental life is the 'product' of physical conditions is no less fallacious than is the converse, and that either position renders the status of both categories enigmatic. The main requirement is that psycho-physical events are taken for what they are -- events in which one element is as much and no less the 'cause' of the other as the other is of it. The emphasis might indeed tend one direction or the other, as in ordinary sensation, for example, where a somato-psychic 'causality' appears primary. Emotional states, on the other hand, seem to have a psycho-somatic origin. The essential point is that there is no question of 'causality' here or of relations between distinct entities, since it is the conjunction which is primary. Accordingly, what is directly manifest in such psychological states is that the physical exists ideally in a psychic life while this psychic life exists self-expressively in the physical state. For Hegel this inseparability of psychic and physical is the evident fact in a whole range of quasi-natural psychological states: in mood and disposition, feeling and emotion, and more subtly in those 'higher' forms of 'body-language' such as bearing and gesture, laughing and weeping etc. "where the note of mentality is diffused throughout the whole, announcing the body itself as the externality of a higher nature" (*EN411*).

The temptation to explain away or refute the ambiguity of body-mind conjunction in the manner of physicalism or mentalism is therefore to be resisted. It is simply how the matter itself stands and should be understood as such: free personality is at once a living individual, the living individual an animated individuality. The argument of Hegel's anthropology is the working through of what constitutes the form and order of these various modes of psycho-physical identity, beginning with those states in which conjunction appears more or less fixed and contingent and moving on to those in which it appears more as a fluid interactivity of physical and psychic wherein each mediates the another.

In the first group of forms are included those psychological traits in which natural determinations are reflected in a wholly passive way in the individual; where personality seems contingently predetermined by physical or physiological conditions and variations that as such have no particular psychological significance. This is the case with the influence of seasonal, diurnal and environmental conditions on temperament; of geography or gender on general character traits; of individual differences as a function of changes in bodily reactivity (e.g. age); and finally the psycho-physiology of sensory-emotional life. Springing out of the latter is a further group of psycho-physical forms in which a rudimentary 'self-life' arises in the inevitable clash and turmoil of particular ephemeral feelings and emotions. This elemental, preconscious feeling-self which prefigures personality forms the basis of a wide range of human empathetic phenomena such as the capacity to identify with the feelings of others, the sympathetic intuitions of mother-child, friends etc., the 'magnetism' of hypnotic and hysterical influence. But equally, so far it is but a merely *felt* selfhood, an unconscious identity, it can also come

into conflict with rational personality and, so far as it can, is also the source of all manner of para-normal, neurotic and psychotic states.²⁴

A more stable unity emerges through the cultivation of habit which, by limiting and bringing order among the passions in their ambiguous tendency to both impotence and excess, establishes a more fluid mutuality between self and body wherein individuals so disciplined acquire an independence and capacity for self-determination beyond that achievable in the unrestrained life of feeling. In this simple self-mastery is presaged more complete forms of freedom; Hegel's analysis here invokes the Aristotelian 'rational animal' in whom body has become instrument of the soul and soul the actuality of the body.

Hegel's analysis is remarkable in making no appeal at any point to a simplistic causal account of the relation of natural to psychological determinants. That temperament, traits, talents, dispositions, feelings, insanity, habits etc. seem simply to 'turn up' in people, to express directly what they are, does not alter the fact they are *psychological* modes nonetheless. If they are considered (no doubt rightly) as forming the basis of mental life, it is by no means because their logic and origin is one of *natural* causality. The sun does not 'cause' a sunny disposition, white skin a European habit of mind, a lump in the throat grief. When it is said organic or environmental conditions 'produce' corresponding psychological response, this is only figurative, for what is actually 'produced' is neither a mental nor a physical entity simply but a psycho-physical state, a unity in which natural determinants appear in a distinctly *non-natural* mode. Even the most hard-nosed experimental research assumes this: the 'effects' observed, desired or tested for as a result of, say, psycho-pharmaceutical interventions, are inevitably described, as they must be, in psychological terms (one feels exhilarated, dizzy, painless etc).²⁵

Everything depends on refusing to let go of the inherent ambiguity of psycho-physical phenomena, not to explain this away but to recognize it as evidence of an *aboriginal* ideality of nature in spirit. Where temperament or traits, sensations or emotions, unconscious feelings or habits are concerned, it is essential they be comprehended as the phenomena they are, not as reducible to one or other of their psycho-physical moments. The point is rather to examine the logic of their role within the larger life of the animated individual as such, so that Hegel can recognize differences of biology, environment, gender, disposition and so forth as certainly psychologically determinative in individuals, but not in any strict cause-and-effect way nor as fixed and isolated psychological functions, but as complementary, contributory elements within the total economy of the intelligent animal. The behaviourist would be right to assert that

²⁴ Hegel gives a most provocative account of what would now be called 'unconscious' manifestations. It is unique in the view that empathetic or psychiatric states such as hypnosis and madness can only occur in a being which has at least the *potentiality* for rational life. Insanity, for example, can only be described in relation to sanity.

²⁵ A further example: the now common confidence that schizophrenia is chemically based does nothing to alter the fact that 'schizophrenia' itself is a *mental* disorder, described in terms of uniquely *mental* symptoms. It would be odd on the basis of merely detecting some gene or chemical in the system to judge anyone schizophrenic on that account alone, just as, notwithstanding the advances in pharmacological treatment of depression, 'being depressed' remains a psychological, not a biochemical condition.

human personality has a basis in habit, for example, but wrong to view habit as externally conditioned. For in habit there is also a certain measure of liberation from sheer bodiliness and externality, and 'behaviour' is no less an outward expression of inward autonomy than a structuring from without.

The logic of Hegel's psychology of the intelligent animal traces the development of the principle of self-determination in the immediate mode of an interactivity of psychic and physical. It begins with those conjunctions which appear wholly contingent, such as temperament, following through to those in which a more definite mutuality and interpenetration of moments is evident where simple identity passes into an emergent, but still immediate self-identity confirmed and structured through habit, in which latter, Hegel observes,

the individual human being exists in the mode of a nature-being and is to that extent unfree; but also is free in so far as the natural determinateness of the sensory is reduced through habit to *his* being simply, thus no longer standing as something different opposed to him, to be occupied with, interested in or dependent upon ... The main point about habit is the *liberation* the individual gains from the feelings even while being affected by them. (EN 410)

Finally, as an animal so rationalized through habit, individuality acquires the form of a unified personality suffusing bodiliness and making it its own. Hegel calls this full-blown animated individuality 'the actual soul' and describes it thus:

From [this] standpoint body comes into consideration, no longer from the side of its *organic processes* but only as an externality posited ideally in [the animated individual] which in turn is no longer restricted to the *involuntary* embodiment of its inner sensations but makes itself manifest in whatever measure of freedom it has achieved in overcoming obstacles to this ideality. (EN 411. Add.)

It has been said of Vermeer's portraits of kitchen maids, exquisitely posed in their very physical but self-absorbed presence, that he captured their human being as 'bodies translucent with soul'.

Hegel's is thus no spiritualistic account of spirit. As *anthropos*, ensouled being, the animated individual has bodily life as presupposition but no less as its own expressive content. The straightforward evidence for this is simply the existing or 'natural' individual as such for whom nothing is ever mental which is not expressed physically nor anything ever physical which does not have mental import. In the living rational animal, body is always spiritual and spirit always bodily; or put another way, there is no such thing as a psychological structure or event that is 'purely physical', any more than there are such that are mental without any physical reference. Again, what is true in the mind-body conjunction is not their separation or abstract relation but their dynamic of reciprocal liberation-actualization, native to the human being as such and in which a certain limited

freedom -- a 'natural freedom' -- is already manifest. It is this embryonic freedom-in-nature which is and should be, for Hegel, the first and appropriate concern of an anthropology of the animated individual.

This intrinsic ambiguity of human nature is an ancient paradox, ever begging to be dispelled or mystically interpreted. But it is, on deeper consideration, freedom itself as it appears on the scene as the simple fact of human existence as an immediate conjunction of being and selfhood, of physical and mental dimensions. In empirical and experimental psychology the temptation is all but irresistible to attempt to reduce every mental activity to such 'natural' or psycho-physical modes as traits, emotions, habits etc.; then to reduce these in turn to organic terms. But whatever organic 'cause' is elicited has still to be defined with reference to the psychic phenomenon allegedly explained by it, and so the whole exercise is fatally circular. Intelligence, for example, clearly has an organic basis in the brain (it is difficult to think without one) yet no matter what steps may be taken to explain or measure it, 'intelligence' itself is definable only in mental, not in organic terms. In the end, as colour is a sensation, not an eye, and shame a feeling, not a fluctuation in blood pressure, so intelligence is a psychological trait, not a synapse or gene. In the fully animated creature of habit in whom a measure of stability has come to pervade every aspect of sensory-motor life, the forms of a merely abstract psycho-physical identity are dissolved into the more fluid form of total body-mind interactivity. The human being is thus literally, not metaphorically, a 'living-soul', an individuality whose trans-organic or im-mortal life is more than a mere object of conjecture but the simple given fact.

IV. Phenomenology Of Consciousness.

In the overall scheme of Hegel's philosophy of the subjective spirit, this standpoint of the immediately independent individual or 'actual soul' forms both a conclusion and suggests another starting point. For the concept of independent individuality has directly a dual significance: psycho-physical ambiguity transposed in quite another key. On the one hand, the whole of psycho-physical life is brought to unity in individuality, the realm of otherness resolved to an otherness belonging to the existing individual as such whose own psycho-physical life it is. But on the other hand, this unity, this 'existing individual as such', stands no less independent of this psycho-physical world than inextricably related to it. Individuality as such, in short, implies at once self-relativity and relativity to an other, to a *given* content. This relation of an autonomous selfhood, 'I', to a world of its own which is simply there for but also opposed to it, is what one ordinarily speaks of as 'experience', and the division into a subjective and an objective reference, into consciousness and world, is essential to it.

Consciousness constitutes the reflexive, relational or phenomenal stage of mental life. The 'I' is infinite self-relation as *subjective*, as *self-certainty*. The immediate identity of the natural soul is raised to this purely ideal identity with self, its content becoming for this self-existent reflection an

'object'. This purely abstract, self-initiated freedom distinguishes from itself its determinateness, the nature-life of the soul, as something autonomous, an *independent object*, and it is of this object, *as external to it*, that the 'I' is primarily 'aware', thus is a being-conscious-of, a conscious-ness. (EN 413)

The 'self-world' relation of experience is of a wholly different order than the quasi-natural relation of psycho-physical conjunction whose terms are in some degree distinguishable. In the relation of experience, consciousness and world have no meaning whatever independent of one another -- pure ego on one side, things-themselves on the other. These are *purely* reciprocal terms: the very concept of consciousness suggests an infinite reflexivity wherein alone the 'I' and the 'object' have meaning. On the 'real' side, what is otherwise the realm of the psycho-physical in general, has here the status of a content actively posited as existing 'in itself' for subjectivity -- a world 'out there' for a self 'in here'. On the 'ideal' side, individuality which constitutes itself as autonomous, an 'I' or 'subject', is not a soul anymore, a psycho-physical self, but a 'transcendental' self whose whole meaning lies in a world being there for it. Husserl's dictum: 'all consciousness is consciousness-of' is no less superfluous than the Heideggerian converse that 'world is always world for the subject' which is but the same principle ontologically expressed. The gulf between transcendental and empirical, phenomenality and being-itself, is in the end a spurious one since to be 'subject' at all means nothing else but to be the consciousness of something objective while an 'object' in turn has no other meaning than that something is 'there' for consciousness.

For Hegel the focus of phenomenological psychology is upon *subjective* freedom, which is not native or original as often supposed, but springs from the act, itself an act of freedom, wherein the sense of independence cultivated in the natural individual is affirmed absolutely.²⁶ In this immediate appropriation of its abstract autonomy, individuality withdraws into itself out of its psycho-physical life, in the same act determining the latter as an 'experienced' world, the object of its observation and reflection and with which it struggles to be reconciled.²⁷ The paradox of consciousness lies in the fact that it also belongs to this same claim to autonomy that the experienced world stand utterly independent of the subject, be 'already there' for it, to deny which would be compromise the very basis of the subject's self-declared independence, the ground from which it springs. As it is in one and the same act that a detached, transcendental self and an objective world of experience over against it are established, these cannot be confused with each other without corrupting both, and this is the absolute first law of empirical science. It is also the hidden paradox which renders such knowledge from experience in principle finite and incompletable, for the unconditional otherness of the object which subjectivity demands is inevitably, from an absolute point

²⁶ . But for Hegel, as the 'phenomenological' assumption of modern philosophy, it can come to light only where a certain ordered culture already exists. The self-original nature of subjective freedom -- that it exists simply in the sheer affirmation of it -- is articulated explicitly by Descartes as by Husserl and, in some form, by virtually everyone in between.

²⁷ F.L. Jackson, "The Paradoxical Idealism of Enlightenment", *Dionysius*, v.i, 1977.

of view, only the reflex of the same act in which the latter affirms itself. In short, what is objective is in the end subjective and *vice versa*.

The standpoint of subjective freedom, of 'experience' and its psychology, thus has in it a latent contradiction belonging to its concept. In its rigid dissociation of self and world there is at the same time the implicit admission of a reflexivity and relativity which renders this dissociation void. The resolution of this contradiction marks Hegel's departure from the standpoint of the philosophy of his day which he explicitly understood to be phenomenological in its assumptions, character and problematic. In his own psychology of experience, Hegel rather seeks to trace and identify the various forms of consciousness-world and discern how, beginning with the simplest affirmation of subjective-objective difference, the point is reached where the equally essential reciprocity of subject and object is brought to the fore. The course followed is the same as in his better-known earlier work, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, which, however, had a more extensive and broader historical purpose. In the narrower context of a strict phenomenology of the subjective spirit, Hegel excludes much of what is in the larger argument of that work, confining himself to the *logical* divisions in a phenomenology of experience, namely, the structures of 'consciousness', 'self-consciousness' and 'reason'.²⁸

Notably in contrast with the correlational methods of experimental psychology focussing on psycho-physical conjunctions, the method of phenomenology is intrinsically *dialectical*, moving entirely within the context of the reflexivity which consciousness-world essentially is, according to a logical progress Hegel summarized clearly in the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In contrast with psychophysics again, phenomenology will make its commencement, not from the psycho-physical or empirical individual, but from the simplest form of the subjective act which affirms a world 'then-and-there' for it. It then proceed by means of a dialectic latent even in this simple relation to more complex forms in which the essential relativity of subjective and objective moments progressively reveals itself in the structure of the object itself. Hegel's aim, quite unlike that of contemporary phenomenological psychology, is to bring fully to the fore the limit of the principle of infinite unity-in-reciprocity upon which the concept of conscious experience depends, as well as the limit of the subjective freedom it assumes, namely a freedom from, but also dependence upon, an unreconciled otherness of its own creation. In the course of the argument, the *concept* of 'experience' itself as viewed philosophically is brought out; namely the relation of self-affirmed free spirits to a world recognized as necessarily finite and endless in that it is not clearly its own: in short, the partial or problematic appropriation of the world in accordance with an abstract and subjective presumption of freedom.

This logical development of phenomenological categories is familiar enough and need only be briefly noted. First is the simple orientation of the presumptively free self, the 'I', to a world directly affirmed as already there for it: what Hegel calls the 'sense-like' consciousness. Implicit in this attitude, however, is a fatal ambiguity concerning the being of this immediately given world: whether it exists in itself or has status only as

²⁸ In *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, (tr. Miller, Oxford, 1977) Part A, i, ii and iii; in EN, Sect. 1B, (a) (b) and (c)..

subjectively posited. This paradox renders the standpoint of immediate experience unsustainable, leading to a further reconstitution of the world for consciousness as a realm of things possessing properties, in which objective relation the relation of objective to subjective generally might be represented as something already given. But the thing-world is unstable too in another way; it dissolves into the phenomenal play of mutual interactions pointing beyond themselves to an essential world of stable laws and categories. In the formulation of this purely intelligible world, however, consciousness cannot help but recognize the key role it plays in its construction, a recognition destructive of the independence essential to its very standpoint.

Any simple consciousness-world relation being unsustainable, experience demands for its object a being like itself, another self which, like itself, stands on its own, and in relation to which it hopes to find its own freedom recognized. This is only, however, to become embroiled in an endless conflict of selves vying for mutual recognition, each denying to the other their absolute freedom -- "Hell" Sartre observed, "is other people". The war of ego against alter ego reaches its climax in the recognition that the conflict really belongs to the consciousness that would in this way seek to make itself its object; for such a self-consciousness, other-relation and self-relation must remain unreconcilable. The confrontation is really one within subjective freedom itself and is overcome only so far as the conflict within self-consciousness between its abstract freedom and its existential being-in-the-world is resolved; where each can be sacrificed to the other and their latent reciprocity come fully to the fore. This 'absolute' self-consciousness as an essential unity of the objective world as subjective and the subjective as objective Hegel identifies as the standpoint of 'reason'. In it, a merely inward or universal self-consciousness passes freely over to the experience of a world that is posited as one with it, which world in turn assumes for subjectivity the significance of the arena in which its own freedom is realized.

The later phenomenological-existential critique of the principle of reason and 'modernity' as its cultural expression, may be viewed as an extended elaboration of the penultimate paradox just indicated. The individual as a radically autonomous subjectivity, fixed in itself, knows it has no actual freedom in a world that is 'objective' as such. It may seek to conserve the authenticity of its freedom by choosing to exist in this alien world nonetheless, asserting itself in it and against it, a choice admittedly absurd but to which, in Sartre's word, one is 'condemned'. The existential-deconstructionist critique of modernity from Nietzsche to Derrida refuses to follow Hegel beyond this standpoint of a conflicted or finite human freedom, viewing every other conception, including that of a freedom infinite and actual in itself, as enemy to its own. Instead, it finds a certain 'proof' for its radically subjective standpoint through the carrying out of an endless demolition of every other perspective which does not accord with its own radical critique of the concept of a universal reason, an approach which of itself leads to no positive result but only embodies and expresses the final decadence of the modern tradition which clings to the principle of subjective freedom.

Hegel on the other hand rejects the dead-end of subjective freedom by pushing the phenomenological standpoint to its furthest, radical limit. At the point at which the

conflict intrinsic to experience as a finite relation of self to world is made explicit, the essential reciprocity of these terms themselves, and thus what 'subjective' freedom really comes down to, is fully recognized. Hegel intends 'reason' as just this recognition: as freedom is something more than simply the individual as animated organism, it is also something more than an autonomous ego, whether transcendental, existential or otherwise. 'Reason' for Hegel is far from some sort of cosmic logicity brooding over the world, and as far from a merely subjective principle of transcendental unity imposed on the otherwise alien content of experience. That reason is the 'truth' of experience, means, for Hegel that in it the *limit of experience itself* is exposed, in that the latter rests on the wholly abstract assumption of an autonomous subject somehow detached from a world it nonetheless is supposed to inhabit, know, and act in and upon. Its presumed distinction into subject and object is exposed as at the same time no distinction, a completely fluid, relativity. Freedom in its fuller definition for Hegel is thus rational freedom, in the specific sense of a reciprocity between self and world that is not, as from the standpoint of experience, only finite or existential, but such that in it 'I' and 'object' are infinitely one and the same, and *explicitly* so. It is this standpoint which Hegel takes up in the third and main argument of the philosophy of subjective spirit, the psychology of the actually free spirit, of mental life as such.

V. Psychology Of Mental Life

(a) 'Spirit' As Mental Life

The object specific to philosophical psychology in particular is the subjective spirit as such, and this in its completed form, not as the merely animated individual or the self of experience, but as what one ordinarily knows as the individual's 'inner life' as a thinking, deliberating individual. This 'inwardness' reflects nothing more than the wholly self-positing, self-referential character of mental activity: in short, its spontaneous and to that extent self-determinate character. The ordinary act of recall -- of a name, a past experience, the formula for velocity -- provides a simple case in point. One already possesses a content which is yet only latent; known yet unknown. One 'turns within', seeks it and finds it, brings it to light, re-cognizes and confirms it as the thing sought. At every stage -- latency, recall, recognition, verification -- the content remains already there 'in' oneself, independent of external evocation, needing only to be brought to evidence in the free act of recalling it. Ordinary recall is thus a live demonstration of the mutual mediation of objective and subjective, content and form which is characteristic of all mental acts, a demonstration requiring no philosopher to license it or put it on stage.

Plato in *Theaetetus* invokes the image of a mine as a metaphor for the latency of content in mental life and Descartes makes a similar observation about the difference between the sun in the sky and the 'objective reality' of the sun-idea in thought. The same holds true of every other mental act: its content is no less spontaneously produced by it than it is also already 'there' in and for it. Such is the case with imagination and its image, thinking and its concept, desire and its object, choice and its options. In each case

subjective and objective components are distinguished, but within an original identity in which they also have no independence of one another. It is only the counsel of abstraction which wants to foist in a Thinker behind thought, a Thing behind objects, a Holy Will behind moral choices, in short, to fossilize the subject-object polarities of mental life when what is unique about them is *precisely* their fluid mutuality.²⁹

Common to all mental modalities, though expressed differently in each, is just this activity of mutual determination of subjective and objective moments, of outer and inner, being and self. Any mental act is the affirmative sublimation of any separation between self and content; in intuiting, imagining, thinking, desiring, willing etc. what is above all characteristic is that their content is decidedly *not* given empirically or sensually but from the outset as content that is posited in and by the act itself.

Any mental act is such that its content both *exists in itself* and, consistent with freedom, is also *its own*. It possesses this dual determinateness of 'existence' and 'own-ness' aboriginally, on the one hand finding something *already existent* in it and on the other positing it as *its own*. (EN 443)

Psychology proper for Hegel thus has to do with the genesis and development of this freely self-determinate inner life which is more than a psycho-physical individuality and more too than the abstract freedom of the conscious 'I'. Although the content of mental life has its origin nowhere else than in bodily life and experience, it belongs to the self-enclosed reflexivity of mental activity itself that the element of externality is subordinated and assimilated in the mental act where it appears in another form, namely, as a content that belongs specifically to, and has the form, of the inner life itself. In and as mental life, individuality thus stands in a wholly free relation to its own world, the various forms of mental activity being species of the active assimilation of determinate to self-determinate form which Hegel designates as *Erinnerung*: the 'mentalization' in which everything whatever is drawn into relation to freedom.

Mental freedom (*der freie Geist*) reveals itself ... both as 'soul', the simple mental substance or immediate spirit, and as 'consciousness', the experiencing spirit which is this same substance self-divided... [But] the principle of free mental life is to posit the being of consciousness as soul-like while rendering the soul-like as objective. Like consciousness it stands over on one side against the object and yet, like soul, it is both sides at once, a totality. So whereas as soul the truth of mental life is only that of an immediate, unconscious totality, and whereas as consciousness it also falls short as this same totality construed as an 'I' severed from its external object, it is only as free that the truth of mental life is recognized as knowing itself to be such (EN 440, *Add.*).

²⁹ For Hegel, it is in being haunted by the very same ghost of metaphysics that it would exorcize, that the phenomenological standpoint of modernity reveals its limit. Even the contemporary pragmatic or deconstructionist demand that every notion of 'subject' be entirely given up accomplishes this only by radically limiting the scope or possibility of philosophy itself.

Freedom has already turned up in Hegel's analysis of the subjective life in two forms, first as the ideality of nature in the psycho-physical individual, and second as the abstract autonomy of the 'I' in relation to the equally independent object of its experience. But these are fettered forms of self-determination. The contingent congruity between bodily and mental states is a kind of independence, but at best an ambiguous freedom since the reflection-expression of one aspect in the other is still a relation between otherwise alien modes and not a true *self*-determining. As for the autonomous self who transcendently would determine the given content of its experience, this too is self-determination only in a unilateral or formal sense, in that the content determined still abides in itself outside the unity of self-consciousness. Self-determination is more fully manifest psychologically where the transubstantiation of natural into spiritual form is complete, i.e., where the mere identity of self and other is resolved to a *self*-identification and the mere difference to a *self*-differentiation. But this is precisely the universal characteristic of mental activity properly speaking: that in it the content of psycho-physical states is given the form of *self*-evidence, while the fixed and conflicted relation of ego and world in experience is liberated to the free reflexivity of the thinking life in which subject and object thoroughly mediate one another.

'Soul' is finite in being immediately or naturally determined;
 'consciousness' in having its object given it. Mental life, no longer fettered by an object, is limited ... only in that as immediate subjectivity it is free only in principle. (*EN 441*)... [But] what this principle of the free spirit is, is just the complete unity of subjective and objective, of form and content; accordingly an unconditional totality, thus an 'infinite' and 'eternal' [self-determining]. (*Ibid. Add.*)

With Hegel, a psychology of free individuality requires the systematic ordering of the various distinguishable mental acts such as will bring out their common principle. Viewed as a mere manifold, as if each stood enigmatically on its own -- recall something other than imagination, intuition than memory, thinking than willing etc. -- their common essence *qua mental* is thereby obscured.

To treat mental activities as distinct expressions or as general faculties each somehow useful and adaptable to this or that intellectual or personal interest, is to miss what their *end overall* might be. But this can be found to lie only in the concept of mental activity itself whose essential end is the sublimation of its own initial subjective form and to reach out and get hold of what it is: to *liberate itself to itself*. The various so-called mental faculties are in this sense to be regarded as steps in this liberation, and this alone permits of a *rational* method for the study of mental life and its various activities. (*EN 442*)

The Hegelian *Geist* is thus no autonomic Self pre-armed with faculties and categories with which it would commandeer an alien world and enforce its will in it. It is rather the active mental life which appropriates and redeems the merely given world by reconstituting it as a world of its own according to its own self-determining principle.

The intuition of a meaningful world, its recollection and re-presentation through image and symbol, the generation through the mnemonics of language of a world explicitly in and for thought, the consequent self-certainty that purposes self-proposed goals -- in and through all these essentially interconnected activities a world otherwise alien for the self-conscious individual is transformed into one that has freedom, 'the absolute idea', as its substance and principle.

For Hegel mental life is the consummation and resurrection of nature, not some curious evolutionary capacity in the case of a particular natural species. Still, mental life is viewed somewhat on the model of organic life raised to a higher power. As skin, heart, brain or eye have no life of their own beyond the function they serve in the total life of the organism, so particular modes of mental activity -- intuition, imagination, language, deliberation etc. -- have no independence except as moments within the larger dynamic of a free subjective life. 'Reason', infinite reciprocity of subjective and objective and the form pervading all mental activity, provides the ordering principle of a properly philosophical psychology whose end must be to disclose the 'psycho-logical' progression of mental modes in and through which a merely subjective-existential freedom is liberated to the concrete autonomy of an actually free and rational life. The consummation of this logic of inner liberation yields the figure with which the philosophy of the subjective spirit concludes, namely, the thinking-deliberating individual as a being capable of action; whose witness to personal freedom translates directly into a will to realize this freedom as the substance of an objective human order, the legal, moral and institutional life which, in the larger Hegelian system, forms the theme of his ethical and political philosophy

(b) Human Reason

It is clear the 'reason' of Hegel's psychology is no Kantian regulative super-faculty any more than it is the conjuring of a cosmic intelligence, as Charles Taylor has held.³⁰ Hegel is no 'rationalist' in either sense. Rather the concept of reason here pertinent is the same with which the argument of phenomenology concludes, namely the concept of the thoroughgoing reciprocity of consciousness and world, the infinite unity of subjectivity and objectivity, which concept forms the first, if only formal definition of what spirit is. This reciprocity is not, however, to be thought a mere relativity of subjective and objective nor, as with Schelling, their abstract identity, but both of these dynamically considered. Logically, then, reason is reciprocity in the intense sense: identification through differentiation and at once differentiation through identification. It is on this basis, Hegel thinks, that reason itself has typically been considered as falling into a subjective and an objective form, a theoretical and a practical reason. The former roughly defined is the activity of the subject in bringing to light the essential conformability of the objectively given world to its own rational intuition; the latter is this subjective certainty as the impulse to realize its reason as an objective world. Theoretical reason is the intellectual spirit whose aim is the appropriation of the objective world in freedom; practical reason the volitional spirit whose ultimate end is the constitution of freedom as

³⁰ C. Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge, 1975), c.iii.

the principle of an objective order of life: the 'intellect' and 'will' of the older metaphysical language.

Hegel regarded the presumption of a fixed subjective-objective opposition as the principal problematic of the modern philosophy of experience,³¹ the inability to surmount which had been -- and in more subtle ways still remains -- the chief impediment to the development of an authentic psychology of freedom.

Psychology, like logic, is one of those sciences profiting least from the ... deeper concept of reason of modern times and finds itself even now in a wholly corrupt condition. The Kantian philosophy laid great emphasis on the claim that psychology, even as *empirical*, forms the basis of metaphysics itself construed accordingly as the analysis of the 'facts' of human consciousness taken simply *as* facts. Such confounding of psychology with anthropology and [phenomenology] has done nothing to improve matters, having only had the effect that for metaphysics and philosophy generally, all attempts to know truly, that is conceptually, the necessity of *what exists in and for itself*, namely the free spirit, have been abandoned. (EN 444)

The prescience of this remark is striking. Contemporary psychology, where not still locked into 18th century mechanistic psycho-physical notions, still appeals to an equally constrictive Kantism which, however much sophisticated in the schools of Husserl, Freud, Heidegger or Foucault has yet to move beyond the basic presumption of a gulf between conscious and preconscious life. What Hegel observed concerning such positions remains true: a psychology of freedom is quite impossible on either ground. With respect to experimental psychology, its own assumptions prevent it from recognizing familiar activities such as imagining, thinking, desiring, etc. as real, even though for common sense as for Hegel they are not only real but the very substance of one's self-conscious life. It can only reduce them to something else, to biological or behavioural terms, missing thereby just that which of all things is essential to them, namely their free, self-determinate character. The method of existential phenomenology, on the other hand, would 'deconstruct' these same activities by seeking to ground conscious life (which it nonetheless presupposes) in some absolute and inscrutable pre-mental or para-mental condition -- 'life', 'the unconscious', 'being', 'language' etc. -- an analysis which thus sustains itself through the endless negative dialectic of its own primary distinction from which it can never extricate itself. In neither context, accordingly, whether conceived as a cybernetic automaton or as an inwardly conflicted being, can the concept of actually free individuality possibly emerge.

Revisiting the older distinction between theoretical and practical reason, Hegel's takes the key consideration to be, that while negative with respect to any fixed opposition of ego and world, reason does not entail the abolition of this difference but its retention as its own essential moment. This is why 'Reason' has been traditionally understood as both

³¹ Ref. Note 50.

an objective and a subjective principle: as a principle of objective cognition, *Wissen*, and a principle of subjective self-realization, *Wille*.

The theoretical or intellectual spirit addresses the world as 'objective', not in relation to the mere consciousness of it, but as objective *in itself*. It is motivated by a demand for insight into the *intrinsic* meaningfulness of the world and by the impulse to bring this intuition to light. Observation, representation, hypothetical conjecture, linguistic and conceptual articulation, are the familiar intellectual mediations through which the mere *experience* of a world is raised to a *knowledge* of it.

So determined as having all objectivity as such contained in it, [reason] is a knowing whose object is not anything given externally, and thus inscrutably. Accordingly mental life is the *simple, universal, wholly opposition-less certainty of self* which, being confident it will find in the world only itself and that the world must in principle be reconciled with it, ... knows that to discover the reason of the world it has only to seek its own. (*EN 440 Add.*)

Practical reason moves in the other direction. Reason is just as much the movement to render its own principle of subjective-objective unity objective, to render the inner certainty of its freedom outward. In its immediate form, 'will' is simply this practical sense and orientation generally: the impulse to action, the will to will which Nietzsche took to be the whole of freedom. Its more developed form as free choice (Nietzsche condemns it as a counter-impulsive "will *not* to will") is the essence of the Kantian morality.³² But for Hegel, so far as willing is impulsive or merely moral, it still assumes a content and aim other than freedom itself; it is to this extent a 'free will' only contingently. It is only where freedom itself is its aim and content that one can properly speak of a rational will, that is to say, a will actively to bring about and sustain freedom as an objective world, an ethical-institutional order of human life -- *Sittlichkeit*.

In Hegelian shorthand, theoretical reason is the resolution of being to own-ness, practical reason the resolution of own-ness to being, each movement representing different aspects of the one inner self-determining activity which is subjective freedom. The limit of theoretical and practical reason correspondingly lies just in the fact that each embodies the dynamic of subjective freedom on its one side only: intellectualization as "subjectification of the objective", in Hegel's words, invests intuitively pre-given determinations with the form of self-relation, while willing, as "objectification of the subjective", is the resolution of this abstract self-relativity to particular, determinate form. (*EN 443*) The concept of an actually free spirit -- a being capable of action -- will further require that this residual disjunction be rendered transparent as representing but two sides of the same free life, neither in itself intellectual nor practical only. In this insight, psychology as the reflection on the subjective spirit and its inner freedom, reaches its proper conclusion in the concept of the individual as an actually free being, which concept alone can stand as legitimizing the presumption of a properly philosophical account of the world of 'objective spirit, i.e., the realm of moral and historical action.

³² A theme dominant throughout Nietzsche's works, e.g. *Beyond Good and Evil*, 19, 259 etc.

(c) The Intellectual Spirit

The intellectual or thinking life ('theoretical reason') has an economy and logic of its own, the accounting for which is inadequate if appeal is made only to experimental or phenomenological models. The very idea of a psycho-physics or phenomenology of mental acts properly speaking is problematical. They are acts of the whole individual in which the organic and the subjective play only a subliminal role. There is no 'organ' of imagination for example; if imagination is impossible without a brain, the one who imagines is still more than a head full of cells; and what is imagined is 'a waving palm', not a burst of neural gymnastics. The contents of mental acts, moreover, are not 'objective' in the ordinary sense, but uniquely *self*-objective (the waving palm as posited, not given) and so it is more that simply something 'there-for-a-subject'. To propose to 'explain' intuiting, remembering, thinking etc. psycho-physically or describe them phenomenologically is thus already to convert them into something other than what they directly are.

The old idea of minds making copies of non-mental entities and passing them up the line for further processing as images, symbols or concepts is, while metaphysically picturesque, still the basic model of experimental psychology.³³ Hegel, however, writes:

that [intelligence] receives and accepts impressions from outside, that 'ideas' arise through causal operations on the part of external things upon it, etc., belongs to a point of view utterly alien to what mental life is, as to the standpoint of its philosophical study. (*EN 445*)

The same holds for phenomenological description which rests on the assimilation of all mental acts to one subjective form, as modifications of an original 'protodoxic' intentionality of consciousness, in Husserl's language, as modes of *Dasein's* being-in-the-world, or as even perhaps a function of one's speaking or writing. Not only is subjective-objective polarity still residual in these views but the simple fact is not faced that intuiting, imagining or thinking are not properly to be described as acts of a subject in *any* sense, since subjectivity is *already* one of the terms in the free intellectual reciprocity in which such acts consist. In recalling anything, for example, I am as much in the object recalled as the object recalled is in me; and so for all cases. Thinking is not the act of a detached ego brooding over an alien world but the self-expressive activity in which it is a matter of indifference whether one says thinking immerses itself in being or being presents itself to thinking.³⁴ It is in just this that the freedom of mental life lies.

³³ The picturesque ancient model by which Lucretius' in *De rerum natura* would explain cognition is no different in principle from those still employed by contemporary experimental psychology. His 'atoms' were equipped with hooks and eyes of various shapes and sizes to facilitate their differential linkage to one another. In the 1960's, the popular theories of D.O. Hebb explained creative imagination by the hypothesis of connective extensions growing on cortical neurons. Computer technology has given a renewed boost to such essentially phrenological speculations to help 'locate', as with Pinsky, thinking, sadness etc. in parts of the brain.

³⁴ Again, this unity of thinking and being is *absolutely and already presupposed* in all theorizing whatsoever, including scientific theorizing about the contribution of the brain, genes etc.

Experimental and phenomenological psychologies succeed only to the extent that, tacitly or explicitly, they treat the actuality of mental life as illusory; and this in stark contrast to the most ordinary and vivid witness, namely, that one *does* actually imagine, speak, think etc. Through insight, imagination, language and thought, the psycho-physical and experienced world undergo a total metamorphosis, in Aristotle's phrase, into a whole other genus, a world 'in accordance with reason', inwardly self-constituting and self-determining. The *spontaneity* of intellectual activity is thus irreducibly what it is, not some superficial embellishment grafted upon bodily life and experience. Nor do these latter constitute the 'real world', as commonly said. The psycho-physical animal does not, properly speaking, have a 'world' at all but lives interactively in and with nature. The world for 'experience', on the other hand, is not self-existent but an indeterminate phenomenality brought to totality in and for an abstract self. It is only the world of intellectual insight that exists in itself, that is, is not merely 'real' or 'objective' but is considered *sub specie aeternitatis* as animated by its own inner principle. The world as thoughtfully addressed is one in which thinking itself plays a role, thus a world known as *in principle actual*.

For Hegel intellectual life generally consists in the complex of activities whose overall thrust is the 'subjectification of the objective', the 'mentalization' of the non-mental or, in another vein, the liberation of every content from its mere givenness and its comprehension under the form of freedom (*intelligere* as discriminating-gathering-interiorizing). His aim in the analysis of the theoretical reason is accordingly to bring out the role that various specific cognitive activities play in this overall process of *Erinnerung*, inwardization, through which a free mental life establishes and sustains itself.

In everyday terms, the ordinary word for the intellectualizing activity Hegel has in mind is just 'thinking'; not 'abstract thinking', but in the comprehensive Cartesian sense as covering the whole range of free mental activities wherein a given content is progressively appropriated to a spiritual form, that is, endowed with a self-determining character. The autonomy accomplished in the course of such intellectualization is marked on the objective side by the transformation of the content from evident to self-evident, and on the subjective side by the advance from cognition as wholly given over and absorbed in its content, to a cognition which explicitly recognizes its content as its own. For Hegel, 'thinking' is at one extreme spontaneous and immediate -- 'intuition' (*Anschauung*) -- and at the other, self-conscious comprehension -- (*Begreifen*). Mediating these is a range of other determinations of thinking -- as recollection, imagination, symbolization and signification, mnemonic retention -- which, as reflexive or representational, are partly intuitive, partly comprehensive. Through their mediation, an immediately intuited world attains to explicit self-determinate form as comprehension, while in turn this self-conscious thinking finds its freedom manifested and confirmed in the concrete detail of its intuitive and imaginative life. Thinking is thus for Hegel no less intuitive than reflective, no less reflective than comprehensive; it is not a simple activity but a complex dynamic in which many component acts -- observing, attending, imagining, remembering, conceiving etc. -- are unified according to the logic of thinking itself, rooted in the principle of reason as 'subjectification of the objective'.

Thinking is this self-conscious activity in which individuals actualize an autonomy already theirs in principle. Hegel's account of theoretical reason accordingly seeks to bring out the *telos* of this intellectual *Erinnerung* or cognition, the dialectic connection between mental activities whereby subjective or psychological freedom establishes itself and is sustained and whose principal moments are given as 'intuition', 'representation' and 'thinking'.

“Intuition”

The primary division of his analysis of theoretical reason is between thinking as intuitive, as reflective ('representational') and as conceptual. The chief point to be made about intuition as *Anschauung* is that it does not at all imply, as it tends to with Kant, the imprinting of a spatio-temporal manifold on a mental *tabula rasa*. Not only is intuition *active* but, Hegel insists, *intellectual*, that is, a thinking which seeks active 'insight' into a content which it takes immediately to be its own.³⁵ Hegel concurs absolutely, if in a different vein, with the Kantian principle that "concepts without intuitions are empty and intuitions without concepts blind". But since in the self-enclosed free reciprocity of mental life there is no inside or outside, no 'in-itself' standing over against a 'for us', the description of intuition as 'sensible' can only be metaphoric. 'Sensibility' ordinarily implies physical affectation but that intuition be sensible in this sense is, of course, a category mistake. Kant did not intend the term in this sense but had rather in mind the model of perceptual consciousness whose object is assumed independent of it. But again, by intuition is not meant the simple apprehension of some outwardly given content, but active insight into its *inner* significance, the sense or reason intrinsic in the fact itself. "Intuition" Hegel says, is not merely the consciousness of objects in general, but "consciousness filled with the certainty of reason, whose object is rationally determined ... a totality, a unified fullness of determinations" (*EN 449 Add.*).

In short, intuition is *intellectual* observation, an entirely non-conceptual and prereflexive thinking such as does not relate passively to some empirically given manifold but looks past this phenomenality, sinks itself wholly into its content and seeks out what it is that holds it all together: in short, intuition is the grasping of things in their *inner meaning*. This is, of course, the sense 'intuition' has in ordinary usage, a standard which Hegel in all cases respects. Nor is intuitive, insightful thinking the privilege of the philosopher, the artist or mystic; it is second nature to the human being as such, a fact of mental existence, manifest in the universal demand that life 'make sense', the speculative impulse to look beyond experience to the inner meaning of the world. The religious analogue is the general belief that in all things a god or spirit is indwelling, a conviction echoed aesthetically in Hopkins' sentiment of a "beauty deep down things". It is also what is really behind the demand in science that one begin with nothing less than what is unqualifiedly self-evident.

³⁵ Even the being one calls 'nature' is an immediate being-for-thinking. Hegel concludes the EN logic: "Considered on the side of its being for self, according to its immediate unity with self, freedom [the idea] is *intuition*; and the intuitive idea is '*nature*' (244)".

Though certainly analogous to sensation as also to the 'sense-consciousness' of phenomenology, intuition is neither. What is common to them is their aspect of immediacy. But intuitive thinking is of quite another order than the immediacy of psycho-physical conjunction or the unmitigated otherness of the world-for-consciousness. For, as a *mental* act, intuition has reason implied in it, that is, it already knows that in seeking the meaning of some content it seeks only what is already its own. Immersing itself freely in the objective, giving itself over wholly to it, what intuition reveals is the immediate unity of itself with objectivity and objectivity with itself: this is what 'insight' is. In intuition, therefore, cognition comes into possession of a world that belongs directly to its own freedom, a world that is not only given, but *intuitively* given, not only a natural or objective world, but a *meaningful* world. And it is with this its own immediately self-constituted meaning-world, and no other, that thinking in its further reflective and conceptual modes is occupied.

That intuition is already wise before all reflection or intellection and even wiser than they; that truth is given whole and complete in the witness of immediate feeling needing only to be expressed and brought out: this is the peculiar bias, not only of perennial mysticism, aestheticism and romanticism, but also of much of contemporary popular philosophy. It is a claim, Hegel says, that goes too far. Although it is of supreme importance to recognize thinking as itself intuitive and that 'nothing is ever in thought that is not first in intuition', that intuition be thought to stand on its own as cognition independent of, and even superior to, reflective thought, is a wrong view of the matter. While intuition is fundamental to cognition and the guarantee of its concrete substantiality, as wholly unreflective it also loses itself in, and remains undistinguished, from whatever its content happens to be. Its cognition is thus itself supremely prone to contingency, a contingency it directly construes as absolute truth. Accordingly, the claim that intuitive feeling directly discloses the hidden truth of things without further ado is as capable of breeding the most absurd superstitions as it is generative of true insight. The reason is that:

in intuition we are outside ourselves in the element of spatio-temporal asunderness ... Intelligence directly immerses itself in with this external material, identifies with it and will have no other content than its object so intuited. Accordingly in intuition we can become unfree in the highest degree (*EN 450 Add.*).

As for the idea of romanticism that art, as exclusively intuitive, affords a preferred access to truth:

People often imagine that the ... artist must go to work purely intuitively. This is absolutely not the case. On the contrary a genuine poet, before and during the execution of his work, must meditate and reflect, for only in this way can he hope to bring out the heart or the soul of the subject-matter and free it from all the externalities in which it is shrouded. (*EN 449 Add.*)

It is thus all-important in Hegel's analysis, as in ordinary practice, that the *immediacy* belonging to intuitive thinking not be confused with its exclusivity as an access to truth. Indeed, it is in this same immediacy that the limit of intuition also lies, namely in the contradiction entailed in a free cognition which, as the immediate immersion in, and identification with, an essentially contingent content, renders itself also thereby contingent. This limit points to what thinking further entails beyond its intuitive form.

"Representation"

Mental activity on its intellectual side is the infinite process of 'interiorization' wherein the world as objectively experienced is progressively assimilated to unity with subjectivity, a unity already assumed in the certainty which is reason. In intuitive insight this unity appears as something given immediately, and thus also contingently: the 'inner meaning' of the objective world. What ranks as the real world for the free thinking spirit is thus neither nature as such nor even the world of experience, but the meaning-world, the world as given in and for human insight. In the free act of intuition, accordingly, thinking is directly being and being directly thinking; reality simply the undivided identity of self and world. Intuition *is* this self-identity, however, only so far as it also conceals in it or negates the moment of self-differentiation that also belongs to what thinking is. This is why the romanticist desire to celebrate as absolute the pure life of intuitive feeling notoriously bears within it a foreboding of a harmony that threatens ever to pass away due to the alienating encroachments of a meddling intellect that 'murders to dissect'.

'Representational' thinking is thinking so far as this equally essential moment of self-differentiation is brought to the fore as against the immediacy of intuitive thinking. In it are comprised a variety of familiar mental activities of which 'imagination' is perhaps the most vivid paradigm, all manifesting the characteristic of self-reciprocation or 'reflection' wherein some intuitively given content is stripped of its immediacy and contingency and referred back to the subjective activity which both posits it and appropriates it as its own. In recollecting a familiar face it is not that face itself which forms the content but the actively posited image of it.

Representation is recollected or inwardized intuition, thus a mean between intelligence which finds itself as immediately determined [i.e., intuition as such] and intelligence in its freedom as thought ... The course of intelligence as representation is to render immediacy inward, to set itself forth as *intuitive in itself*, thus to overcome the subjectivity of its inwardness, to render itself outward in itself, and thereby, even in its own outwardness, to remain enclosed in itself (*EN 451*).

In this Hegel expresses clearly how recollection, imagination or memory are actually witnessed; as freely self-reciprocal activities in which some immediately given content is transformed into an object posited as the subject's own product. Imagination, for instance, is no Humean sanitarium to which worn-out intuitions passively retire, to associate and reminisce about a former active life. Nor are its images a conjuring of mere fancies and dressing them up in borrowed empirical costumes. Nor is representation for Hegel a

second-order picturing or fictionalizing of an unmoved sensible reality which remains the standard of authentication. Rather it is a wholly creative productivity in which thinking as infinite self-activity liberates itself from the immediacy and contingency of its own intuitions, purges them of their residual extraneousness and appropriates them as its own freely re-produced content.

The German, *Vorstellen*, expresses the matter more clearly again than the English 'representation'. The latter, as evidenced at length by Rorty,³⁶ typically embodies a distinctly empiricist bias: representation as reflection, the passive 'mirroring' of a reality already assumed as given. But *Vorstellen* has the quite different sense of a positing or setting-forth, implying the free re-constitution of what is merely given, giving it an autonomous new life in an *intellectual* space and time -- which is, of course, the locationless, timeless realm in which things of imagination or memory actually do live. The power to generate perceptions, images or concepts thus belongs entirely to freedom and can, neither in principle nor in fact, have its explanation in terms of a physics of mere picturing or mirroring or a phenomenology of fantasies or simulacra.

Hegel groups acts of representation under 'recollection' (again more aptly denoted in the German, *Erinnerung*), imagination proper (*Einbildungskraft*) and memory (*Gedächtnis*). 'Recollection' describes the primitive psychological acts whereby intuited things and events are appropriated as freely *re-presented* data, stored in the mine of the mind, as it were, and available to be *re-cognized* or 'called to mind' at will. All knowledge, said Plato, is in a sense recollection. Beyond this first-order creation of images, imagination proper is the associative power which moves freely among its images, endowing them with connection and generality; and it is further the power which enlists these, its own figurative constructs, in the interest of giving concrete expression of its own infinite freedom. For Hegel, imagination must be seen as a double-sided activity, no less creative than reflective, no less expressive than impressive. That is, the generation of images is at once the positing inward of an outward, pre-reflexive or intuited world and equally the outward expression through which an inwardly abstract thinking gives itself outward, concrete embodiment. Like art, imagination does not simply imitate life but imposes its own truth upon it; not only forces a mindless world to yield up its hidden truth but also creates a brave new world of its own.

Association introduces order among images according to inclusion and exclusion, similarity and difference and so forth, and arising therefrom is the further possibility of the spontaneous generation of images that comprehend or stand in for other images: the 'creative' imagination. The most refined and sophisticated of the product of creative imagination is, of course, language, the system of symbols and signs. It is one of Hegel's unique contributions to have developed an account of language consistent with a psychology of freedom, in contrast with the more usual deterministic psychological or anthropological approaches. It is chiefly in and through language, Hegel avers, that thinking accomplishes its dual end of, on the one hand, purging the contingency of its intuited world and repossessing it in and for freedom, while on the other, rendering this freedom itself incarnate. In the symbol an empirical image is employed to stand in for,

³⁶ R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the mirror of Nature* (Princeton, 1979).

literally represent, what is more than an image, some deeper, more universal reference, meaning or principle. With Hegel, however, a great deal hangs on distinguishing between language properly speaking and symbolic representation; between the image as symbol and as sign. Symbols are often considered the more effective in expressing meaning because of the more distinct reference they bear to 'ordinary reality'; representing some abstract idea in terms of a familiar image keeps thinking's feet on the ground, as it were. But Hegel argues to the contrary: symbols, just because they embody a reference to a more directly empirical image, are thereby rendered inherently ambiguous. The eagle rampant may represent state authority, but a bird is not a state nor a state a bird; nor is death a crucifix or even a house a home.

The freedom which thinking demands is not adequately grasped or expressed in symbol or hieroglyph due to the residue of empirical meaning infecting it. What is rather required for thinking are images which, while serving to embody and represent a *universal* meaning, have themselves no empirical reference at all, or only a meaningless one, and this is how it stands with the image as 'sign'. Linguistic signs are mere arbitrary sounds, marks, gestures etc. whose whole virtue and utility lies in their intrinsic *meaninglessness*. Whatever meaning they do have is one conferred upon them in an entirely arbitrary way. Hegel makes the point that the thinking life had its true advent (Socrates comes to mind) with liberation from the ambiguity of the symbolic-hieroglyphic imagination, an event coincident with Greek linguistic innovations. Where picturesque grammar and onomatopoeia give way to the embodiment of meaning in meaningless squiggles and sounds, only then does a *comprehensive* thinking first become possible. Contrary to the reigning linguistic neo-primitivism, the more senseless and indeterminate language is semiotically, the more adequate it is as an expressive vehicle of thought.

From Hegel's perspective it follows that, as itself the free product of thinking, it is absurd to construe language itself as imposing an absolute limit on thought, or to construe thought as reducible to language. Were this indeed the case the descent into mere verbiage, bombast and gossip, where the letter killeth and dead utterance usurps the authority of thought, is inevitable and irresistible. There is liberation from the entrapments of language only where thinking has *command* of it, where the ambiguity which fails to separate signs from their meaning is surmounted. In Hegel's scheme, accordingly, the imagination that produces language has its further sophistication in the reduction of language itself to a mere mechanism of which thinking has the absolutely free and fluid use. Language is robbed of its power to dominate and delude only where its mere grammatical and lexical machinery has been so committed to memory as to become automatic. What is then brought forth and encountered in speaking-hearing or reading-writing is not 'language' at all, but a world of meaning in which language plays an essential but silent role as mere tool and messenger.

This is not to point beyond language to a universe of pure verbless significations, nor to a pseudo-platonic perspective requiring a meta-language available only to the professoriate -- what more formidable linguistic prison-house could there be?³⁷ Hegel is

³⁷ F.L.Jackson, "The Post-Modern Attack on Plato, s.4, *Animus*, v.4. www.mun.ca.

clear enough on the point: "we think only in words". In speaking of language as ultimately in the service of thought, the suggestion is not that it is only the philosopher who grasps or speaks the truth. Rather, for Hegel, since every human being thinks and to that extent is already implicitly a philosopher, he refuses to stray from the ordinary reality of language as the everyday means whereby free individuals sustain and articulate a meaningful life. The relation of language to meaning is for Hegel again analogous to the Aristotelian body become the transparent instrument of the soul, or the knife in the hand of the surgeon which itself has no idea of the life that it saves, or the audio device going about its electronic business in the corner oblivious to the spiritual longing for music which invented it.

"Thinking"

It is in and as thinking proper, *Denken*, that the mere welter of words as such is broken through and the self-determinate character of the meaning which language only embodies and expresses comes into view for itself. In language generally, the power of representation renders the whole of the intuited world its own, brings it under the sway of inner freedom. But in thinking comprehension, language is itself liberated from the formalism of its grammatical and lexical mechanisms, as well as from its hermeneutical relativity. Thinking brings before it the concrete meaning to which words refer and is the grasping (*Begreifung*) of this meaning according to a principle of *self-determination*, that is, on its own terms as what is meaningful *in itself*. It is as the comprehension (*Begreifen*) of meaning for its own sake that thinking is properly thinking, and it is the free, inner logical structure of meaning so comprehended that Hegel calls the 'concept' (*Begriff*). In it, such subjective-objective distinctions of language as that between signifier and signified, word and meaning etc. are superceded; the word *is* nothing apart from the more-than-verbal meaning it expresses. What the 'concept' in its fuller development is, Hegel chooses not to discuss at length in his psychology; no doubt partly because it has already been fully explicated in the earlier, logical sections of the *Encyclopaedia*. Here Hegel is chiefly interested only in what the psychological origin of the concept is.

If in language subjectivity has a freedom that is only partial and one-sided, as was in another way the case in intuition, in a comprehending or speculative thinking there is a complete unity of cognitive form and content, thus the full certainty of the infinity of one's self-relation.

Intelligence knows something intuited but as already its very own; likewise it possesses the fact already in the word. But [as thinking,] what exists for it is *its own universality*, in the dual sense of its universality as such and the same as an immediately existent content: thus a true universal which, comprehending otherness or being as its own, remains in unity with itself. As thinking, intelligence is re-cognitive *in and for itself* ... its product, *what is thought*, is directly the fact, the simple identity of subjective and objective. It knows that 'what is thought' is 'what is', and that 'what is' only 'is' so far as it is thought. To think is thus simply to have thoughts; to have these alone as content and object. (*EN 465*)

In comprehension the world of intuition, imagination and language is resolved to a world of pure meaning, the subjective-objective reciprocity which is the principle of intellectual life fully realized, if realized only on its inward side. In the ordinary thinking life, the outward world is ideally reconciled to oneself, and freedom to this extent has the form of an inner or ideal certainty of a unity of self and world. But an intellectual freedom of this kind remains in one respect incomplete, not with regard to certainty -- 'thinking' *is* this certainty of freedom -- but incomplete in the sense there is still the want of a freedom which is more than just the subjective or psychological certainty of it, i.e., an actual freedom. For Hegel, this want, so far as it is expressed subjectively, that is, still has the form of a psychological modality in the individual, is what is called 'will'.

(d) The Practical Spirit

Mental life is an inwardly appropriated outer world, or an outwardly posited inward one: a unity of self and being whose formal process is the mutual mediation of one through the other, the principle of 'reason' in Hegel's sense. This reciprocity is of course a two-way street: reason is at once the subjective appropriation of the objective -- intuition, representation, comprehension -- and equally objectification of the subjective -- will, deliberation, self-realization. In short, reason is both theoretical and practical, and subjective freedom in its fully developed sense (Hegel will call it 'free spirit') consists in these twin dynamics taken in their unity: a 'thinking-willing', a freedom at once intellectual and practical.

As already described, intellectual appropriation has two components: on the one hand it is immediate insight into the truth of the given world, on the other a dynamic of op-positing within this unity its subjective and objective moments. In short, thinking is at once intuitive and reflective, no less an immediate insight into meaning than the dual recollection and objectification of this meaning. The activity which had intuition and reflection as its moments is thinking itself as addressing an objectivity now posited as intelligible. This thinking is comprehension (*Begreifen*), its self-intelligible content the concept (*Begriff*). In viewing the whole range of cognitive forms as grounded and consummated in thinking so considered as free, that is, as at once self-determinate and concrete, Hegel steps decisively beyond the standpoint of earlier metaphysical and empirical-phenomenological psychologies of knowledge (*EN 26-60, espec. ss.77,78*).

Intellectual life is thus free subjectivity reconciling a merely given world to itself, which latter is born again as an autonomous, self-enclosed and self-sustained life, the so-called 'inner' life of the individual. But this inner or mental life, even though in itself free, has implied in it the demand for an *outward* reconciliation, for the objectification of a freedom otherwise sustained *only* in thought. This is the basis of the practical human spirit which springs, in Hegel's account, from nothing else but the inner certainty of freedom. For *practice* -- as opposed to motion, process, behaviour or other activity -- explicitly presupposes deliberation and initiative, thus a preexistent speculative life wherein intentions are generated, ends are proposed and articulated, and discretion and options exercised. In short, the individual, to be a practical being or agent, must already be a thinking being. (*EN 468*)

'Will' or practical reason is for Hegel that dynamic, belonging to mental life as such, according to which one is impelled to enact or bring about circumstances or conditions consistent with the inner certainty of one's freedom. The concept of the free will forms for Hegel the culminating point in the psychology of freedom, yielding as it does the very presumption upon which any philosophy of human practice, of ethical and political life, must necessarily rest: namely that human beings really are free agents, beings capable of positive, creative action. Nevertheless, so far as freedom thus remains a psychological modality only, is but the 'will' to action, it is not freedom as an actually free life, not an 'objective' spirit. The psychology of the free will thus forms the transition-point where spirit considered in its subjective manifestation in and as mental life passes into a consideration of freedom in its objective embodiment in an actual human-practical order. (*EN 481*).³⁸

'Will' is a common enough word in ordinary discourse where it is normally understood not at all metaphysically, but as a familiar fact of psychological life. Of course historically the term has indeed been endowed with a metaphysical meaning, most vividly in the voluntarism of Schopenhauer whose account of will as the Absolute, a pre-rational and unconscious power, became through its refinements with Nietzsche, Spencer, Bradley, Heidegger and many others a principal strain in 19th and 20th century philosophical thought. The bias is found everywhere in popular expressionistic psychologies where behaviour is assumed to be driven by organic, erotic or aggressive urges welling up in an unconscious self to be inhibited, frustrated and perverted by contrary 'repressive' forces of parental, social or moral-cultural origin -- a theme also ubiquitous in Victorian and post-Victorian literature.

With Hegel, however, 'will' retains its more modest everyday psychological meaning as referring to the self-initiated character of human behaviour which alone makes it possible to speak of individuals as acting 'deliberately' or 'intentionally', being responsible for what they do, forming self-proposed ends and carrying them out by actually altering circumstances or shaping events. In short the concept of will is the simple presumption of *agency*, describing a human being's inherent or 'inner' capacity to act on self-generated motives. The certainty individuals have of this capacity is not an illusory psychological inference, nor, at the other extreme, a mysterious metaphysical endowment. For Hegel freedom *is* human nature, "not anything which [human beings] *have* but what they *are*" (*EN 483*); it is second nature to know oneself as an infinitely self-given, self-relative being. Accordingly, the expression 'free will' is for Hegel a pleonasm; will *is* nothing else but freedom so far as it denotes the human capacity to act. If the free will does have a limit, it does not lie in any conjecture that it may not be free after all -- an 'unfree will' being a contradiction in terms -- but rather it lies in fact that, conceived merely *as* will, freedom is no more than a psychological capacity, not freedom itself as something actually and objectively realized.

³⁸ . The psychological moments of the free will are summarized again in *The Philosophy of Right* (ss 1-33) by way of introducing the philosophy of ethical-institutional freedom, 'objective spirit'. But while generations of political philosophers have turned to these sections to discover the basis of Hegel's concept of the free will, the broader psychological considerations out of which it springs are typically missed or ignored with the result that Hegel's account there appears arbitrary or dogmatic.

Hegel's purpose in his psychology of the will is to reveal this limit and show how, within the more complete freedom of the actually free spirit, the merely subjective freedom of the will is reduced to a subordinate element, an ideal moment. The argument thus moves from the concept of the free will as immediately given in and as 'human nature', as it were, to the concept of a self-conscious or thinking will whose own form as will is potentially self-transcended as the will that wills an actual and objective freedom.

“Practical Impulse”

So far as motives, intentions and purposes are simply *found* in oneself in an immediate way, to this extent one's freedom is no more than the irrepressible propensity to act, to impose one's will on the world, to appropriate, change, order, command and create it -- in short, the practical spirit in general. For Hegel, freedom is implied even in the most capricious and seemingly involuntary human acts, though, as such, only as a freedom possessed and expressed contingently. Hegel calls this sheer impulsiveness the 'natural' will, meaning not at all to suggest that human actions spring, after all, from biological drives or something else of the kind -- they would then not be actions at all but something else -- but that freedom is already directly implied in *the sheer proclivity to act from oneself*, and that this proclivity is 'native' to human beings as such, their 'original sin', the source as much of everything wanton, cruel and decadent in human affairs as of everything liberating and ennobling.

This confusion of natural will with natural instinct is the source of the ancient prejudice which regards the latter as in itself evil. In a more sophisticated moral psychology, however, evil is seen rather to lie in the unredeemed impulsiveness of the human will, an impulsiveness that nonetheless belongs to it *as free*. Practical feelings and impulses, *qua* practical, are never in any case instinctive, given as natural; there is no 'organic will' in competition with a free one. Rather, in human beings, instinctive urges inevitably arise in the context of an already implicit consciousness of freedom, with which they are directly felt to be compatible or incompatible. What Hegel means by the 'natural' will is thus not natural urges as such, acting as if on their own, but the free *practical* will so far as may link itself with any determining fact it may find just 'there' in itself, whether this be some biological urge, a particular sentiment, a cultural prejudice, a habit and so on. The key difference lies rather in whether the will unthinkingly attaches itself to particularistic motives or whether it self-consciously brings these under the universal practical standard of freedom.

In this view of the freedom of the natural will Hegel advances a unique and important doctrine. The notorious wilfulness, egoism, selfishness, impetuosity and capacity for unlimited evil that is 'original' with human nature, has its source and meaning, not in the corruption of human actions by extraneous *natural* passions, nor as the secret work of sinister supernatural agencies; nor again as a consequence, as Nietzsche thought, of cultural decadence. Rather, Hegel thinks, it is nothing other than freedom which is the original 'will to power' behind the practical passions, no matter how trivial or profound, high-minded or debased they may in fact be. Even in his most repressive acts, it is his own freedom the tyrant perverts. Being simply what it is, an immediate wedding of the

infinity of freedom to some finite aim, the passionate or impulsive will is neither evil nor good in itself and contains indifferently the possibility of either outcome.

More precisely, will is 'natural' for Hegel only to the degree its aim or object is something immediately and subjectively given. It is to this extent blind and impulsive, a direct identification of freedom with purely egoistic self-activity, not a deliberative, thoughtful willing. Far from representing the natural and the rational wills as locked in eternal Manichaean conflict, Hegel rather affirms they are forms of the same; that the natural will is rational in principle, the former the latter's unreflexive form. In this view, Hegel stands at complete odds with much of the modern tradition on this matter, and especially with Kant's rigid distinctions between inclination and will, heteronomy and autonomy, where freedom belongs only on the one side of the rational or holy will, standing in irreconcilable opposition to the human inclinations, passions and desires seen as originating in natural necessity and as reconciled to freedom only formally in the 'ought-to-be' of moral conscience. This same polarization was to evoke the extreme resolutions of 19th century absolutism based on a dogmatic identification of nature and volition on the one side or the other. Fichte's moralism would reduce nature to a moment of will -- the very trees in the garden are constituted in my moral self-consciousness -- while Schopenhauer's metaphysics asserted the converse: that the In-Itself, the Absolute, is an irrational, implacable, purposeless, all-generative *Wille* whose most notorious manifestation is the intractable egoism of humankind. In psychologizing this metaphysical will as Will-to-power, Nietzsche significantly described the latter as the "instinct to freedom".

As much as moral, naturalistic and aesthetic absolutism were to become permanent strains in later 19th and 20th thought, already in his time, Hegel had rejected them as failing to appreciate the dynamic or dialectical character of the unity of nature and man, of being and self-consciousness, resorting to dogmatic affirmations which betray the underlying assumption that what is being unified is still really something divided, a difficulty which infects most subsequent humanism and existentialism. For Hegel the difficulty lies in the Kantian insistence on treating inclinations, passions and desires as in essential conflict with the free will, having their origin in an alien nature defined as ruled by a necessity in principle unreconciled to freedom. But for Hegel this is too abstract a view; it fails to distinguish between physical and psychological contexts and to recognize that even the most ordinary feelings, so far as they are *practical*, fall entirely into the latter class:

delight, joy, grief, shame, repentance, contentment, etc., are partly just modifications of practical feeling generally [the natural will]; partly the practical 'ought' gains determinateness through their varying contents. (*EN* 472)

[The feeling of joy] consists in a sense of the accordance of my whole being with some event, thing or person [while] in terror I feel an instant discordance between something external and my own positive self-feeling. (*Ibid. Add.*)

In short, such human feelings are improperly defined as 'natural impulses'; they are entirely practical in character and content and are utterly unintelligible except on the presumption of a thinking, and feeling being freely addressed to the context of its very own life.

For Hegel, "nothing great has been and nothing great can be accomplished without passion" and "it is only a dead and too often hypocritical moralizing which inveighs against passion as such (*EN 474*)". But if freedom is indeed the energy behind human practical passion, it is also the case there is no greater bondage than that incurred in giving oneself entirely over to them. The contradiction springs from a possibility lying in freedom itself, namely the possibility of absolute commitment to some determinate end for its own sake, in which commitment one renders *oneself* unfree. Hegel's position is the ancient and familiar one: the passions are destructive only so far as they become bonds freely forged for oneself. If the pursuit of particular aims and needs may well serve the interest of freedom, the equation of them with freedom itself renders the latter 'wilful' and capricious, a *mere* 'will to power'.

Hegel thus breaks radically with the Kantian scheme where the passions, as heteronomous, can at best only be regulated, brought conditionally under the imperative of freedom, which 'ought' to prevail over necessity. Strict morality is an inherently inadequate basis of a philosophy of practice since the unredeemed subjectivity of conscience only guarantees that the gulf between impulse and freedom is never bridged, and that the objective measure of good is no more than an ought-to-be which never is. It becomes impossible in the end to distinguish morality from caprice or moral virtue from moral hypocrisy (*PR 140; PG vi.C*). As against this, Hegel insists the conflict between inclination and freedom is not absolute. No matter how bodily or material their reference may be, human practical urges, desires and passions, *qua* human, are *already* modes of freedom; since they are those of a thinking being who feels, reflects, associates, imagines and thinks, even the crassest of human motives, the cruelest of passions, the most decadent of desires imply an 'instinct to freedom'. This alone can explain the common observation that it is impossible to account physiologically for the human propensity to corruption; human evil being inventively vicious and self-destructive far beyond anything of which other animals are capable.³⁹ The real question is not how the practical passions may be repressed, overcome, regulated of whatever, but how a freedom already latent in them may be more fully realized and developed.

For Hegel, as determination is actual only as self-determination and necessity is actual only as freedom, so the impulsive will is implicitly but not actually free. The conflict between the free will and the passions is accordingly an entirely spiritual one played out in the court of free individuality, not a cosmic war between nature and spirit. It comes down to a question how, as a practical being, one reconciles the inner and to that extent abstract certainty of one's freedom with the host of the particular motives, enticements and ends presenting themselves in everyday life, competing as optional

³⁹ "Nor does evil, the negative of self-existent, infinite spirit ... afflict spirit from outside; on the contrary, evil is nothing other than spirit putting its separate individuality before all else... Thus even in this its extreme disunity ... spirit remains identical with itself and therefore free." (*EN 382 Add.*)

vehicles for bringing this freedom to bear. The question of the moralization of the natural will is thus for Hegel not a matter of how free will overcomes impulse in the abstract, but how freedom in its immediate psychological or impulsive form can develop into an actual, positive, living capacity for free action.

The conflation of impulse with instinct has led to the now common contemporary way of speaking of the individual as free *aboriginally*, 'by nature', prior to all rational, moral, cultural, historical, religious or political mediations or constraints. Such a notion not only gives priority to practical impulse but would render this impulsive aspect of freedom absolute, pushing the romanticist thesis to its extreme. But the description of one's freedom, and the rights flowing from it, as absolute in the sense of 'natural' or 'aboriginal' can again only be metaphorical, for what is really being referred to is not really some natural fact, but the *psychological* fact that human beings are first aware of their freedom unreflectively, in the irrepressible practical impulse to exploit whatever opportunity presents itself for its satisfaction. But since its principle is freedom, willing has already in it the necessity that it not remain impulsive but be subject to the measure of a reflective element that is as essential to its freedom as spontaneity is. This necessity, certainly well documented no less in experience than in philosophy, lies in the common observation that in seeking to satisfy this or that finite end, what notoriously is achieved is often the opposite, the *dissatisfaction* of knowing one's freedom unrequited or conflicted in the very pursuit or attainment of it. The impulsive will to act is thus forced inexorably to reflect on the limits and relativity of its own aims, to become thus divided against itself, and to seek to realize its freedom, no longer directly, but indirectly through appeal to some principle through which conflicting desires and inclinations might be reconciled or unified.

"Free Choice"

Freedom in its subjective form as 'will' is thus as much reflexive as it is impulsive; as much a moral as a natural will. For the will as reflexive, Hegel reserves the term *Willkür* (*arbitrium*) or in ordinary English parlance, the will as choosing: 'free choice'. It involves two factors:

- (a) free reflection, abstracting from everything, and (b) dependence on a content and material given either from within or without...

The idea people most commonly have of freedom is that it is [free option or] 'arbitrariness' -- the mean, chosen by abstract reflection, between will as wholly determined by impulse and will as free absolutely ... Though the abstract certainty of freedom, is not its truth since it has not got *itself* as content and aim and consequently the subjective side is still other than the objective ... (PR 15)

That is, freedom would be self-determination; but choice is only the determining of a content not explicitly generated through freedom itself. In choosing, the will is thus in one sense free, in another not free, a second-order selecting and rejecting of inclinations and impulses taken as simply given and in conflict with the autonomy of the choosing

will itself. In its simplest expression freedom as choice comes down either to the attempt, in hedonism, to satisfy all inclination in some measure or, as in asceticism, the denial of the inclinations as such. But such extreme measures do not really confront or resolve the real problem which lies in the concept of free choice itself:

The contradiction which the choosing will itself is, comes into view as a dialectic of impulses and inclinations, each in the way of every other, the satisfaction of one unavoidably subordinated or sacrificed to the satisfaction of another, and so on. Since an impulse is a uni-directional urge it has no measuring-rod in itself, and so the determination of its subordination or sacrifice is a contingent decision of the choosing will ... appealing to intelligence to calculate which impulse will afford the greater satisfaction or in accordance with some other ground of option. (*PR 17*)

Beyond the self-defeating solutions of hedonism or asceticism, freedom as *Willkür* asserts its abstract universality as against the multitude of given inclinations. It is then an explicitly 'moral' or reflexive will which appeals to its own principle of autonomy as the ground for choosing among various options (keeping or not keeping a promise or whatever). Hegel mounts an extensive criticism of the idea of moral free choice (e.g. *EN 53, 473-478, PR 15-20*) on the grounds that in it freedom still has the form of contingency. The abstract or morally free agent ought to act only from its own inner principle, never 'heteronomously' from particular motives. In *actually* choosing some course of action, however, the moral standpoint falls into contradiction, for then one does something definite, and having chosen to do this rather than that, cannot hide the fact one might just as well have chosen that rather than this, or perhaps some other option altogether. The question then is how and why the option chosen is the 'moral' one consistent with freedom. If one looks for a criterion in the pure form of free choice itself, this proves too abstract to apply to any particular case. If one looks to the intent, the circumstances or the consequences of the particular option chosen, then it becomes impossible to know whether it was made on moral grounds or from quite other, extraneous motives. The whole question of moral goodness or wickedness becomes undecidable.

Practical reflection may, in this dilemma, conjecturally propose to itself some ideal conjunction of morality and reality, a condition of human happiness wherein all impulses are satisfied consistent with a general moral ideal. But, Hegel observes, this "merely imagined universality of things desired" remains "a universality which only ought to be (*EN 480*)", that is, an ideal unattainable no less in concept than in fact. Free choice turns out to be, not an activity of harmonizing or reconciling conflicting impulses but a

process of diversion or distraction, suspending one desire or enjoyment by another and one satisfaction (which is just as much no satisfaction) by another *ad infinitum*. (*EN 478*)

In other words, free choice, once enacted, produces a spurious infinity (*schlechte Unendlichkeit*) in which *whatever* option one chooses must appear at once moral and

immoral, in which case freedom itself becomes indistinguishable from a literal arbitrariness into which in fact it is bound to degenerate. The moral standpoint thus contains in it the seed of its own decadence, just as surely as the 20th century followed the 19th.⁴⁰

"Thinking Will"

The impulsive will has the deficiency that though freedom is its real underlying source and aim its cannot find the fulfilment of its essential infinity in the satisfaction of finite, fleeting desires -- hence the romantic spirit's perennial complaint as to the fatally unrequited nature of all desire. The limit of the autonomous or reflective will on the other hand lies rather in that, while it has freedom explicitly in view, it has it in such an abstractly subjective form that committing to any actual course of action sullies it or makes a virtue of arbitrariness. For Hegel, what is *negatively* important in this mutual failure of a natural will which is never satisfied in its finite embodiments and a moral will which is impotent to act or else corrupts freedom whenever it does, is the insufficiency of either view by itself as an adequate account of the psychology of human freedom.

Hegel set himself resolutely beyond both the romanticist and the moralistic views of freedom emerging to predominance in his time, not by simply refuting them but by containing and reinstating them as elements within a larger view of the psychology of freedom. He accordingly describes the relation between the natural and the moral will as *dialectical* rather than, as in the traditional and still dominant view, *oppositional*.⁴¹ The relation is clearly analogous to that between intuition and representation in the analysis of theoretical reason, where these are seen, not as separate or alternative forms of intellectual cognition but as moments of the self-determinative activity which is 'thinking' itself, an act which demands both direct and immediate insight into meaning and also the reflection which articulates the subjective-objective unity-in-reciprocity which forms the inner essence of that same meaning. Similarly, the passionate and the moral view of willing are not to be taken as standing in irreconcilable conflict, but as moments within what Hegel calls the *actually* free will, a reciprocity indeed implied in all truly practical life where what is realized through a rational ordering of the practical passions is nothing less than the satisfaction, if not of them directly, then of the universal end latent in them and driving them, namely freedom itself.

The practical will in its fullest realized sense is thus simply the will to freedom. It remains a 'will' so far as still considered only the human *propensity* to free, deliberate action, which Hegel describes as springing directly out of the immediate certainty human beings have of their essential freedom. It is only as utterly divorced from thinking that will can appear as a principle of irrationality, as with Schopenhauer, or its freedom as sheer limitlessness, as in anarchic liberalism. For Hegel, the individual is only practical so far as also a thinking reason. In opposing 'wilfulness', moral self-consciousness brings the pure thought of freedom back into the picture, but at the price of a division within the will itself. What is lost in the idea of a moral will (Nietzsche's 'will not to will'), in turn, is

⁴⁰ *Philosophy of Right*, Pt. II, ss.3;

⁴¹ *Ibid.* S .27

the spontaneity characteristic of the natural or impulsive will. Still, with Hegel it is never a question of refuting the moral standpoint as such, as with Nietzsche and his legacy, but of taking its acknowledged impotence as symptomatic of the inadequacy of the whole division between thinking and willing, between theoretical and practical reason, which it proves unable to reconcile.

By an 'actually' free will Hegel means willing so far as it's own inner principle, the freedom established and made certain in thought, is no longer concealed in it. Such a will is 'actually' free in the sense that its essential unity with thinking life, the basis of its rationality, is brought explicitly to the fore in it: it is a self-conscious, deliberating will.

The *actually* free will is the unity of theoretical and practical spirit, a free will which realizes its own freedom of will now that the formalism, fortuitousness and contractedness of the practical content has been superseded and will is *immediately self-instituted individuality*, an individuality purified of all that interferes with its universality, that is, with freedom itself. This [individuality] can have this universality as its object and aim only so far as it thinks itself, knows this to be concept, and is thus *will as free intelligence*. (EN481)

Where freedom becomes the consciously explicit end, willing can no longer appear as simply impulsive, whether morally fettered or unfettered, but as *a willing free in itself and knowing itself to be such*. So considered, 'will' is more than a mere psychological practical proclivity and presents itself as 'ideal' in the larger life of the living agent who, more than merely free 'by nature' or even by moral cultivation, is an actually existing free individual through whose deliberate actions an objective, ethical and institutional order of freedom is sustained.

(e) The Free Spirit

So far as a division persists between its intellectual and its practical expressions, 'spirit' is a subjective freedom only, a psychological category, a *purely* mental, not an actual life. This limit lies in the division in reason whereby it is on the one side appropriation of otherness to self, cognition, and on the other impulse to self-realization, will. Both are incomplete expressions of freedom as self-determination, and if the Kantian legacy remains ambiguous on this point,⁴² Hegel is not:

For the theoretical mentality, though the object is subjective, a residual objective content remains outside this unity; ... as subjectivity does not wholly pervade the object, the latter is accordingly not posited wholly in and through spirit. In the practical sphere ... subjectivity still does not possess a true objectivity since in the immediate form [of 'will'] it is not a ... [freedom] existing in and for itself, but such as still belongs to the singularity of the individual. (EN 444 *Add.*)

⁴² If one may judge Kant's third critique, as it was generally judged in its day, to have been unsuccessful in demonstrating an aesthetic or teleological reconciliation of theoretical and practical reason.

Or again,

The theoretical no less than the practical mentality still belongs to the sphere of *subjective spirit* ... The inward, theoretical spirit produces only its own ideal world and attains a degree of abstract self-determination therein. The practical spirit is concerned only with giving universal form to a content which is after all only its own, and thus again only nominally self-determined. Existing as the unity of soul and consciousness, of its anthropological and phenomenological aspects, the subjective spirit ... [has] for its theoretical product the *word* and for its practical, *enjoyment*, but not yet deeds and actions. (EN 444).

Where so divided, whether as an inner intellectuality culminating in language, or as an ever-unrequited will to personal reconciliation, freedom can have only a subjective or psychological meaning; the character, that is, of a universal self-determinateness which yet belongs only to 'this' individual -- a paradoxical and problematical 'fact' of the latter's finite existence. But for the self-conscious spirit which knows this universality to be its own very being and essence, freedom is no merely inward human condition but an actual ethical order of life, realized and sustained by thinking individuals mutually recognizing and enacting a freedom understood to be objectively fulfilled only in a common commitment to familial, social and political institutions.

True freedom, freedom as actual ethical-institutional life, is this: that willing have for its content a universal end and not some subjective or self-serving one. But such a content can exist only in and through thinking, so that it is nothing short of absurd to exclude the fact of thinking from the consideration of ethical, religious or juridical rights. (EN 469)

Hegel's psychology thus reaches its consummation in the concept of the individual as an actually free spirit in whom being, thinking and doing are one and the same. This concept of the free spirit (EN III.C.c) is the driving force throughout the whole argument of the Hegelian psychology: namely the demonstration that "freedom is not something human beings *have*, but what they *are*". This is a view contemporary psychology cannot bring itself to embrace, whether forced to deny it as inconsistent with the primarily technocratic aims of experimental science, or whether willing to acknowledge freedom but as compromised by any number of existential conditionalities: circumstantial, cultural-political, linguistic etc. The Hegelian psychology of the free spirit is unique in making the outright argument that freedom and nothing less constitutes human nature as such; that 'mind' or free personality is not some enigmatic, supernumerary entity or quality grafted upon a human existence to be conceived and explained otherwise, but is an actual, living-freedom *in which every other sense and significance of existence is implicitly contained*. The aesthetic and theological analogies to this speculative position are obvious.

From its very commencement, then, the metaphysical dichotomy between nature and freedom, body and spirit, is assumed as *already* superseded in the human self-consciousness of freedom considered as such. Human mentality is not in Hegel's psychology, as in most others, a lingering conundrum recurring again and again at each stage of inquiry, finally requiring to be abandoned altogether or only foisted capriciously in at some point in a quite contradictory way. In Hegel's account, the whole gamut of human psycho-physical and phenomenological structures and activities are not allowed to fall outside the principle of freedom but are drawn together under it. The 'ideality' of mental life is thus identified and confirmed at every level of psychological life from the most elemental to the most complex, from the direct impact of climate or gender on temperament, to the intricacies of mind-brain relations, to the more subtle phenomenological relations between a self and its world, to mental life as such where, in thinking, language and deliberate action, the individual's essential freedom is made most distinctly evident.

It is remarkable that, however obviously any account of legal, moral or institutional freedom must depend on the assumption, at least, of human freedom as a psychological fact, this question is for the most part ignored or summarily dismissed in contemporary psychology. And this, even where there is a coincident total contemporary commitment, no doubt even on the part of psychologists themselves, to ideas of individual and social liberty, with which commitment it is nonetheless supposed consistent to describe human beings as organisms in whom the category of freedom has no scientific relevance or else as existential beings in whom freedom has at best only a conflicted status. Accordingly, the relation of psychological to political theory almost always entails a leap of some kind from such a deterministic or existential account of human nature to the possibility of an ethically, socially or institutionally meaningful freedom, an ideal which therefore can only be, and typically is, dogmatically laid down.

A plausible explanation for this pervasive contemporary inconsistency might be that in post-Hegelian times the certainty of the individual's essential freedom, far from having gone by the board, has rather 'gone under', that is, become an absolute and unspoken assumption, so thoroughly and universally accepted as no longer to enter into the mix of ordinary inquiry or to be considered as standing in need of a speculative or any other form of justification. This newly blind conviction, implicit no less in contemporary science than in contemporary politics, can thus appear unconscious of or indifferent to the question whether such a psychologically unfounded appeal to freedom can be any more than ephemeral, can avoid foundering, as some might well argue contemporary freedom has, into a celebration of personal caprice and public anarchy for want of a definite and concrete *knowledge*, beyond dogma and conviction, of what freedom actually is. The aim of working out just such a psychological foundation of freedom as 'absolute idea' forms the central inspiration of Hegel's philosophy of the subjective spirit, which suggests it may well be the case that the post-Hegelian world is far more Hegelian than it knows.