

The Phenomenology of Spirit...

PREFACE

On scientific knowledge

Φ 1. In the case of a philosophical work it seems not only superfluous, but, in view of the nature of philosophy, even inappropriate and misleading to begin, as writers usually do in a preface, by explaining the end the author had in mind, the circumstances which gave rise to the work, and the relation in which the writer takes it to stand to other treatises on the same subject, written by his predecessors or his contemporaries. For whatever it might be suitable to state about philosophy in a preface — say, an historical sketch of the main drift and point of view, the general content and results, a string of desultory assertions and assurances about the truth — this cannot be accepted as the form and manner in which to expound philosophical truth.

Φ 2. Moreover, because philosophy has its being essentially in the element of that universality which encloses the particular within it, the end or final result seems, in the case of philosophy more than in that of other sciences, to have absolutely expressed the complete fact itself in its very nature; contrasted with that the mere process of bringing it to light would seem, properly speaking, to have no essential significance. On the other hand, in the general idea of e.g. anatomy — the knowledge of the parts of the body regarded as lifeless — we are quite sure we do not possess the objective concrete fact, the actual content of the science, but must, over and above, be concerned with particulars. Further, in the case of such a collection of items of knowledge, which has no real right to the name of science, any talk about purpose and suchlike generalities is not commonly very different from the descriptive and superficial way in which the contents of the science these nerves and muscles, etc. — are themselves spoken of. In philosophy, on the other hand, it would at once be felt incongruous were such a method made use of and yet shown by philosophy itself to be incapable of grasping the truth.

In the same way too, by determining the relation which a philosophical work professes to have to other treatises on the same subject, an extraneous interest is introduced, and obscurity is thrown over the point at issue in the knowledge of the truth. The more the ordinary mind takes the opposition between true and false to be fixed, the more is it accustomed to expect either agreement or contradiction with a given philosophical system, and only to see reason for the one or the other in any explanatory statement concerning such a system. It does not conceive the diversity of philosophical systems as the progressive evolution of truth; rather, it sees only contradiction in that variety. The bud disappears when the blossom breaks through, and we might say that the former is refuted by the latter; in the same way when the fruit comes, the blossom may be explained to be a false form of the plant's existence, for the fruit appears as its true nature in place of the blossom. These stages are not merely differentiated; they supplant one another as being incompatible with one another. But the ceaseless activity of their own inherent nature makes them at the same time moments of an organic unity, where they not merely do not contradict one another, but where one is as necessary as the other; and this equal necessity of all moments constitutes alone and thereby the life of the whole. But contradiction as between philosophical systems is not wont to be conceived in this way; on the other hand, the mind perceiving the contradiction does not commonly know how to relieve it or keep it free from its one-sidedness, and to recognise in what seems conflicting and inherently antagonistic the presence of mutually necessary moments.

Φ 3. The demand for such explanations, as also the attempts to satisfy this demand, very easily, pass for the essential business philosophy has to undertake. Where could the inmost truth of a philosophical work be found better expressed than in its purposes and results? and in what way could these be more definitely known than through their distinction from what is produced during the same period by others working in the same field? If, however, such procedure is to pass for more than the beginning of knowledge, if it is to pass for actually knowing, then we must, in point of fact, look on it as a device for avoiding the real business at issue, an attempt to combine the appearance of being in earnest and taking trouble about the subject with an actual neglect of the subject altogether. For the real subject-matter is not exhausted in its purpose, but in working the matter out; nor is the mere result attained the concrete whole itself, but the result along with the process of arriving at it. The purpose of itself is a lifeless universal, just as the general drift is a mere activity in a certain direction, which is still without its concrete realisation; and the naked result is the corpse of the system which has left its guiding tendency behind it. Similarly, the distinctive difference of anything is rather the boundary, the limit, of the subject; it is found at that point where the subject-matter stops, or it is what this subject-matter is not. To trouble oneself in this fashion with the purpose and results, and again with the differences, the positions taken up and judgments passed by one thinker and another, is therefore an easier task than perhaps it seems. For instead of laying hold of the matter in hand, a procedure of that kind is all the while away from the subject altogether. Instead of dwelling within it and becoming absorbed by it, knowledge of that sort is always grasping at something else; such knowledge, instead keeping to the subject-matter and giving itself up to it, never gets away from itself. The easiest thing of all is to pass judgments on what has a solid substantial content; it is more difficult to grasp it, and most of all difficult to do both together and produce the systematic exposition of it.

Φ 4. The beginning of culture and of the struggle to pass out of the unbroken immediacy of naive psychical life has always to be made by acquiring knowledge of universal principles and points of view, by striving, in the first instance, to work up simply to the thought of the subject-matter in general, not forgetting at the same time to give reasons for supporting it or refuting it, to apprehend the concrete riches and fullness contained in its various determinate qualities, and to know how to furnish a coherent, orderly account of it and a responsible judgment upon it. This beginning of mental cultivation will, however, very soon make way for the earnestness of actual life in all its fullness, which leads to a living experience of the subject-matter itself; and when, in addition, conceptual thought strenuously penetrates to the very depths of its meaning, such knowledge and style of judgment will keep their due place in everyday thought and conversation.

2. The element of truth is the Concept/Notion (Begriff), and its true form the scientific system

Φ 5. The systematic development of truth in scientific form can alone be the true shape in which truth exists. To help to bring philosophy nearer to the form of science — that goal where it can lay aside the name of love of knowledge and be actual knowledge — that is what I have set before me. The inner necessity that knowledge should be science lies in its very nature; and the adequate and sufficient explanation for this lies simply and solely in the systematic exposition of philosophy itself. The external necessity, however, so far as this is apprehended in a universal way, and apart from the accident of the personal element and the particular occasioning influences affecting the individual, is the same as the internal: it lies in the form and shape in which the process of time presents the existence of its moments. To show that the time process does raise philosophy to the level of scientific system would, therefore, be the only true justification of the attempts which aim at proving that philosophy must assume this character; because the temporal process would thus bring out and lay bare the necessity of it, nay, more, would at the same time be carrying out that very aim itself.

Φ 6. When we state the true form of truth to be its scientific character — or, what is the same thing, when it is maintained that truth finds the medium of its existence in notions or conceptions alone — I know that this seems to contradict an idea with all its consequences which makes great pretensions and has gained widespread acceptance and conviction at the present time. A word of explanation concerning this contradiction seems, therefore, not out of place, even though at this stage it can amount to no more than a dogmatic assurance exactly like the view we are opposing. If, that is to say, truth exists merely in what, or rather exists merely as what, is called at one time intuition, at another immediate knowledge of the Absolute, Religion, Being — not being in the centre of divine love, but the very Being of this centre, of the Absolute itself — from that point of view it is rather the opposite of the notional or conceptual form which would be required for systematic philosophical exposition. The Absolute on this view is not to be grasped in conceptual form, but felt, intuited; it is not its conception, but the feeling of it and intuition of it that are to have the say and find expression.

3. Present position of the spirit

Φ 7. If we consider the appearance of a claim like this in its more general setting, and look at the level which the self-conscious mind at present occupies, we shall find that self-consciousness has got beyond the substantial fullness of life, which it used to carry on in the element of thought — beyond the state of immediacy of belief, beyond the satisfaction and security arising from the assurance which consciousness possessed of being reconciled with ultimate reality and with its all-pervading presence, within as well as without. Self-conscious mind has not merely passed beyond that to the opposite extreme of insubstantial reflection of self into self, but beyond this too. It has not merely lost its essential and concrete life, it is also conscious of this loss and of the transitory finitude characteristic of its content. Turning away from the husks it has to feed on, and confessing that it lies in wickedness and sin, it reviles itself for so doing, and now desires from philosophy not so much to bring it to a knowledge of what it is, as to obtain once again through philosophy the restoration of that sense of solidity and substantiality of existence it has lost. Philosophy is thus expected not so much to meet this want by opening up the compact solidity of substantial existence, and bringing this to the light and level of self-consciousness is not so much to bring chaotic conscious life back to the orderly ways of thought, and the simplicity of the notion, as to run together what thought has divided asunder suppress the notion with its distinctions, and restore the feeling of existence. What it wants from philosophy is not so much insight as edification. The beautiful, the holy, the eternal, religion, love — these are the bait required to awaken the desire to bite: not the notion, but ecstasy, not the march of cold necessity in the subject-matter, but ferment and enthusiasm — these are to be the ways by which the wealth of the concrete substance is to be stored and increasingly extended.

Φ 8. With this demand there goes the strenuous effort, almost perfervidly zealous in its activity, to rescue mankind from being sunken in what is sensuous, vulgar, and of fleeting importance, and to raise men's eyes to the stars; as if men had quite forgotten the divine, and were on the verge of finding satisfaction, like worms, in mud and water. Time was when man had a heaven, decked and fitted out with endless wealth of thoughts and pictures. The significance of all that is, lay in the thread of light by which it was attached to heaven; instead of dwelling in the present as it is here and now, the eye glanced away over the present to the Divine, away, so to say, to a present that lies beyond. The mind's gaze had to be directed under compulsion to what is earthly, and kept fixed there; and it has needed a long time to introduce that clearness, which only celestial realities had, into the crassness and confusion shrouding the sense of things earthly, and to make attention to the immediate present as such, which was called Experience, of interest and of value. Now we have

apparently the need for the opposite of all this; man's mind and interest are so deeply rooted in the earthly that we require a like power to have them raised above that level. His spirit shows such poverty of nature that it seems to long for the mere pitiful feeling of the divine in the abstract, and to get refreshment from that, like a wanderer in the desert craving for the merest mouthful of water. By the little which can thus satisfy the needs of the human spirit we can measure the extent of its loss.

Φ 9. This easy contentment in receiving, or stinginess in giving, does not suit the character of science. The man who only seeks edification, who wants to envelop in mist the manifold diversity of his earthly existence and thought, and craves after the vague enjoyment of this vague and indeterminate Divinity — he may look where he likes to find this: he will easily find for himself the means to procure something he can rave over and puff himself up withal. But philosophy must beware of wishing to be edifying.

Φ 10. Still less must this kind of contentment, which holds science in contempt, take upon itself to claim that raving obscurantism of this sort is something higher than science. These apocalyptic utterances pretend to occupy the very centre and the deepest depths; they look askance at all definiteness and preciseness meaning; and they deliberately hold back from conceptual thinking and the constraining necessities of thought, as being the sort of reflection which, they say, can only feel at home in the sphere of finitude. But just as there is a breadth which is emptiness, there is a depth which is empty too: as we may have an extension of substance which overflows into finite multiplicity without the power of keeping the manifold together, in the same way we may have an insubstantial intensity which, keeping itself in as mere force without actual expression, is no better than superficiality. The force of mind is only as great as its expression; its depth only as deep as its power to expand and lose itself when spending and giving out its substance. Moreover, when this unreflective emotional knowledge makes a pretence of having immersed its own very self in the depths of the absolute Being, and of philosophizing in all holiness and truth, it hides from itself the fact that instead of devotion to God, it rather, by this contempt for all measurable precision and definiteness, simply attests in its own case the fortuitous character of its content, and in the other endows God with its own caprice. When such minds commit themselves to the unrestrained ferment of sheer emotion, they think that, by putting a veil over self-consciousness, and surrendering all understanding, they are thus God's beloved ones to whom He gives His wisdom in sleep. This is the reason, too, that in point of fact, what they do conceive and bring forth in sleep is dreams.

Φ 11. For the rest it is not difficult to see that our epoch is a birth-time, and a period of transition. The spirit of man has broken with the old order of things hitherto prevailing, and with the old ways of thinking, and is in the mind to let them all sink into the depths of the past and to set about its own transformation. It is indeed never at rest, but carried along the stream of progress ever onward. But it is here as in the case of the birth of a child; after a long period of nutrition in silence, the continuity of the gradual growth in size, of quantitative change, is suddenly cut short by the first breath drawn — there is a break in the process, a qualitative change and the child is born. In like manner the spirit of the time, growing slowly and quietly ripe for the new form it is to assume, disintegrates one fragment after another of the structure of its previous world. That it is tottering to its fall is indicated only by symptoms here and there. Frivolity and again ennui, which are spreading in the established order of things, the undefined foreboding of something unknown — all these betoken that there is something else approaching. This gradual crumbling to pieces, which did not

alter the general look and aspect of the whole, is interrupted by the sunrise, which, in a flash and at a single stroke, brings to view the form and structure of the new world.

Φ 12. But this new world is perfectly realised just as little as the new-born child; and it is essential to bear this in mind. It comes on the stage to begin with in its immediacy, in its bare generality. A building is not finished when its foundation is laid; and just as little, is the attainment of a general notion of a whole the whole itself. When we want to see an oak with all its vigour of trunk, its spreading branches, and mass of foliage, we are not satisfied to be shown an acorn instead. In the same way science, the crowning glory of a spiritual world, is not found complete in its initial stages. The beginning of the new spirit is the outcome of a widespread revolution in manifold forms of spiritual culture; it is the reward which comes after a chequered and devious course of development, and after much struggle and effort. It is a whole which, after running its course and laying bare all its content, returns again to itself; it is the resultant abstract notion of the whole. But the actual realisation of this abstract whole is only found when those previous shapes and forms, which are now reduced to ideal moments of the whole, are developed anew again, but developed and shaped within this new medium, and with the meaning they have thereby acquired.

4. The principle is not the completion; against formalism

Φ 13. While the new world makes its first appearance merely in general outline, merely as a whole lying concealed and hidden within a bare abstraction, the wealth of the bygone life, on the other hand, is still consciously present in recollection. Consciousness misses in the new form the detailed expanse of content; but still more the developed expression of form by which distinctions are definitely determined and arranged in their precise relations. Without this last feature science has no general intelligibility, and has the appearance of being an esoteric possession of a few individuals — an esoteric possession, because in the first instance it is only the essential principle or notion of science, only its inner nature that is to be found; and a possession of few individuals, because, at its first appearance, its content is not elaborated and expanded in detail, and thus its existence is turned into something particular. Only what is perfectly determinate in form is at the same time exoteric, comprehensible, and capable of being learned and possessed by everybody. Intelligibility is the form in which science is offered to everyone, and is the open road to it made plain for all. To reach rational knowledge by our intelligence is the just demand of the mind which comes to science. For intelligence, understanding (Verstand), is thinking, pure activity of the self in general; and what is intelligible (Verständige) is something from the first familiar and common to the scientific and unscientific mind alike, enabling the unscientific mind to enter the domain of science.

Φ 14. Science, at its commencement, when as yet it has reached neither detailed completeness nor perfection of form, is exposed to blame on that account. But it would be as unjust to suppose this blame to attach to its essential nature, as it is inadmissible not to be ready to recognise the demand for that further development in fuller detail. In the contrast and opposition between these two aspects (the initial and the developed stages of science) seems to lie the critical knot which scientific culture at present struggles to loosen, and about which so far it is not very clear. One side parades the wealth of its material and the intelligibility of its ideas; the other pours contempt at any rate on the latter, and makes a parade of the immediate intuitive rationality and divine quality of its content. Although the first is reduced to silence, perhaps by the inner force of truth alone, perhaps, too, by the noisy bluster of the other side, and even though having regard to the reason and nature of the case it did feel overborne, yet it does not therefore feel satisfied as regards those demands for greater development; for those demands are just, but still unfulfilled. Its silence is due only in part to the victory of the other side; it is half due to that weariness and indifference which are usually the

consequence when expectations are being constantly awakened by promises which are not followed up by performance.

Φ 15. The other side no doubt at times makes an easy enough matter of having a vast expanse of content. They haul on to their territory a lot of material, that, namely, which is already familiar and arranged in order; and since they are concerned more especially about what is exceptional, strange, and curious, they seem all the more to be in possession of the rest, which knowledge in its own way was finished and done with, as well as to have control over what was unregulated and disorderly. Hence everything appears brought within the compass of the Absolute Idea, which seems thus to be recognised in everything, and to have succeeded in becoming a system in extenso of scientific knowledge. But if we look more closely at this expanded system we find that it has not been reached by one and the same principle taking shape in diverse ways; it is the shapeless repetition of one and the same idea, which is applied in an external fashion to different material, the wearisome reiteration of it keeping up the semblance of diversity. The Idea, which by itself is no doubt the truth, really never gets any farther than just where it began, as long as the development of it consists in nothing else than such a repetition of the same formula. If the knowing subject carries round everywhere the one inert abstract form, taking up in external fashion whatever material comes his way, and dipping it into this element, then this comes about as near to fulfilling what is wanted — viz. a self-origination of the wealth of detail, and a self-determining distinction of shapes and forms — as any chance fancies about the content in question. It is rather a monochrome formalism, which only arrives at distinction in the matter it has to deal with, because this is already prepared and well known.

Φ 16. This monotonousness and abstract universality are maintained to be the Absolute. This formalism insists that to be dissatisfied therewith argues an incapacity to grasp the standpoint of the Absolute, and keep a firm hold on it. If it was once the case that the bare possibility of thinking of something in some other fashion was sufficient to refute a given idea, and the naked possibility, the bare general thought, possessed and passed for the entire substantive value of actual knowledge; similarly we find here all the value ascribed to the general idea in this bare form without concrete realisation; and we see here, too, the style and method of speculative contemplation identified with dissipating and, resolving what is determinate and distinct, or rather with hurling it down, without more ado and without any justification, into the abyss of vacuity. To consider any specific fact as it is in the Absolute, consists here in nothing else than saying about it that, while it is now doubtless spoken of as something specific, yet in the Absolute, in the abstract identity $A = A$, there is no such thing at all, for everything is there all one. To pit this single assertion, that “in the Absolute all is one”, against the organised whole of determinate and complete knowledge, or of knowledge which at least aims at and demands complete development — to give out its Absolute as the night in which, as we say, all cows are black — that is the very naïveté of emptiness of knowledge.

The formalism which has been deprecated and despised by recent philosophy, and which has arisen once more in philosophy itself, will not disappear from science, even though its inadequacy is known and felt, till the knowledge of absolute reality has become quite clear as to what its own true nature consists in. Having in mind that the general idea of what is to be done, if it precedes the attempt to carry it out, facilitates the comprehension of this process, it is worth while to indicate here some rough idea of it, with the hope at the same time that this will give us the opportunity to set aside certain forms whose habitual presence is a hindrance in the way of speculative knowledge.

5. The absolute is subject —

Φ 17. In my view — a view which the developed exposition of the system itself can alone justify everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as Substance but as Subject as well. At the same time we must note that concrete substantiality implicates and involves the universal or the immediacy of knowledge itself, as well as that immediacy which is being, or immediacy qua object for knowledge. If the generation which heard God spoken of as the One Substance was shocked and revolted by such a characterisation of his nature, the reason lay partly in the instinctive feeling that in such a conception self-consciousness was simply submerged, and not preserved. But partly, again, the opposite position, which maintains thinking to be merely subjective thinking, abstract universality as such, is exactly the same bare uniformity, is undifferentiated, unmoved substantiality. And even if, in the third place, thought combines with itself the being of substance, and conceives immediacy or intuition (*Anschauung*) as thinking, it is still a question whether this intellectual intuition does not fall back into that inert, abstract simplicity, and exhibit and expound reality itself in an unreal manner.

6. — and what this is

Φ 18. The living substance, further, is that being which is truly subject, or, what is the same thing, is truly realised and actual (*wirklich*) solely in the process of positing itself, or in mediating with its own self its transitions from one state or position to the opposite. As subject it is pure and simple negativity, and just on that account a process of splitting up what is simple and undifferentiated, a process of duplicating and setting factors in opposition, which [process] in turn is the negation of this indifferent diversity and of the opposition of factors it entails. True reality is merely this process of reinstating self-identity, of reflecting into its own self in and from its other, and is not an original and primal unity as such, not an immediate unity as such. It is the process of its own becoming, the circle which presupposes its end as its purpose, and has its end for its beginning; it becomes concrete and actual only by being carried out, and by the end it involves.

Φ 19. The life of God and divine intelligence, then, can, if we like, be spoken of as love disporting with itself; but this idea falls into edification, and even sinks into insipidity, if it lacks the seriousness, the suffering, the patience, and the labour of the negative. Per se the divine life is no doubt undisturbed identity and oneness with itself, which finds no serious obstacle in otherness and estrangement, and none in the surmounting of this estrangement. But this “per se” is abstract generality, where we abstract from its real nature, which consists in its being objective, to itself, conscious of itself on its own account (*für sich zu sein*); and where consequently we neglect altogether the self-movement which is the formal character of its activity. If the form is declared to correspond to the essence, it is just for that reason a misunderstanding to suppose that knowledge can be content with the “per se”, the essence, but can do without the form, that the absolute principle, or absolute intuition, makes the carrying out of the former, or the development of the latter, needless. Precisely because the form is as necessary to the essence as the essence to itself, absolute reality must not be conceived of and expressed as essence alone, i.e. as immediate substance, or as pure self-intuition of the Divine, but as form also, and with the entire wealth of the developed form. Only then is it grasped and expressed as really actual.

Φ 20. The truth is the whole. The whole, however, is merely the essential nature reaching its completeness through the process of its own development. Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only at the end is it what it is in very truth; and just in that consists its nature, which is to be actual, subject, or self-becoming, self-development. Should it appear contradictory to say that the Absolute has to be conceived essentially as a result, a little consideration will set this appearance of contradiction in its true light. The beginning, the principle, or the Absolute, as at first

or immediately expressed, is merely the universal. If we say “all animals”, that does not pass for zoology; for the same reason we see at once that the words absolute, divine, eternal, and so on do not express what is implied in them; and only mere words like these, in point of fact, express intuition as the immediate. Whatever is more than a word like that, even the mere transition to a proposition, is a form of mediation, contains a process towards another state from which we must return once more. It is this process of mediation, however, that is rejected with horror, as if absolute knowledge were being surrendered when more is made of mediation than merely the assertion that it is nothing absolute, and does not exist in the Absolute.

Φ 21. This horrified rejection of mediation, however, arises as a fact from want of acquaintance with its nature, and with the nature of absolute knowledge itself. For mediating is nothing but self-identity working itself out through an active self-directed process; or, in other words, it is reflection into self, the aspect in which the ego is for itself, objective to itself. It is pure negativity, or, reduced to its utmost abstraction, the process of bare and simple becoming. The ego, or becoming in general, this process of mediating, is, because of its being simple, just immediacy coming to be, and is immediacy itself. We misconceive therefore the nature of reason if we exclude reflection or mediation from ultimate truth., and do not take it to be a positive moment of the Absolute. It is reflection which constitutes truth the final result, and yet at the same time does away with the contrast between result and the process of arriving at it. For this process is likewise simple, and therefore not distinct from the form of truth, which consists in appearing as simple in the result; it is indeed just this restoration and return to simplicity. While the embryo is certainly, in itself, implicitly a human being, it is not so explicitly, it is not by itself a human being (*für sich*); man is explicitly man only in the form of developed and cultivated reason, which has made itself to be what it is implicitly. Its actual reality is first found here. But this result arrived at is itself simple immediacy; for it is self-conscious freedom, which is at one with itself, and has not set aside the opposition it involves and left it there, but has made its account with it and become reconciled to it.

Φ 22. What has been said may also be expressed by saying that reason is purposive activity. The exaltation of so-called nature at the expense of thought misconceived, and more especially the rejection of external purposiveness, have brought the idea of purpose in general into disrepute. All the same, in the sense in which Aristotle, too, characterises nature as purposive activity, purpose is the immediate, the undisturbed, the unmoved which is self-moving; as such it is subject. Its power of moving, taken abstractly, is its existence for itself, or pure negativity. The result is the same as the beginning solely because the beginning is purpose. Stated otherwise, what is actual and concrete is the same as its inner principle or notion simply because the immediate qua purpose contains within it the self or pure actuality. The realised purpose, or concrete actuality, is movement and development unfolded. But this very unrest is the self; and it is one and the same with that immediacy and simplicity characteristic of the beginning just for the reason that it is the result, and has returned upon itself — while this latter again is just the self, and the self is self-referring and self-relating identity and simplicity.

Φ 23. The need to think of the Absolute as subject, has led men to make use of statements like “God is the eternal”, the “moral order of the world”, or “love”, etc. In such propositions the truth is just barely stated to be Subject, but not set forth as the process of reflectively mediating itself with itself. In a proposition of that kind we begin with the word God. By itself this is a meaningless sound, a mere name; the predicate says afterwards what it is, gives it content and meaning: the empty beginning becomes real knowledge only when we thus get to the end of the statement. So far as that goes, why not speak alone of the eternal, of the moral order of the world, etc., or, like the ancients,

of pure conceptions such as being, the one, etc., i.e. of what gives the meaning without adding the meaningless sound at all? But this word just indicates that it is not a being or essence or universal in general that is put forward, but something reflected into self, a subject. Yet at the same time this acceptance of the Absolute as Subject is merely anticipated, not really affirmed. The subject is taken to be a fixed point, and to it as their support the predicates are attached, by a process falling within the individual knowing about it, but not looked upon as belonging to the point of attachment itself; only by such a process, however, could the content be presented as subject. Constituted as it is, this process cannot belong to the subject; but when that point of support is fixed to start with, this process cannot be otherwise constituted, it can only be external. The anticipation that the Absolute is subject is therefore not merely not the realisation of this conception; it even makes realisation impossible. For it makes out the notion to be a static point, while its actual reality is self-movement, self-activity.

Φ 24. Among the many consequences that follow from what has been said, it is of importance to emphasise this, that knowledge is only real and can only be set forth fully in the form of science, in the form of system; and further, that a so-called fundamental proposition or first principle of philosophy, even if it is true, is yet none the less false just because and in so far as it is merely a fundamental proposition, merely a first principle. It is for that reason easily refuted. The refutation consists in bringing out its defective character, and it is defective because it is merely the universal, merely a principle, the beginning. If the refutation is complete and thorough, it is derived and developed from the nature of the principle itself, and not accomplished by bringing in from elsewhere other counter assurances and chance fancies. It would be strictly the development of the principle. and thus the completion of its deficiency, were it not that it misunderstands its own purport by taking account solely of the negative aspect of what it seeks to do, and is not conscious of the positive character of its process and result. The really positive working out of the beginning is at the same time just as much the very reverse, it is a negative attitude towards the principle we start from, negative, that is to say, of its one-sided form, which consists in being primarily immediate, a mere purpose. It may therefore be regarded as a refutation of what constitutes the basis of the system; but more correctly it should be looked at as a demonstration that the basis or principle of the system is in point of fact merely its beginning.

Φ 25. That the truth is only realised in the form of system, that substance is essentially subject, is expressed in the idea which represents the Absolute as Spirit (Geist) — the grandest conception of all, and one which is due to modern times and its religion. Spirit is alone Reality. It is the inner being of the world, that which essentially is, and is per se; it assumes objective, determinate form, and enters into relations with itself — it is externality (otherness), and exists for self; yet, in this determination, and in its otherness, it is still one with itself — it is self-contained and self-complete, in itself and for itself at once. This self-containedness, however, is first something known by us, it is implicit in its nature (an sich); it is Substance spiritual. It has to become self-contained for itself, on its own account; it must be knowledge of spirit, and must be consciousness of itself as spirit. This means, it must be presented to itself as an object, but at the same time straightway annul and transcend this objective form; it must be its own object in which it finds itself reflected. So far as its spiritual content is produced by its own activity, it is only we [the thinkers] who know spirit to be for itself, to be objective to itself; but in so far as spirit knows itself to be for itself, then this self-production, the pure notion, is the sphere and element in which its objectification takes effect, and where it gets its existential form. In this way it is in its existence aware of itself as an object in which its own self is reflected. Mind, which, when thus developed, knows itself to be mind, is science. Science is its realisation, and the kingdom it sets up for itself in its own native element.

7. The element of knowledge

Φ 26. A self having knowledge purely of itself in the absolute antithesis of itself, this pure ether as such, is the very soil where science flourishes, is knowledge in universal form. The beginning of philosophy presupposes or demands from consciousness that it should feel at home in this element. But this element only attains its perfect meaning and acquires transparency through the process of gradually developing it. It is pure spirituality as the universal which assumes the shape of simple immediacy; and this simple element, existing as such, is the field of science, is thinking, which can be only in mind. Because this medium, this immediacy of mind, is the mind's substantial nature in general, it is the transfigured essence, reflection which itself is simple, which is aware of itself as immediacy; it is being, which is reflection into itself. Science on its side requires the individual self-consciousness to have risen into this high ether, in order to be able to live with science, and in science, and really to feel alive there. Conversely the individual has the right to demand that science shall hold the ladder to help him to get at least as far as this position, shall show him that he has in himself this ground to stand on. His right rests on his absolute independence, which he knows he possesses in every type and phase of knowledge; for in every phase, whether recognised by science or not, and whatever be the content, his right as an individual is the absolute and final form, i.e. he is the immediate certainty of self, and thereby is unconditioned being, were this expression preferred. If the position taken up by consciousness, that of knowing about objective things as opposed to itself, and about itself as opposed to them, is held by science to be the very opposite of what science is: if, when in knowing it keeps within itself and never goes beyond itself, science holds this state to be rather the loss of mind altogether — on the other hand the element in which science consists is looked at by consciousness as a remote and distant region, in which consciousness is no longer in possession of itself. Each of these two sides takes the other to be the perversion of the truth. For the naïve consciousness, to give itself up completely and straight away to science is to make an attempt, induced by some unknown influence, all at once to walk on its head. The compulsion to take up this attitude and move about in this position, is a constraining force it is urged to fall in with, without ever being prepared for it and with no apparent necessity for doing so. Let science be per se what it likes, in its relation to naïve immediate self-conscious life it presents the appearance of being a reversal of the latter; or, again, because naïve self-consciousness finds the principle of its reality in the certainty of itself, science bears the character of unreality, since consciousness “for itself” is a state quite outside of science. Science has for that reason to combine that other element of self-certainty with its own, or rather to show that the other element belongs to itself, and how it does so. When devoid of that sort of reality, science is merely the content of mind qua something implicit or potential (*an sich*); purpose, which at the start is no more than something internal; not spirit, but at first merely spiritual substance. This implicit moment (*Ansich*) has to find external expression, and become objective on its own account. This means nothing else than that this moment has to establish self-consciousness as one with itself.

8. The ascent into this is the Phenomenology of Spirit

Φ 27. It is this process by which science in general comes about, this gradual development of knowing, that is set forth here in the Phenomenology of Mind. Knowing, as it is found at the start, mind in its immediate and primitive stage, is without the essential nature of mind, is sense-consciousness. To reach the stage of genuine knowledge, or produce the element where science is found — the pure conception of science itself — a long and laborious journey must be undertaken. This process towards science, as regards the content it will bring to light and the forms it will assume in the course of its progress, will not be what is primarily imagined by leading the unscientific consciousness up to the level of science: it will be something different, too, from establishing and

laying the foundations of science; and anyway something else than the sort of ecstatic enthusiasm which starts straight off with absolute knowledge, as if shot out of a pistol, and makes short work of other points of view simply by explaining that it is to take no notice of them.

Φ 28. The task of conducting the individual mind from its unscientific standpoint to that of science had to be taken in its general sense; we had to contemplate the formative development (Bildung) of the universal [or general] individual, of self-conscious spirit. As to the relation between these two [the particular and general individual], every moment, as it gains concrete form and its own proper shape and appearance, finds a place in the life of the universal individual. The particular individual is incomplete mind, a concrete shape in whose existence, taken as a whole, one determinate characteristic predominates, while the others are found only in blurred outline. In that mind which stands higher than another the lower concrete form of existence has sunk into an obscure moment; what was formerly an objective fact (die Sache selbst) is now only a single trace: its definite shape has been veiled, and become simply a piece of shading. The individual, whose substance is mind at the higher level, passes through these past forms, much in the way that one who takes up a higher science goes through those preparatory forms of knowledge, which he has long made his own, in order to call up their content before him; he brings back the recollection of them without stopping to fix his interest upon them. The particular individual, so far as content is concerned, has also to go through the stages through which the general mind has passed, but as shapes once assumed by mind and now laid aside, as stages of a road which has been worked over and levelled out. Hence it is that, in the case of various kinds of knowledge, we find that what in former days occupied the energies of men of mature mental ability sinks to the level of information, exercises, and even pastimes, for children; and in this educational progress we can see the history of the world's culture delineated in faint outline. This bygone mode of existence has already become an acquired possession of the general mind, which constitutes the substance of the individual, and, by thus appearing externally to him, furnishes his inorganic nature. In this respect culture or development of mind (Bildung), regarded from the side of the individual, consists in his acquiring what lies at his hand ready for him, in making its inorganic nature organic to himself, and taking possession of it for himself. Looked at, however, from the side of universal mind qua general spiritual substance, culture means nothing else than that this substance gives itself its own self-consciousness, brings about its own inherent process and its own reflection into self.

Φ 29. Science lays before us the morphogenetic process of this cultural development in all its detailed fullness and necessity, and at the same time shows it to be something that has already sunk into the mind as a moment of its being and become a possession of mind. The goal to be reached is the mind's insight into what knowing is. Impatience asks for the impossible, wants to reach the goal without the means of getting there. The length of the journey has to be borne with, for every moment is necessary; and again we must halt at every stage, for each is itself a complete individual form, and is fully and finally considered only so far as its determinate character is taken and dealt with as a rounded and concrete whole, or only so far as the whole is looked at in the light of the special and peculiar character which this determination gives it. Because the substance of individual mind, nay, more, because the universal mind at work in the world (Weltgeist), has had the patience to go through these forms in the long stretch of time's extent, and to take upon itself the prodigious labour of the world's history, where it bodied forth in each form the entire content of itself, as each is capable of presenting it; and because by nothing less could that all-pervading mind ever manage to become conscious of what itself is — for that reason, the individual mind, in the nature of the case, cannot expect by less toil to grasp what its own substance contains. All the same, its task has meanwhile been made much lighter, because this has historically been implicitly (an sich)

accomplished, the content is one where reality is already cancelled for spiritual possibilities, where immediacy has been overcome and brought under the control of reflection, the various forms and shapes have been already reduced to their intellectual abbreviations, to determinations of thought (Gedankenbestimmung) pure and simple. Being now a thought, the content is the property of the substance of mind; existence has no more to be changed into the form of what is inherent and implicit (Ansichseins), but only the implicit — no longer merely something primitive, nor lying hidden within existence, but already present as a recollection — into the form of what is explicit, of what is objective to self (Fürsichseins).

9. The transformation of the notion and the familiar into thought —

Φ 30. We have to state more exactly the way this is done. At the point at which we here take up this movement, we are spared, in connection with the whole, the process of cancelling and transcending the stage of mere existence. This process has already taken place. What is still to be done and needs a higher kind of transformation, is to transcend the forms as ideally presented and made familiar to our minds. By that previous negative process, existence, having been withdrawn into the mind's substance, is, in the first instance, transferred to the life of self only in an immediate way. The property the self has thereby acquired, has still the same character of uncomprehended immediacy, of passive indifference, which existence itself had; existence has in this way merely passed into the form of an ideal presentation. At the same time, by so doing, it is something familiar to us, something “well-known”, something which the existent mind has finished and done with, and hence takes no more to do with and no further interest in. While the activity that is done with the existent is itself merely the process of the particular mind, of mind which is not comprehending itself, on the other hand, knowledge is directed against this ideal presentation which has hereby arisen, against this “being-familiar” and “well-known”; it is an action of universal mind, the concern of thought.

Φ 31. What is “familiarily known” is not properly known, just for the reason that it is “familiar”. When engaged in the process of knowing, it is the commonest form of self-deception, and a deception of other people as well, to assume something to be familiar, and give assent to it on that very account. Knowledge of that sort, with all its talk, never gets from the spot, but has no idea that this is the case. Subject and object, and so on, God, nature, understanding, sensibility, etc., are uncritically presupposed as familiar and something valid, and become fixed points from which to start and to which to return. The process of knowing flits between these secure points, and in consequence goes on merely along the surface. Apprehending and proving consist similarly in seeing whether every one finds what is said corresponding to his idea too, whether it is familiar and seems to him so and so or not.

Φ 32. Analysis of an idea, as it used to be carried out, did in fact consist in nothing else than doing away with its character of familiarity. To break up an idea into its ultimate elements means returning upon its moments, which at least do not have the form of the given idea when found, but are the immediate property of the self. Doubtless this analysis only arrives at thoughts which are themselves familiar elements, fixed inert determinations. But what is thus separated, and in a sense is unreal, is itself an essential moment; for just because the concrete fact is self-divided, and turns into unreality, it is something self-moving, self-active. The action of separating the elements is the exercise of the force of Understanding, the most astonishing and greatest of all powers, or rather the absolute power. The circle, which is self-enclosed and at rest, and, qua substance, holds its own moments, is an immediate relation, the immediate, continuous relation of elements with their unity, and hence arouses no sense of wonderment. But that an accident as such, when out loose from its containing circumference, — that what is bound and held by something else and actual only by being

connected with it, — should obtain an existence all its own, gain freedom and independence on its own account — this is the portentous power of the negative; it is the energy of thought, of pure ego. Death, as we may call that unreality, is the most terrible thing, and to keep and hold fast what is dead demands the greatest force of all. Beauty, powerless and helpless, hates understanding, because the latter exacts from it what it cannot perform. But the life of mind is not one that shuns death, and keeps clear of destruction; it endures death and in death maintains its being. It only wins to its truth when it finds itself utterly torn asunder. It is this mighty power, not by being a positive which turns away from the negative, as when we say of anything it is nothing or it is false, and, being then done with it, pass off to something else: on the contrary, mind is this power only by looking the negative in the face, and dwelling with it. This dwelling beside it is the magic power that converts the negative into being. That power is just what we spoke of above as subject, which by giving determinateness a place in its substance, cancels abstract immediacy, i.e. immediacy which merely is, and, by so doing, becomes the true substance, becomes being or immediacy that does not have mediation outside it, but is this mediation itself.

10. — and this into the Concept/Notion

Φ 33. This process of making what is objectively presented a possession of pure self-consciousness, of raising it to the level of universality in general, is merely one aspect of mental development; spiritual evolution is not yet completed. The manner of study in ancient times is distinct from that of the modern world, in that the former consisted in the cultivation and perfecting of the natural mind. Testing life carefully at all points, philosophizing about everything it came across, the former created an experience permeated through and through by universals. In modern times, however, an individual finds the abstract form ready made. In straining to grasp it and make it his own, he rather strives to bring forward the inner meaning alone, without any process of mediation; the production of the universal is abridged, instead of the universal arising out of the manifold detail of concrete existence. Hence nowadays the task before us consists not so much in getting the individual clear of the stage of sensuous immediacy, and making him a substance that thinks and is grasped in terms of thought, but rather the very opposite: it consists in actualising the universal, and giving it spiritual vitality, by the process of breaking down and superseding fixed and determinate thoughts. But it is much more difficult to make fixed and definite thoughts fuse with one another and form a continuous whole than to bring sensuous existence into this state. The reason lies in what was said before. Thought determinations get their substance and the element of their existence from the ego, the power of the negative, or pure reality; while determinations of sense find this in impotent abstract immediacy, in mere being as such. Thoughts become fluent and interfuse, when thinking pure and simple, this inner immediacy, knows itself as a moment, when pure certainty of self abstracts from itself. It does not “abstract” in the sense of getting away from itself and setting itself on one side, but of surrendering the fixed quality of its self-affirmation, and giving up both the fixity of the purely concrete — which is the ego as contrasted with the variety of its content — and the fixity of all those distinctions [the various thought-functions, principles, etc.] which are present in the element of pure thought and share that absoluteness of the ego. In virtue of this process pure thoughts become notions, concepts, and are then what they are in truth, self-moving functions, circles, are what their substance consists in, are spiritual entities.

Φ 34. This movement of the spiritual entities constitutes the nature of scientific procedure in general. Looked at as the concatenation of their content, this movement is the necessitated development and expansion of that content into an organic systematic whole. By this movement, too, the road, which leads to the notion of knowledge, becomes itself likewise a necessary and complete evolving process (Werden). This preparatory stage thus ceases to consist of casual philosophical reflections, referring

to objects here and there, to processes and thoughts of the undeveloped mind as chance may direct; and it does not try to establish the truth by miscellaneous ratiocinations, inferences, and consequences drawn from circumscribed thoughts. The road to science, by the very movement of the notion itself, will compass the entire objective world of conscious life in its rational necessity.

Φ 35. Further, a systematic exposition like this constitutes the first part of science, because the positive existence of mind, qua primary and ultimate, is nothing but the immediate aspect of mind, the beginning; the beginning, but not yet its return to itself. The characteristic feature distinguishing this part of science [Phenomenology] from the others is the element of positive immediate existence. The mention of this distinction leads us to discuss certain established ideas that usually come to notice in this connection.

Φ 36. The mind's immediate existence, conscious life, has two aspects — cognition and objectivity which is opposed to or negative of the subjective function of knowing. Since it is in the medium of consciousness that mind is developed and brings out its various moments, this opposition between the factors of conscious life is found at each stage in the evolution of mind, and all the various moments appear as modes or forms (Gestalten) of consciousness. The scientific statement of the course of this development is a science of the experience through which consciousness passes; the substance and its process are considered as the object of consciousness. Consciousness knows and comprehends nothing but what falls within its experience; for what is found in experience is merely spiritual substance, and, moreover, object of its self. Mind, however, becomes object, for it consists in the process of becoming an other to itself, i.e. an object for its own self, and in transcending this otherness. And experience is called this very process by which the element that is immediate, unexperienced, i.e. abstract — whether it be in the form of sense or of a bare thought — externalises itself, and then comes back to itself from this state of estrangement, and by so doing is at length set forth in its concrete nature and real truth, and becomes too a possession of consciousness.

Φ 37. The dissimilarity which obtains in consciousness between the ego and the substance constituting its object, is their inner distinction, the factor of negativity in general. We may regard it as the defect of both opposites, but it is their very soul, their moving spirit. It was on this account that certain thinkers long ago took the void to be the principle of movement, when they conceived the moving principle to be the negative element, though they had not as yet thought of it as self. While this negative factor appears in the first instance as a dissimilarity, as an inequality, between ego and object, it is just as much the inequality of the substance with itself. What seems to take place outside it, to be an activity directed against it, is its own doing, its own activity; and substance shows that it is in reality subject. When it has brought out this completely, mind has made its existence adequate to and one with its essential nature. Mind is object to itself just as it is, and the abstract element of immediacy, of the separation between knowing and the truth, is overcome. Being is entirely mediated; it is a substantial content, that is likewise directly in the possession of the ego, has the character of self, is notion. With the attainment of this the Phenomenology of Mind concludes. What mind prepares for itself in the course of its phenomenology is the element of true knowledge. In this element the moments of mind are now set out in the form of thought pure and simple, which knows its object to be itself. They no longer involve the opposition between being and knowing; they remain within the undivided simplicity of the knowing function; they are the truth in the form of truth, and their diversity is merely diversity of the content of truth. The process by which they are developed into an organically connected whole is Logic or Speculative Philosophy.

11. In what way the Phenomenology of the Spirit is negative or contains what is false

Φ 38. Now, because the systematic statement of the mind's experience embraces merely its ways of appearing, it may well seem that the advance from that to the science of ultimate truth in the form of truth is merely negative; and we might readily be content to dispense with the negative process as something altogether false, and might ask to be taken straight to the truth at once: why meddle with what is false at all? The point formerly raised, that we should have begun with science at once, may be answered here by considering the character of negativity in general regarded as something false. The usual ideas on this subject particularly obstruct the approach to the truth. The consideration of this point will give us an opportunity to speak about mathematical knowledge, which non-philosophical knowledge looks upon as the ideal which philosophy ought to try to attain, but has so far striven in vain to reach.

Φ 39. Truth and falsehood as commonly understood belong to those sharply defined ideas which claim a completely fixed nature of their own, one standing in solid isolation on this side, the other on that, without any community between them. Against that view it must be pointed out, that truth is not like stamped coin that is issued ready from the mint and so can be taken up and used. Nor, again, is there something false, any more than there is something evil. Evil and falsehood are indeed not so bad as the devil, for in the form of the devil they get the length of being particular subjects; qua false and evil they are merely universals, though they have a nature of their own with reference to one another. Falsity (that is what we are dealing with here) would be otherness, the negative aspect of the substance, which [substance], qua content of knowledge, is truth. But the substance is itself essentially the negative element, partly as involving distinction and determination of content, partly as being a process of distinguishing pure and simple, i.e. as being self and knowledge in general. Doubtless we can know in a way that is false. To know something falsely means that knowledge is not adequate to, is not on equal terms with, its substance. Yet this very dissimilarity is the process of distinction in general, the essential moment in knowing. It is, in fact, out of this active distinction that its harmonious unity arises, and this identity, when arrived at, is truth. But it is not truth in a sense which would involve the rejection of the discordance, the diversity, like dross from pure metal; nor, again, does truth remain detached from diversity, like a finished article from the instrument that shapes it. Difference itself continues to be an immediate element within truth as such, in the form of the principle of negation, in the form of the activity of Self. All the same, we cannot for that reason say that falsehood is a moment or forms even a constituent part of truth. That "in every case of falsity there is something true" is an expression in which they are taken to be like oil and water, which do not mix and are merely united externally. Just in the interest of their real meaning, precisely because we want to designate the aspect or moment of complete otherness, the terms true and false must no longer be used where their otherness has been cancelled and superseded. Just as the expressions "unity of subject and object", of "finite and infinite", of "being and thought", etc., are clumsy when subject and object, etc., are taken to mean what they are outside their unity, and are thus in that unity not meant to be what its very expression conveys; in the same way falsehood is not, qua false, any longer a moment of truth.

Φ 40. Dogmatism as a way of thinking, whether in ordinary knowledge or in the study of philosophy, is nothing else but the view that truth consists in a proposition, which is a fixed and final result, or again which is directly known. To questions like, "When was Caesar born?" "How many feet make a furlongs", etc., a straight answer ought to be given; just as it is absolutely true that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides of a right-angled triangle. But the nature of a so-called truth of that sort is different from the nature of philosophical truth.

12. Historical and mathematical truth

Φ 41. As regards truth in matters of historical fact — to deal briefly with this subject — so far as we consider the purely historical element, it will be readily granted that they have to do with the sphere of particular existence, with a content in its contingent and arbitrary aspects, features that have no necessity. But even bare truths of the kind, say, like those mentioned, are impossible without the activity of self-consciousness. In order to know any one of them, there has to be a good deal of comparison, books must be consulted, or in some way or other inquiry has to be made. Even in a case of direct perception, only when we know it along with the reasons behind it, is it held to be something of real value; although it is merely the naked fact itself that we are, properly speaking, supposed to be concerned about.

Φ 42. As to mathematical truths, we should be still less inclined to consider anyone a geometer who had got Euclid's theorems by heart (auswendig) without knowing the proofs, without, if we may say so by way of contrast, getting them into his head (inwendig). Similarly, if anyone came to know by measuring many right-angled triangles that their sides are related in the way everybody knows, we should regard knowledge so obtained as unsatisfactory. All the same, while proof is essential in the case of mathematical knowledge, it still does not have the significance and nature of being a moment in the result itself; the proof is over when we get the result, and has disappeared. Qua result the theorem is, no doubt, one that is seen to be true. But this eventuality has nothing to do with its content, but only with its relation to the knowing subject. The process of mathematical proof does not belong to the object; it is a function that takes place outside the matter in hand. Thus, the nature of a right-angled triangle does not break itself up into factors in the manner set forth in the mathematical construction which is required to prove the proposition expressing the relation of its parts. The entire process of producing the result is an affair of knowledge which takes its own way of going about it. In philosophical knowledge, too, the way existence, qua existence, comes about (Werden) is different from that whereby the essence or inner nature of the fact comes into being. But philosophical knowledge, for one thing, contains both, while mathematical knowledge sets forth merely the way an existence comes about, i.e. the way the nature of the fact gets to be in the sphere of knowledge as such. For another thing, too, philosophical knowledge unites both these particular movements. The inward rising into being, the process of substance, is an unbroken transition into outwardness, into existence or being for another; and conversely, the coming of existence into being is withdrawal into the inner essence. The movement is the twofold process in which the whole comes to be, and is such that each at the same time posits the other, and each on that account has in it both as its two aspects. Together they make the whole, through their resolving each other, and making themselves into moments of the whole.

Φ 43. In mathematical knowledge the insight required is an external function so far as the subject-matter dealt with is concerned. It follows that the actual fact is thereby altered. The means taken, construction and proof, contain, no doubt, true propositions; but all the same we are bound to say that the content is false. The triangle in the above example is taken to pieces, and its parts made into other figures to which the construction in the triangle gives rise. It is only at the end that we find again reinstated the triangle we are really concerned with; it was lost sight of in the course of the construction, and was present merely in fragments, that belonged to other wholes. Thus we find negativity of content coming in here too, a negativity which would have to be called falsity, just as much as in the case of the movement of the notion where thoughts that are taken to be fixed pass away and disappear.

Φ 44. The real defect of this kind of knowledge, however, affects its process of knowing as much as its material. As to that process, in the first place we do not see any necessity in the construction. The necessity does not arise from the nature of the theorem: it is imposed; and the injunction to draw just these lines, an infinite number of others being equally possible, is blindly acquiesced in, without our knowing anything further, except that, as we fondly believe, this will serve our purpose in producing the proof. Later on this design then comes out too, and is therefore merely external in character, just because it is only after the proof is found that it comes to be known. In the same way, again, the proof takes a direction that begins anywhere we like, without our knowing as yet what relation this beginning has to the result to be brought out. In its course, it takes up certain specific elements and relations and lets others alone, without its being directly obvious what necessity there is in the matter. An external purpose controls this process.

Φ 45. The evidence peculiar to this defective way of knowing — an evidence on the strength of which mathematics plumes itself and proudly struts before philosophy — rests solely on the poverty of its purpose and the defectiveness of its material, and is on that account of a kind that philosophy must scorn to have anything to do with. Its purpose or principle is quantity. This is precisely the relationship that is non-essential, alien to the character of the notion. The process of knowledge goes on, therefore, on the surface, does not affect the concrete fact itself, does not touch its inner nature or lotion, and is hence not a conceptual way of comprehending. The material which provides mathematics with these welcome treasures of truth consists of space and numerical units (*das Eins*). Space is that kind of existence wherein the concrete notion inscribes the diversity it contains, as in an empty, lifeless element in which its differences likewise subsist in passive, lifeless form. What is concretely actual is not something spatial, such as is treated of in mathematics. With unrealities like the things mathematics takes account of, neither concrete sensuous perception nor philosophy has anything to do. In an unreal element of that sort we find, then, only unreal truth, fixed lifeless propositions. We can call a halt at any of them; the next begins of itself *de novo*, without the first having led up to the one that follows, and without any necessary connection having in this way arisen from the nature of the subject-matter itself. So, too — and herein consists the formal character of mathematical evidence because of that principle and the element where it applies, knowledge advances along the lines of bare equality, of abstract identity. For what is lifeless, not being self-moved, does not bring about distinction within its essential nature; does not attain to essential opposition or unlikeness; and hence involves no transition of one opposite element into its other, no qualitative, immanent movement, no self-movement. It is quantity, a form of difference that does not touch the essential nature, which alone mathematics deals with. It abstracts from the fact that it is the notion which separates space into its dimensions, and determines the connections between them and in them. It does not consider, for example, the relation of line to surface, and when it compares the diameter of a circle with its circumference, it runs up against their incommensurability, i.e. a relation in terms of the notion, an infinite element, that escapes mathematical determination.

Φ 46. Immanent or so-called pure mathematics, again, does not oppose time *qua* time to space, as a second subject-matter for consideration. Applied mathematics, no doubt, treats of time, as also of motion, and other concrete things as well; but it picks up from experience synthetic propositions — i.e. statements of their relations, which are determined by their conceptual nature — and merely applies its formulae to those propositions assumed to start with. That the so-called proofs of propositions like that concerning the equilibrium of the lever, the relation of space and time in gravitation, etc., which applied mathematics frequently gives, should be taken and given as proofs, is itself merely a proof of how great the need is for knowledge to have a process of proof, seeing that,

even where proof is not to be had, knowledge yet puts a value on the mere semblance of it, and gets thereby a certain sense of satisfaction. A criticism of those proofs would be as instructive as it would be significant, if the criticism could strip mathematics of this artificial finery, and bring out its limitations, and thence show the necessity for another type of knowledge.

As to time, which, it is to be presumed, would, by way of the counterpart to space, constitute the object-matter of the other division of pure mathematics, this is the notion itself in the form of existence. The principle of quantity, of difference which is not determined by the notion, and the principle of equality, of abstract, lifeless unity, are incapable of dealing with that sheer restlessness of life and its absolute and inherent process of differentiation. It is therefore only in an arrested, paralysed form, only in the form of the quantitative unit, that this essentially negative activity becomes the second object-matter of this way of knowing, which, itself an external operation, degrades what is self-moving to the level of mere matter, in order thus to get an indifferent, external, lifeless content.

13. The nature of philosophical truth and its method

Φ 47. Philosophy, on the contrary, does not deal with a determination that is non-essential, but with a determination so far as it is an essential factor. The abstract or unreal is not its element and content, but the real, what is self-establishing, has life within itself, existence in its very notion. It is the process that creates its own moments in its course, and goes through them all; and the whole of this movement constitutes its positive content and its truth. This movement includes, therefore, within it the negative factor as well, the element which would be named falsity if it could be considered one from which we had to abstract. The element that disappears has rather to be looked at as itself essential, not in the sense of being something fixed, that has to be cut off from truth and allowed to lie outside it, heaven knows where; just as similarly the truth is not to be held to stand on the other side as an immovable lifeless positive element. Appearance is the process of arising into being and passing away again, a process that itself does not arise and does not pass away, but is per se, and constitutes reality and the life-movement of truth. The truth is thus the bacchanalian revel, where not a member is sober; and because every member no sooner becomes detached than it eo ipso collapses straightway, the revel is just as much a state of transparent unbroken calm. Judged by that movement, the particular shapes which mind assumes do not indeed subsist any more than do determinate thoughts or ideas; but they are, all the same, as much positive and necessary moments, as negative and transitory. In the entirety of the movement, taken as an unbroken quiescent whole, that which obtains distinctness in the course of its process and secures specific existence, is preserved in the form of a self-recollection, in which existence is self-knowledge, and self-knowledge, again, is immediate existence.

Φ 48. It might well seem necessary to state at the outset the chief points in connection with the method of this process, the way in which science operates. Its nature, however, is to be found in what has already been said, while the proper systematic exposition of it is the special business of Logic, or rather is Logic itself. For the method is nothing else than the structure of the whole in its pure and essential form. In regard, however, to what has been hitherto currently held on this point, we must be sensible that the system of ideas bearing on the question of philosophical method, belongs also to a stage of mental culture that has now passed away. This may perhaps seem somewhat boastful or revolutionary; and I am far from adopting an attitude of that sort; but it is significant that the scientific régime bequeathed by mathematics — a régime of explanations, divisions, axioms, an array of theorems, with proofs, principles, and the consequences and conclusions drawn from them — all this has already come to be generally considered as at any rate

out of date. Even though there is no clear idea why it is unsuitable, yet little or no use is made of it any longer; and even though it is not condemned outright, it is all the same not in favour. And we must be so far prejudiced in favour of what is excellent to believe that it can turn itself to practical account, and make itself acceptable. But it is not difficult to see that the method of propounding a proposition, producing reasons for it and then refuting its opposite by reasons too, is not the form in which truth can appear. Truth moves itself by its very nature; but the method just mentioned is a form of knowledge external to its material. Hence it is peculiar to mathematics and must be left to mathematics, which, as already indicated, takes for its principle the relation of quantity, a relation alien to the notion, and gets its material from lifeless space, and the equally lifeless numerical unit. Or, again, such a method, adopting a freer style, one involving more of arbitrariness and chance, may have a place in ordinary life, in a conversation, or in supplying matter-of-fact instruction for the satisfaction of curiosity rather than knowledge, very much as a preface does. In every-day life the mind finds its content in different kinds of knowledge, experiences of various sorts, concrete facts of sense, thoughts, too, and principles, and, in general, in whatever lies ready to hand, or passes for a solid stable entity, or real being. The mind follows wherever this leads, sometimes interrupting the connection by an unrestrained caprice in dealing with the content, and takes up the attitude of determining and handling it in quite an external fashion. It runs the content back to some touchstone of certainty or other, even though it be but the feeling of the moment; and conviction is satisfied if it reaches some familiar resting-place.

Φ 49. But when the necessity of the notion banishes from its realm the loose procedure of the “raisonnements” of conversation, as well as the pedantic style of scientific pomposity, its place, as we have already mentioned, must not be taken by the disconnected utterance of presageful surmise and inspiration, and the arbitrary caprice of prophetic utterance; for this does not merely despise that particular form of scientific procedure, but contemns scientific procedure altogether.

14. Against schematizing formalism

Φ 50. Now that the triplicity, adopted in the system of Kant — a method rediscovered, to begin with, by instinctive insight, but left lifeless and uncomprehended — has been raised to its significance as an absolute method, true form is thereby set up in its true content, and the conception of science has come to light. But the use this form has been put to in certain quarters has no right to the name of science. For we see it there reduced to a lifeless schema, to nothing better than a mere shadow, and scientific organization to a synoptic table. This formalism — about which we spoke before in general terms, and whose procedure we wish here to state more fully — thinks it has comprehended and expressed the nature and life of a given form when it proclaims a determination of the schema to be its predicate. The predicate may be subjectivity or objectivity, or again magnetism, electricity, and so on, contraction or expansion, East or West, and such like — a form of predication that can be multiplied indefinitely, because according to this way of working each determination, each mode, can be applied as a form or schematic element in the case of every other, and each will thankfully perform the same service for any other. With a circle of reciprocities of this sort it is impossible to make out what the real fact in question is, or what the one or the other is. We find there sometimes constituents of sense picked up from ordinary intuition, determinate elements which to be sure should mean something else than they say; at other times what is inherently significant, viz. pure determinations of thought-like subject, object, substance, cause, universality, etc. — these are applied just as uncritically and unreflectingly as in every-day life, are used much as people employ the terms strong and weak, expansion and contraction. As a result that type of metaphysics is as unscientific as those ideas of sense.

Φ 51. Instead of the inner activity and self-movement of its own actual life, such a simple determination of direct intuition (*Anschauung*) — which means here sense-knowledge — is predicated in accordance with a superficial analogy, and this external and empty application of the formula is called “construction”. The same thing happens here, however, as in the case of every kind of formalism. A man’s head must be indeed dull if he could not in a quarter of an hour get up the theory that there are enervating, innervating, and indirectly enervating diseases and as many cures, and who could not — since not so long ago instruction of that sort sufficed for the purpose — in as short a time be turned from being a man who works by rule of thumb into a theoretical physician. Formalism in the case of speculative Philosophy of Nature (*Naturphilosophie*) takes the shape of teaching that understanding is electricity, animals are nitrogen, or equivalent to South or North and so on. When it does this, whether as badly as it is here expressed or even concocted with more terminology, such forceful procedure brings and holds together elements to all appearance far removed from one another; the violence done to stable inert sense-elements by connecting them in this way, confers on them merely the semblance of a conceptual unity, and spares itself the trouble of doing what is after all the important thing — expressing the notion itself, the meaning that underlies sense-ideas. All this sort of thing may strike anyone who has no experience with admiration and wonder. He may be awed by the profound genius he thinks it displays, and be delighted at the happy ingenuity of such characterisations, since they fill the place of the abstract notion with something tangible and sensuous, and so make it more pleasing; and he may congratulate himself on feeling an instinctive mental affinity for that glorious way of proceeding. The trick of wisdom of that sort is as quickly acquired as it is easy to practise. Its repetition, when once it is familiar, becomes as boring as the repetition of any bit of sleight-of-hand once we see through it. The instrument for producing this monotonous formalism is no more difficult to handle than the palette of a painter, on which lie only two colours, say red and green, the former for colouring the surface when we want a historical piece, the latter when we want a bit of landscape. It would be difficult to settle which is greater in all this, the agreeable ease with which everything in heaven and earth and under the earth is plastered with that botch of colour, or the conceit that prides itself on the excellence of its means for every conceivable purpose; the one lends support to the other. What results from the use of this method of sticking on to everything in heaven and earth, to every kind of shape and form, natural and spiritual, the pair of determinations from the general schema, and filing everything in this manner, is no less than an “account as clear as noonday” of the organised whole of the universe. It is, that is to say, a synoptic index, like a skeleton with tickets stuck all over it, or like the rows of boxes kept shut and labelled in a grocer’s stall; and is as intelligible as either the one or the other. It has lost hold of the living nature of concrete fact; just as in the former case we have merely dry bones with flesh and blood all gone, and in the latter, there is shut away in those boxes something equally lifeless too. We have already remarked that the final outcome of this style of thinking is, at the same time, to paint entirely in one kind of colour; for it turns with contempt from the distinctions in the schematic table, looks on them as belonging to the activity of mere reflection, and lets them drop out of sight in the void of the Absolute, and there reinstates pure identity, pure formless whiteness. Such uniformity of colouring in the schema with its lifeless determinations, this absolute identity, and the transition from one to the other — these are the one as well as the other, the expression of inert lifeless understanding, and equally an external process of knowledge.

Φ 52. Not only can what is excellent not escape the fate of being thus devitalised and despiritualised and excoriated of seeing its skin paraded about by lifeless knowledge and the conceit such knowledge engenders; but rather, such a fate lets us realise the power the “excellent” exercises over the heart (*Gemüth*), if not over the mind (*Geist*). Moreover, we recognise thereby, too, the

constructive unfolding into universality and determinateness of form which marks the complete attainment of excellence, and which alone makes it possible that this universality can be turned to superficial uses.

Φ 53. Science can become an organic system only by the inherent life of the notion. In science the determinateness, which was taken from the schema and stuck on to existing facts in external fashion, is the self directing inner soul of the concrete content. The movement of what is partly consists in becoming another to itself, and thus developing explicitly into its own immanent content; partly, again, it takes this evolved content, this existence it assumes, back into itself, i.e. makes itself into a moment, and reduces itself to simple determinateness. In the first stage of the process negativity lies in the function of distinguishing and establishing existence; in this latter return into self, negativity consists in the bringing about of determinate simplicity. It is in this way that the content shows its specific characteristic not to be received from something else, and stuck on externally; the content gives itself this determinate characteristic, appoints itself of its own initiative to the rank of a moment and to a place in the whole. The pigeon-holing process of understanding retains for itself the necessity and the notion controlling the content, that which constitutes the concrete element, the actuality and living process of the subject-matter which it labels: or rather, understanding does not retain this for itself, on the contrary, understanding fails to know it. For if it had as much insight as that, it would surely show that it had. It is not even aware of the need for such insight; if it were, it would drop its schematizing process, or at least would no longer be satisfied to know by way of a mere table of contents. A table of contents is all that understanding gives, the content itself it does not furnish at all.

If the specific determination (say even one like magnetism) is one that in itself is concrete or actual, it all the same gets degraded into something lifeless and inert, since it is merely predicated of another existing entity, and not known as an immanent living principle of this existence; nor is there any comprehension of how in this entity its intrinsic and peculiar way of expressing and producing itself takes effect. This, the very kernel of the matter, formal understanding leaves to others to add later on. Instead of making its way into the inherent content of the matter in hand, understanding always takes a survey of the whole, assumes a position above the particular existence about which it is speaking, i.e. it does not see it at all.

True scientific knowledge, on the contrary, demands abandonment to the very life of the object, or, which means the same thing, claims to have before it the inner necessity controlling the object, and to express this only. Steeping itself in its object, it forgets to take that general survey, which is merely a turning of knowledge away from the content back into itself. But being sunk into the material in hand, and following the course that such material takes, true knowledge returns back into itself, yet not before the content in its fullness is taken into itself, is reduced to the simplicity of being a determinate characteristic, drops to the level of being one aspect of an existing entity, and passes over into its higher truth. By this process the whole as such, surveying its entire content, itself emerges out of the wealth wherein its process of reflection seemed to be lost.

Φ 54. In general, in virtue of the principle that, as we expressed it before, substance is implicitly and in itself subject, all content makes its reflection into itself in its own special way. The subsistence or substance of anything that exists is its self-identity; for its want of identity, or oneness with itself, would be its dissolution. But self-identity is pure abstraction; and this is just thinking. When I say Quality, I state simple determinateness; by means of its quality one existence is distinguished from

another or is an “existence”; it is for itself, something on its own account, or subsists with itself because of this simple characteristic. But by doing so it is essentially Thought.

Here we find contained the principle that Being is Thought: here is exercised that insight which usually tends to deviate from the ordinary non-conceptual way of speaking of the identity of thought and being. In virtue, further, of the fact that subsistence on the part of what exists is self-identity or pure abstraction, it is the abstraction of itself from itself, in other words, is itself its own want of identity with itself and dissolution — its own proper inwardness and retraction into self — its process of becoming.

Owing, to the nature which being thus has, and so far as what is has this nature from the point of view of knowledge, this thinking is not an activity which treats the content as something alien and external; it is not reflection into self away from the content. Science is not that kind of Idealism which stepped into the place of the Dogmatism of mere assertion and took the shape of a Dogmatism of mere assurance, the Dogmatism of mere self-certainty. Rather, since knowledge sees the content go back into its own proper inner nature, the activity of knowledge is absorbed in that content — for it (the activity) is the immanent self of the content — and is also at the same time returned into itself, for this activity is pure self-identity in otherness. In this way the knowing activity is the artful device which, while seeming to refrain from activity, looks on and watches how specific determinateness with its concrete life, just where it believes it is working out its own self-preservation and its own private interest, is, in point of fact, doing the very opposite, is doing what brings about its own dissolution and makes itself a moment in the whole.

Φ 55. While, in the foregoing, the significance of Understanding was stated from the point of view of the self-consciousness of substance; by what has been here stated we can see clearly its significance from the point of view of substance qua being. Existence is Quality, self-identical determinateness, or determinate simplicity, determinate thought: this is existence from the point of view of Understanding. On this account it is Nous, as Anaxagoras first thought reality to be. Those who succeeded him grasped the nature of existence in a more determinate way as Eidos or Idea, i.e. as determinate or specific universality, kind or species. The term species or kind seems indeed too ordinary and inadequate for Ideas, for beauty, holiness, eternal, which are the vogue in these days. As a matter of fact, however, idea means neither more nor less than kind, species. But we often find nowadays that a term which exactly designates a conception is despised and rejected, and another preferred to it which hides and obscures the conception, and thus sounds more edifying, even though this is merely due to its being expressed in a foreign language.

Precisely for the reason that existence is designated a species or kind, it is naked simple thought: Nous, simplicity, is substance. It is on account of its simplicity, its self-identity, that it appears steady, fixed, and permanent. But this self-identity is likewise negativity; hence that fixed and stable existence carries the process of its own dissolution within itself. The determinateness appears at first to be so solely through its relation to something else; and its process seems imposed and forced upon it externally. But its having its own otherness within itself, and the fact of its being a self-initiated process — these are implied in the very simplicity of thought itself. For this is self-moving thought, thought that distinguishes, is inherent inwardness, the pure notion. Thus, then, it is the very nature of understanding to be a process; and being a process it is Rationality.

Φ 56. In the nature of existence as thus described — to be its own notion and being in one — consists logical necessity in general. This alone is what is rational, the rhythm of the organic whole: it

is as much knowledge of content as that content is notion and essential nature. In other words, this alone is the sphere and element of speculative thought. The concrete shape of the content is resolved by its' own inherent process into a simple determinate quality. Thereby it is raised to logical form, and its being and essence coincide; its concrete existence is merely this process that takes place, and is eo ipso logical existence. It is therefore needless to apply a formal scheme to the concrete content in an external fashion; the content is in its very nature a transition into a formal shape, which, however, ceases to be formalism of an external kind, because the form is the indwelling process of the concrete content itself.

Φ 57. This nature of scientific method, which consists partly in being inseparable from the content, and partly in determining the rhythm of its movement by its own agency, finds, as we mentioned before, its peculiar systematic expression in speculative philosophy. What is here stated describes in effect the essential principle; but cannot stand for more at this stage than an assertion or assurance by way of anticipation. The truth it contains is not to be found in this exposition, which is in part historical in character. And just for that reason, too, it is not in the least refuted if anyone assures us on the contrary that this is not so, that the process instead is here so and so; if ideas we are all used to, being truths accepted or settled and familiar to everyone, are brought to mind and recounted; or, again, if something new is served up and Guaranteed as coming from the inner sanctuaries of inspired intuition.

Φ 58. Such a view is bound to meet with opposition. The first instinctive reaction on the part of knowing, when offered something that was unfamiliar, is usually to resist it. It seeks by that means to save freedom and native insight, to secure its own inherent authority against alien authority — for that is the way anything apprehended for the first time appears. This attitude is adopted, too, in order to do away with the semblance of a kind of disgrace which would lie in the fact that something has had to be learnt. In like manner, again, when the unfamiliar or unknown is received with applause, the reaction is in the same way an exaltation of freedom and native authority. It consists in something analogous to ultra-revolutionary declamation and action.

15. The demands of the study of philosophy

Hence the important thing for the student of science is to make himself undergo the strenuous toil of conceptual reflection, of thinking in the form of the notion. This demands concentrated attention on the notion as such, on simple and ultimate determinations like being-in-itself, being-for-itself, self-identity, and so on; for these are elemental, pure, self-determined functions of a kind we might call souls, were it not that their conceptual nature denotes something higher than that term contains. The interruption by conceptual thought of the habit of always thinking in figurative ideas (Vorstellungen) is as annoying and troublesome to this way of thinking as to that process of formal intelligence which in its reasoning rambles about with no real thoughts to reason with. The former, the habit, may be called materialised thinking, a fortuitous mental state, one that is absorbed in what is material, and hence finds it very distasteful at once to lift its self clear of this matter and be with itself alone. The latter, the process of *raisonnement*, is, on the other hand, detachment from all content, and conceited superiority to it. What is wanted here is the effort and struggle to give up this kind of freedom, and instead of being a merely arbitrary principle directing the content anyhow, this freedom should sink into and pervade the content, should let it be directed and controlled by its own proper nature, i.e. by the self as its own self. and should observe this process taking place. We must abstain from interrupting the immanent rhythm of the movement of conceptual thought; we must refrain from arbitrarily interfering with it, and introducing ideas and reflections that have been

obtained elsewhere. Restraint of this sort is itself an essential condition of attending to and getting at the real nature of the notion.

16. Argumentative thinking in its negative attitude —

Φ 59. There are two aspects in the case of that ratiocinative procedure which mark its contrast from conceptual thinking and call for further notice. Raisonement, in the first place, adopts a negative attitude towards the content apprehended; knows how to refute it and reduce it to nothingness. To see what the content is not is merely a negative process; it is a dead halt, which does not of itself go beyond itself, and proceed to a new content; it has to get hold of something else from somewhere or other in order to have once more a content. It is reflection upon and into the empty ego, the vanity of its own knowledge. Conceit of this kind brings out not only that this content is vain and empty, but also that to see this is itself fatuity too: for it is negation with no perception of the positive element within it. In that this reflection does not even have its own negativity as its content, it is not inside actual fact at all, but for ever away outside it. On that account it imagines that by asserting mere emptiness it is going much farther than insight that embraces and reveals a wealth of content. On the other hand, in the case of conceptual thinking, as was above indicated, the negative aspect falls within the content itself, and is the positive substance of that content, as well as being its inherent character and moving principle as by being the entirety of what these are. Looked at as a result, it is determinate specific negation, the negative which is the outcome of this process, and consequently is a positive content as well.

17. — in its positive attitude; its subject

Φ 60. In view of the fact that ratiocinative thinking has a content, whether of images or thoughts or a mixture of both, there is another side to its process which makes conceptual comprehension difficult for it. The peculiar nature of this aspect is closely connected with the essential meaning of the idea above described, in fact, expresses the idea in the way this appears as the process of thinking apprehension. For just as ratiocinative thinking in its negative reference, which we have been describing, is nothing but the self into which the content returns; in the same way, on the other hand, in its positive cognitive process the self is an ideally presented subject to which the content is related as an accident and predicate. This subject constitutes the basis to which the content is attached and on which the process moves to and fro. Conceptual thinking goes on in quite a different way. Since the concept or notion is the very self of the object, manifesting itself as the development of the object, it is not a quiescent subject, passively supporting accidents: it is a self-determining active concept which takes up its determinations and makes them its own. In the course of this process that inert passive subject really disappears; it enters into the different constituents and pervades the content; instead of remaining in inert antithesis to determinateness of content, it constitutes, in fact, that very specificity, i.e. the content as differentiated along with the process of bringing this about. Thus the solid basis, which ratiocination found in an inert subject, is shaken to its foundations, and the only object is this very movement of the subject. The subject supplying the concrete filling to its own content ceases to be something transcending this content, and cannot have further predicates or accidents. Conversely, again, the scattered diversity of the content is brought under the control of the self, and so bound together; the content is not a universal that can be detached from the subject, and adapted to several indifferently. Consequently the content is in truth no longer predicate of the subject; it is the very substance, is the inmost reality, and the very principle of what is being considered. Ideational thinking (*vorstellen*), since its nature consists in dealing with accidents or predicates, and in exercising the right to transcend them because they are nothing more than predicates and accidents — this way of thinking is checked in its course, since that which has in the proposition the form of a predicate is itself the substance of the statement. It is

met by a counter-thrust, as we may say. Starting from the subject, as if this were a permanent base on which to proceed, it discovers, by the predicate being in reality the substance, that the subject has passed into the predicate, and has thereby ceased to be subject: and since in this way what seems to be predicate has become the entire mass of the content, whole and complete, thinking cannot wander and ramble about at will, but is restrained and controlled by this weight of content.

Usually the subject is first set down as the fixed and objective self; from this fixed position the necessary process passes on to the multiplicity of determinations or predicates. Here the knowing ego takes the place of that subject and is the function of knitting or combining the predicates one with another, and is the subject holding them fast. But since the former subject enters into the determinate constituents themselves, and is their very life, the subject in the second case — viz. the knowing subject — finds that the former, which it is supposed to be done with and which it wants to transcend, in order to return into itself, — is still there in the predicate: and instead of being able to be the determining agency in the process of resolving the predicate — reflectively deciding whether this or that predicate should be attached to the former subject — it has really to deal with the self of the content, is not allowed to be something on its own account (*für sich*), but has to exist along with this content.

Φ 61. What has been said can be expressed in a formal manner by saying that the nature of judgment or the proposition in general, which involves the distinction of subject and predicate, is subverted and destroyed by the speculative judgment; and the identical proposition, which the former becomes [by uniting subject and predicate], implies the rejection and repudiation of the above relation between subject and predicate. This conflict between the form of a proposition in general and the unity of the notion which destroys that form, is similar to what we find between metre and accent in the case of rhythm. Rhythm is the result of what hovers between and unites both. So in the case of the speculative or philosophical judgment; the identity of subject and predicate is not intended to destroy their distinction, as expressed in propositional form; their unity is to arise as a harmony of the elements. The form of the judgment is the way the specific sense appears, or is made manifest, the accent which differentiates the meaning it contains: that the predicate expresses the substance, and the subject itself falls within the universal, is however the unity wherein that accent dies away.

Φ 62. To explain what has been said by examples let us take the proposition God is Being. The predicate is “being”: it has substantive significance, and thus absorbs the meaning of the subject within it. Being is meant to be here not predicate but the essential nature. Thereby, God seems to cease to be what he was when the proposition was put forward, viz. a fixed subject. Thinking [i.e. ordinary reflection], instead of getting any farther with the transition from subject to predicate, in reality finds its activity checked through the loss of the subject, and it is thrown back on the thought of the subject because it misses this subject. Or again, since the predicate has itself been pronounced to be a subject, to be the being, to be the essential reality, which exhausts the nature of the subject, thinking finds the subject directly present in the predicate too: and now, instead of having, in the predicate, gone into itself, and preserved the freedom characteristic of ratiocination, it is absorbed in the content all the while, or, at any rate is required to be so.

Similarly when it is said: “the real is the universal”, the real, qua subject, passes away in its predicate. The universal is not only meant to have the significance of a predicate, as if the proposition stated that the real is universal: the universal is meant to express the essential nature of the real. Thinking therefore loses that fixed objective basis which it had in the subject, just as much as in the predicate

it is thrown back on the subject, and therein returns not into itself but into the subject underlying the content.

Φ 63. This unaccustomed restraint imposed upon thought is for the most part the cause of the complaints concerning the unintelligibility of philosophical writings, when otherwise the individual has in him the requisite mental cultivation for understanding them. In what has been said we see the reason for the specific charge often made against them, that a good deal has to be read repeatedly before it can be understood — an accusation which is meant to convey something improper in the extreme, and one which if granted to be sound admits of no further reply. It is obvious from the above what is the state of the case here. The philosophical proposition, being a proposition, calls up the accepted view of the usual relation of subject and predicate, and suggests the idea of the customary procedure which takes place in knowledge. Its philosophical content destroys this way of proceeding and the ordinary view taken of this process. The common view discovers that the statement is intended in another sense than it is thinking of, and this correction of its opinion compels knowledge to recur to the proposition and take it now in some other sense.

Φ 64. There is a difficulty which might well be avoided. It consists in mixing up the methods of procedure followed by speculation and ratiocination, when what is said of the subject has at one time the significance of its conceptual principle, and at another time the meaning of its predicate or accidental quality. The one mode of thinking invalidates the other; and only that philosophical exposition can manage to become plastic in character which resolutely sets aside and has nothing to do with the ordinary way of relating the parts of a proposition.

Φ 65. As a matter of fact, non-speculative thinking has its rights too, which are justifiable, but are disregarded in the speculative way of stating a proposition. Abolishing the form of the proposition must not take place only in an immediate manner, through the mere content of the proposition. On the contrary, we must give explicit expression to this cancelling process; it must be not only that internal restraining and confining of thought within its own substance; this turning of the conception back into itself has to be expressly brought out and stated. This process, which constitutes what formerly had to be accomplished by proof, is the internal dialectical movement of the proposition itself. This alone is the concrete speculative element, and only the explicit expression of this is a speculative systematic exposition. Qua proposition, the speculative aspect is merely the internal restriction of thought within its own substance where the return of the essential principle into itself is not yet brought out. Hence we often find philosophical expositions referring us to the inner intuition, and thus dispensing with the systematic statement of the dialectical movement of the proposition, which is what we wanted all the while. The proposition ought to express what the truth is: in its essential nature the truth is subject: being so, it is merely the dialectical movement, this self-producing course of activity, maintaining, its advance by returning back into itself. In the case of knowledge in other spheres this aspect of expressly stating the internal nature of the content is constituted by proof. When dialectic, however, has been separated from proof, the idea of philosophical demonstration as a matter of fact has vanished altogether.

Φ 66. On this point it may be mentioned that the dialectical process likewise consists of parts or elements which are propositions. The difficulty indicated seems therefore to recur continually, and seems to be a difficulty inherent in the nature of the case. This is like what happens in the ordinary process of proving anything; the grounds it makes use of need themselves to be based on other grounds again, and so on ad infinitum. This manner of furnishing grounds and conditions, however, concerns that type of proof from which the dialectical movement is distinct and hence belongs to

the process of external knowledge. As to what this movement is, its element is the bare concept; this furnishes a content which is through and through subject impliciter and per se. There is to be found, therefore, no sort of content standing in a relation, as it were, to an underlying subject, and getting its significance by being attached to this as a predicate. The proposition as it appears is a mere empty form.

Apart from the sensuously apprehended or ideally presented (vorgestellten) self, it is in the main the mere name qua name which denotes the subject pure and simple, the empty unit without any conceptual character. For this reason it would e.g. be expedient to avoid the name "God", because this word is not in its primary use a conception as well, but the special name of an underlying subject, its fixed resting-place; while, on the other hand, being or the one, singleness, subject, etc., themselves directly indicate conceptions. Furthermore, if speculative truths are stated about that subject [God], even then their content is devoid of the immanent notion, because that content is merely present in the form of a passive subject, and owing to this the speculative truths easily take on the character of mere edification. From this side, too, the obstacle, arising from the habit of putting the speculative predicate in the form of a proposition, instead of taking it as an inherent essential conception, is capable of being made greater or less by the mere way philosophical truths are put forward. Philosophical exposition, faithfully following its insight into the nature of speculative truth, must retain the dialectical form, and exclude everything which is not grasped conceptually and is conception.

Φ 67. Just as much as in the procedure of ratiocination, the study of philosophy finds obstruction, too, in the unreasoning conceit that builds itself on well-established truths, which the possessor considers he has no need to return upon and reconsider, but rather takes to be fundamental, and thinks he can by means thereof propound as well as decide and pass sentence. In this regard, it is especially needful to make once again a serious business of philosophy. In all spheres of science, art, skill, and handicraft it is never doubted that, in order to master them, a considerable amount of trouble must be spent in learning and in being trained. As regards philosophy, on the contrary, there seems still an assumption prevalent that, though every one with eyes and fingers is not on that account in a position to make shoes if he only has leather and a last, yet everybody understands how to philosophize straight away, and pass judgment on philosophy, simply because he possesses the criterion for doing so in his natural reason — as if he did not in the same way possess the standard for shoemaking too in his own foot. It seems as if the possession of philosophy lay just in the want of knowledge and study, as if philosophy left off where the latter began. It is commonly held to be a formal kind of knowledge devoid of all substantial content. There is a general failure to perceive that, in the case of any knowledge, and any science, what is taken for truth, even as regards content, can only deserve the name of "truth" when philosophy has had a hand in its production. Let the other sciences try as much as they like to get along by ratiocination or raisonnement without philosophy, they are unable to keep alive without it, or to have any spiritual significance and truth in them.

18. Natural philosophizing as healthy common sense and as genius

Φ 68. As regards philosophy in its proper and genuine sense, we find put forward without any hesitation, as an entirely sufficient equivalent for the long course of mental discipline — for that profound and fruitful process through which the human spirit attains to knowledge — the direct revelation of the divine and the healthy common sense of mankind, unconcerned with and undisciplined by any other knowledge or by proper philosophical reflection. These are held to be a good substitute for real philosophy, much in the way that chicory is lauded as a substitute for coffee. It is not a very pleasing spectacle to observe uncultivated ignorance and crudity of mind, with

neither form nor taste, without the capacity to concentrate its thoughts on an abstract proposition, still less on a connected statement of such propositions, confidently proclaiming itself to be intellectual freedom and toleration, and even the inspiration of genius. This last used once upon a time, as everyone knows, to be all the vogue in the case of poetry, as it is now in philosophy. Instead of poetry, however, the efforts of this form of inspiration, when it had any sense at all, resulted in the production of trivial prose, or, if it went beyond that, it produced raving harangues. In the same way here in the case of philosophy; philosophizing by the light of nature, which thinks itself too good for conceptual thinking, and, because of the want of it, takes itself to have direct intuitive ideas and poetical thoughts, — such philosophizing trades in arbitrary combinations of an imagination merely disorganised through thinking — fictitious creations that are neither fish nor flesh, neither poetry nor philosophy.

Φ 69. On the other hand again, when instinctive philosophy follows the more secure course prescribed by healthy common sense, it treats us to a rhetorical mélange of commonplace truths. When it is charged with the triviality of what it offers, it assures us, in reply, that the fullness and richness of its meaning lie deep down in its own heart, and that others must feel this too, since with such phrases as the “heart’s natural innocence”, “purity of conscience”, and so on, it supposes it has expressed things that are ultimate and final, to which no one can take exception, and about which nothing further can be required. But the very problem in hand was just that the best must not be left behind hidden away in secret, but be brought out of the depths and set forth in the light of day. It could quite well from the start have spared itself the trouble of bringing forward ultimate and final truths of that sort; they were long since to be found, say, in the Catechism, in popular proverbs, etc. It is an easy matter to grasp such truths in their indefinite and crooked inaccurate form, and in many cases to point out that the mind convinced of them is conscious of the very opposite truths. When it struggles to get itself out of the mental embarrassment thereby produced, it will tumble into further confusion, and possibly burst out with the assertion that in short and in fine the matter is settled, the truth is so and so, and anything else is mere “sophistry” — a password used by plain common sense against cultivated critical reason, like the phrase “visionary dreaming”, by which those ignorant of philosophy sum up its character once for all. Since the man of common sense appeals to his feeling, to an oracle within his breast, he is done with any one who does not agree. He has just to explain that he has no more to say to any one who does not find and feel the same as himself. In other words, he tramples the roots of humanity underfoot. For the nature of humanity is to impel men to agree with one another, and its very existence lies simply in the explicit realisation of a community of conscious life. What is anti-human, the condition of mere animals, consists in keeping within the sphere of feeling pure and simple, and in being able to communicate only by way of feeling-states.

Φ 70. When a man asks for a royal road to science, no more convenient and comfortable way can be mentioned to him than to put his trust in “healthy common sense”. And for the rest, to keep abreast of the times and advance with philosophy, let him read reviews of philosophical works, and even go the length of reading the prefaces and first paragraphs of the works themselves; for the latter give the general principles on which everything turns, while the reviews along with the historical notice provide over and above the critical judgment and appreciation, which, being a judgment passed on the work, goes farther than the work that is judged. This common way a man can take in his dressing-gown. But spiritual elation in the eternal, the sacred, the infinite, moves along the highway of truth in the robes of the high priests road that, from the first, is itself immediate being in its innermost, the inspiration of profound and original ideas and flashes of elevated thought. All the same, those depths do not yet reveal the well-spring of inner reality; nor, again, are these sky-rockets the empyrean. True thoughts and scientific insight can only be won by the labour of the notion.

Conceptions alone can produce universality in the knowing process. This universality is critically developed and completely finished knowledge. It is not the common indefiniteness and inadequacy of ordinary intelligence. Nor, again, is it that extraordinary kind of universality where the powers and potencies of reason are spoiled and ruined by genius through indolence and self-conceit. It is truth which has successfully reached its own inherent native form. It is this universality which is capable of being the property of every self-conscious reason.

19. Conclusion: the author's relation to the public

Φ 71. Since I have taken the self-development of the notion to be the medium wherein science really exists, and since in those respects to which I have drawn attention, as well as in others, current ideas about the nature of truth and the shape it assumes deviate from my view, and indeed are quite opposed to my position, the consideration of this divergence of view does not seem to promise well for a favourable reception of an attempt to expound the system of science in this sense. In the meantime, I may call to mind that while e.g. the supreme merit of Plato's philosophy has sometimes been held to consist in his myths which are scientifically valueless, there have also been times, spoken of even as times of mere sentimental enthusiasm, when the Aristotelian philosophy has been respected on account of its speculative depth of insight, and when the Parmenides of Plato — perhaps the greatest literary product of ancient dialectic — has been taken to be the positive expression of the divine life, the unveiling and disclosing of its inmost truth. I may reflect, too, that notwithstanding much cloudy obscurity which was the product of ecstasy, this misunderstood ecstasy was in point of fact meant to be nothing else than the activity of the pure notion; furthermore, that what is best in the philosophy of our time takes its value to lie in its scientific character; and that, even though others take a different view, it is only in virtue of its scientific character that recent philosophy really gains validity and acceptance. Thus, then, I may hope too that this attempt to justify the claim of science to be a conceptual process, and systematically to develop and present science in this its own peculiar medium, will manage to make a way for itself by the inherent truth of the result accomplished. We may rest assured that it is the nature of truth to force its way to recognition when the time comes, and that it only appears when its time has come, and hence never appears too soon, and never finds a public that is not ripe to receive it. And, further, we may be sure that the individual thinker requires this result to take place, in order to give him confidence in regard to what is no more as yet than a matter for himself singly and alone, and in order to find his assurance, which in the first instance merely belongs to a particular individual, realised as something universal. In this connection, however, it is very often necessary to distinguish the public from those who take upon themselves to be its representatives and spokesmen. The public takes up an attitude in many respects quite different from the latter, indeed, even opposed to them. Whereas the public good-naturedly and generously will rather take the blame upon itself when a philosophical work is not quite acceptable or intelligible to it, these "representatives", on the contrary, convinced of their own competence, put all the blame on the authors. The influence of the work on the public is more silent than the action of those "representatives", who are like the dead burying their dead. While the general level of insight at the present time is in the main more highly cultivated, its curiosity more quickened and alert, and its judgment more swiftly made up and pronounced, so that the feet of those who will carry you out are already at the door: at the same time we have often to distinguish from all this the slower and more gradual effect which rectifies the direction of attention caught and compelled by imposing assurances, corrects, too, contemptuous censure, and after a little provides a contemporary audience for one part, while another after a temporary vogue finds no audience with posterity any longer.

Φ 72. For the rest, at a time when the universal nature of spiritual life has become so very much emphasised and strengthened, and the mere individual aspect has become, as it should be, correspondingly a matter of indifference, when, too, that universal aspect holds, by the entire range of its substance, the full measure of the wealth it has built up, and lays claim to it all, the share in the total work of mind that falls to the activity of any particular individual can only be very small. Because this is so, the individual must all the more forget himself, as in fact the very nature of science implies and requires that he should; and he must, moreover, become and do what he can. But all the less must be demanded of him, just as he can expect the less from himself, and may ask the less for himself.