

GEORG WILHELM
FRIEDRICH HEGEL
The Phenomenology of Spirit

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instead the doubled reflection, the doubling of self-consciousness. There is an object for consciousness which in itself posits its otherness, or which posits the difference as a nullity and is therein a self-sufficient object. To be sure, the differentiated, only *living* shape also sublates its self-sufficiency in the process of life itself, but, along with its differences, it ceases to be what it is. However, the object of self-consciousness is just as self-sufficient in this negativity of itself, and it is thereby for itself the genus, the universal fluidity in the ownness of its isolation. It is living self-consciousness.

177. A *self-consciousness* is *for a self-consciousness*. Only thereby is there in fact self-consciousness, for it is only therein that the unity of itself in its otherness comes to be for it. The *I*, which is the object of its concept, is in fact not an *object*. But the object of desire is only *self-sufficient*, for it is the universal, inerasable substance, the fluid self-equal essence. While a self-consciousness is the object, the object is just as well an *I* as it is an object. — The concept of *spirit* is thereby present and available for us. What will later come to be for consciousness will be the experience of what spirit is, this absolute substance which constitutes the unity of its oppositions in their complete freedom and self-sufficiency, namely, in the oppositions of the various self-consciousnesses existing for themselves: The *I* that is *we* and the *we* that is *I*. Consciousness has its turning point in self-consciousness, as the concept of spirit, where, leaving behind the colorful semblance of the this-worldly sensuous, and leaving behind the empty night of the super-sensible other-worldly beyond, it steps into the spiritual daylight of the present.

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A. *Self-Sufficiency and Non-Self-Sufficiency of Self-Consciousness; Mastery and Servitude*

178. Self-consciousness is *in* and *for itself* while and as a result of its being in and for itself for an other; i.e., it is only as a recognized being.⁶ The concept of its unity in its doubling, of infinity realizing itself in self-consciousness, is that of a multi-sided and multi-meaning intertwining, such that, on the one hand, the moments within this intertwining must be strictly kept apart from each other, and on the other hand, they must also be taken and cognized at the same time as not distinguished, or they must be always taken and cognized in their opposed meanings. This twofold sense of what is distinguished lies in the essence of self-consciousness, which is to be infinitely or immediately the opposite of the determinateness in which it

⁶ ein Anerkanntes.

is posited. The elaboration of the concept of this spiritual unity in its doubling presents us with the movement of *recognizing*.

179. For self-consciousness, there is another self-consciousness; self-consciousness is *outside of itself*.⁷ This has a twofold meaning. *First*, it has lost itself, for it is to be found as an *other* essence. *Second*, it has thereby sublated that other, for it also does not see the other as the essence but rather sees *itself* in the *other*.

180. It must sublate *its otherness*. This is the sublation of that first two-sided ambiguity and is for that reason itself a second two-sided ambiguity. *First*, it must set out to sublate the *other* self-sufficient essence in order as a result to become certain of *itself* as the essence through having sublated the other. *Second*, it thereby sets out to sublate *itself*, for this other is itself.

181. This double-edged sense of the sublating of its double-edged sense of otherness is likewise a double-edged sense of a return *into itself*. This is so *in the first place* because it gets itself back through sublation, for it comes to be in equality with itself again through the sublation of *its otherness*. However, *in the second place*, it likewise gives the other self-consciousness back to itself, since it existed for itself in the other, but it sublates *its being* in the other, and it thus sets the other free again.

182. In this way, this movement of self-consciousness in its relation to another self-consciousness has been represented as *the doing of one self-consciousness*, but this doing on the part of one self-consciousness has itself the twofold significance of being *its own doing just* as well as it is the *other's* doing, for the other is just as self-sufficient. The other is just as enclosed within himself, and there is nothing within him which is not there through himself. The first does not have the object before it in the way that the object only is initially for desire. Instead, it has an object existing for itself self-sufficiently. For that reason, it can do nothing on its own about that object if that object does not do in itself what the first self-consciousness does in it. The movement is thus straightforwardly the doubled movement of both self-consciousnesses. Each sees *the other* do the same as *he* does; each himself does what he demands of the other and for that reason also does what he does *only* insofar as the other does the same. A one-sided doing would be useless because what is supposed to happen can only be brought about through both of them bringing it about.

⁷ es ist *außer sich* gekommen. The term *außer sich* usually means “to be beside oneself” (to be swept up in rage, or hilarity, and so on); but Hegel also clearly wants to play on the literal meaning of the term, so that he is also saying “It has come *outside of itself*,” or self-consciousness exists as an “external object” to itself. The sentence also has the overtones of saying that “self-consciousness has come to be *anxious* about itself.”

183. The doing thus carries not only a double-edged sense inasmuch as it is a doing *directed as much towards itself* as it is *directed towards the other*, but also inasmuch as it is just as much inseparably *the doing of one* as well as *the doing of the other*.

184. In this movement we see the process repeat itself which had been exhibited as the play of forces in consciousness. What existed for us in that process is here for the extremes themselves. The mediating middle is self-consciousness, which disintegrates into the extremes, and each extreme term is this exchange of its own determinateness and the absolute transition into what is its opposite. However, as consciousness, it does indeed get *outside of itself*,⁸ but in its being-outside-of-itself, it is at the same time kept back within itself. It is *for itself*, and its self-externality is *for it*. It is for consciousness that it immediately *is* and *is not* an other consciousness. Likewise, this other is only for itself as it sublates itself as existing-for-itself, and it is for itself only in the being-for-itself of the other. Each is the mediating middle to the other, through which each mediates itself with itself and integrates itself with itself. Each is, to itself, and in that of the other, an essence immediately existing for itself which at the same time is for itself in that way only through this mediation. They *recognize* themselves as *mutually recognizing each other*.

185. This pure concept of recognition, the pure concept of the doubling of self-consciousness in its unity, is itself now up for examination according to how its process appears for self-consciousness. It will first of all exhibit the aspect of inequality between both of them, or the mediating middle breaking apart into the extremes, which are, as extremes, opposed to each other, and of which one is only recognized while the other only recognizes.

186. Self-consciousness is at first simple being-for-itself, and it is self-equal through the exclusion *from itself* of all that is *other*, to itself, its essence and absolute object is the *I*, and within this *immediacy*, or within this *being* of its being-for-itself, it is *a singular being*.⁹ What is other for it, is, as an inessential object, designated by the character of the negative. However, the other is also a self-consciousness, and thus what comes on the scene here is an individual¹⁰ confronting an individual. In the way that they *immediately* make their appearance, they are for each other in the way ordinary objects do. They are *self-sufficient shapes* absorbed within the *being of life* – for

⁸ *außer sich*. The sentence could be much more loosely rendered: “it becomes anxious in its externality to itself.”

⁹ *Einzelnes*. This could be rendered more simply, but perhaps misleadingly, as “an individual.” Hegel does speak of *Individualität* and *Individuum* in other places.

¹⁰ *Individuum*.

the existing object has here been determined to be life – which *for each other* have not yet achieved the movement of absolute abstraction, they have not yet achieved the destruction of all immediate being and of being themselves only the purely negative being of self-equal consciousness, or they have not yet presented themselves to each other as pure *being-for-itself*, which is to say, as *self-consciousness*. Each is, to be sure, certain of itself but not of the other, and for that reason its own certainty of itself is still without truth, for its truth would be only if its own *being-for-itself* were, to itself, to have exhibited itself as a self-sufficient object, or, what is the same thing, that the object would have turned out to be this pure certainty of itself. However, according to the concept of recognition, this is not possible without the other being for it in the way it is for the other, without each in itself achieving this pure abstraction of *being-for-itself*, without each achieving this through its own activity and again through the activity of the other.

187. However, the *exhibition* of itself as the pure abstraction of self-consciousness consists in showing itself to be the pure negation of its objective mode, or in showing that it is fettered to no determinate *existence*, that it is not at all bound to the universal singularity of existence, that it is not shackled to life. This display is the *doubled* act, namely, both what the other does and what is done through oneself. To the extent that it is what is done *by the other*, each thus aims at the death of the other. However, the second aspect is also therein present, namely, *what is done through oneself*, for the former involves putting one's own life on the line. The relation of both self-consciousnesses is thus determined in such a way that it is through a life and death struggle that each *proves its worth* to itself, and that both *prove their worth* to each other.¹¹ – They must engage in this struggle, for each must elevate its self-certainty of *existing for itself* to truth, both in the other and in itself. And it is solely by staking one's life that freedom is proven to be the essence, namely, that as a result the essence for self-consciousness is proven to be not *being*, not the *immediate* way self-consciousness emerges, not its being absorbed within the expanse of life – but rather, it is that there is nothing present in it itself which could not be a vanishing moment for it, that self-consciousness is only pure *being-for-itself*. The individual who has not risked his life may admittedly be recognized as a *person*,¹² but he has not achieved the truth of being recognized as a self-sufficient self-consciousness. As each risks his own life, each must likewise aim at the death of the other,

¹¹ sich selbst und einander . . . *bewähren*.

¹² *Person*.

for that other no longer counts to him as himself. To himself, his essence exhibits itself as that of an other; he is external to himself,¹³ and he must sublate that being-external-to-himself. The other is a diversely entangled and existing consciousness; he must intuit his otherness as pure being-for-itself, or as absolute negation.

188. However, this trial by death likewise sublates the truth which was supposed to emerge from it, and, by doing so, completely sublates the certainty of itself. For just as life is the *natural* location of consciousness, self-sufficiency without absolute negativity, death is the *natural* negation of this same consciousness, negation without self-sufficiency, which thus endures without the significance of the recognition which was demanded. Through death, the certainty has been established that each has risked his life, and that each has cast a disdainful eye towards death both in himself and in the other. But this is not the case for those who passed the test in this struggle. They sublate their consciousness, which was posited in this alien essentiality which is natural existence, or they elevate themselves and, as *extremes* wanting to be for themselves, are themselves sublated. The essential moment thereby vanishes from the fluctuating interplay, namely, that of disintegrating into extremes of opposed determinatenesses, and the mediating middle collapses into a dead unity, which breaks down into dead extremes which are merely existents and not opposed. Neither gives back the other to itself nor does it receive itself from the other through consciousness. Rather, they only indifferently leave each other free-standing, like things. Their deed is abstract negation, not the negation of consciousness, which *sublates* so that it *preserves* and *maintains* what has been sublated and which thereby survives its having become sublated.

189. In this experience self-consciousness learns that life is as essential to it as is pure self-consciousness. In immediate self-consciousness, the simple I is the absolute object. However, for us, or in itself, this object is absolute mediation and has stably existing self-sufficiency as its essential moment. The dissolution of that simple unity is the result of the first experience. It is through that experience that a pure self-consciousness is posited, and a consciousness is posited which is not purely for itself but for an other, which is to say, is posited as an *existing* consciousness, or consciousness in the shape of *thinghood*. Both moments are essential – because they are initially not the same and are opposed, and because their reflection into unity has not yet resulted, they are as two opposed shapes of consciousness. One is self-sufficient; for it, its essence is being-for-itself. The other is

¹³ außer sich.

non-self-sufficient; for it, life, or being for an other, is the essence. The former is the *master*, the latter is the *servant*.

190. The master is consciousness existing *for itself*. However, the master is no longer consciousness existing for itself only as the concept of such a consciousness. Rather, it is consciousness existing for itself which is mediated with itself through an *other* consciousness, namely, through an other whose essence includes its being synthetically combined with self-sufficient *being*, or with thinghood itself. The master relates himself to both of these moments, to a *thing* as such, the object of desire, and to the consciousness for which thinghood is essential; while (a) the master is, as the concept of self-consciousness, the immediate relation of *being-for-itself*, but (b) henceforth is at the same time as mediation, or as a being-for-itself that is for itself only through an other, the master in that way relates himself (a) immediately to both, and (b) meditately to each through the other. The master relates himself *to the servant meditately through self-sufficient being*, for it is on this very point that the servant is held fast. It is his chain, the one he could not ignore in the struggle, and for that reason he proved himself to be non-self-sufficient and to have his self-sufficiency in the shape of thinghood. However, the master is the power over this being, for he has proved in the struggle that to him it only counted as a negative. While he is the power over this being, this being, however, is the power over the other, so that the master thus has within this syllogism the other as subordinate to him. The master likewise relates himself *to the thing meditately through the servant*. The servant, as self-consciousness itself, relates himself negatively to the thing and sublates the thing. However, at the same time the thing is for him self-sufficient, and, for that reason, he cannot through his negating be over and done with it, cannot have eliminated it; or, the servant only *processes* it. On the other hand, to the master, the immediate relation *comes to be* through this mediation as the pure negation of the thing, or as the *consumption* of the thing. Where desire had failed, the master now succeeds in being over and done with the thing, and he achieves satisfaction in his consumption of it. On account of the thing's self-sufficiency, desire did not achieve this much, but the master, who has interposed the servant between the thing and himself, as a result only links up with the non-self-sufficiency of the thing and simply consumes it. He leaves the aspect of its self-sufficiency in the care of the servant, who works on the thing.

191. For the master, it is in these two moments that his recognition comes about through another consciousness, since the latter consciousness posits itself as inessential within those moments, first of all by working on the

thing, and second of all by his dependence on a determinate existence. In both moments, he cannot achieve mastery over existence and achieve absolute negation. This moment of recognition is present here such that the other consciousness sublates itself as being-for-itself, and it thereby itself does what the first does to it. This is just as much the case for the other moment. What the second self-consciousness does is the first's own doing, for what the servant does is really the master's doing. The latter is only being-for-itself, the essence; he is the pure negative power for which the thing is nothing, and he is thus the pure essential doing in this relationship. However, the servant is not a pure but rather an inessential doing. However, what prevents this from being genuine recognition is the moment where what the master does with regard to the other, he also does with regard to himself, and where what the servant does with regard to himself, he also is supposed to do with regard to the other. As a result, a form of recognition has arisen that is one-sided and unequal.

192. The inessential consciousness is therein for the master the object which constitutes the *truth* of his certainty of himself. However, it is clear that this object does not correspond to its concept, but rather that the object in which the master has achieved his mastery has become, to the master, something entirely different from a self-sufficient consciousness. It is not a self-sufficient consciousness which is for him but above all a non-self-sufficient consciousness. His certainty is therefore not that of *being-for-itself* as the truth; instead, his truth is the inessential consciousness and the inessential doing of that inessential consciousness.

193. The *truth* of the self-sufficient consciousness is thus the *servile consciousness*. To be sure, this consciousness admittedly first appears *external* to itself¹⁴ and not as the truth of self-consciousness. However, in the way that mastery showed that its essence is the inversion of what mastery wants to be, so too in its consummation will servitude become instead the opposite of what it immediately is. As a consciousness *forced back* into itself, it will take the inward turn¹⁵ and convert itself into true self-sufficiency.

194. We only saw what servitude is in relation to mastery. However, servitude is self-consciousness, and thus what it is in and for itself is now up for examination. For servitude, the master is initially the essence. Therefore, to servitude, the *truth* is the *self-sufficient consciousness existing for itself*, a truth which *for servitude* is nonetheless not yet *in servitude*. Yet servitude has this truth of pure negativity and of *being-for-itself in fact in servitude* in its own self, for servitude has *experienced* this essence in servitude. This

¹⁴ *aufser sich*. Alternatively, this could be rendered: "beside itself."

¹⁵ *in sich gehen*.

consciousness was not driven with anxiety about just this or that matter, nor did it have anxiety about just this or that moment; rather, it had anxiety about its entire essence. It felt the fear of death, the absolute master. In that feeling, it had inwardly fallen into dissolution, trembled in its depths, and all that was fixed within it had been shaken loose. However, this pure universal movement, this way in which all stable existence becomes absolutely fluid, is the simple essence of self-consciousness; it is absolute negativity, *pure being-for-itself*, which thereby is in this consciousness. This moment of pure being-for-itself is also *for this consciousness*, for, to itself, its *object* lies within the master. Furthermore, not only is there this universal dissolution *as such*, but, in his service, the servant also achieves this dissolution *in actuality*. In his service, he sublates all of the singular moments of his attachment to natural existence, and he works off his natural existence.

195. However, the feeling of absolute power as such, and in the particularities of service, is only dissolution *in itself*, and, although the fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom, in that fear consciousness is what it is that is *for it itself*, but it is not *being-for-itself*.¹⁶ However, through work, this servile consciousness comes round to itself. In the moment corresponding to desire in the master's consciousness, the aspect of the non-essential relation to the thing seemed to fall to the lot of the servant, as the thing there retained its self-sufficiency. Desire has reserved to itself the pure negating of the object, and, as a result, it has reserved to itself that unmixed feeling for its own self.¹⁷ However, for that reason, this satisfaction is itself only a vanishing, for it lacks the *objective* aspect, or *stable existence*. In contrast, work is desire *held in check*, it is vanishing *staved off*, or: work *cultivates and educates*.¹⁸ The negative relation to the object becomes the *form* of the object; it becomes something that *endures* because it is just for the laborer himself that the object has self-sufficiency. This *negative* mediating middle, this formative *doing*, is at the same time *singularity*, or the pure being-for-itself of consciousness, which in the work external to it now enters into the element of lasting. Thus, by those means, the working consciousness comes to an intuition of self-sufficient being *as its own self*.

196. However, what the formative activity means is not only that the serving consciousness as pure *being-for-itself* becomes, to itself, an *existing being* within that formative activity. It also has the negative meaning of the first moment, that of fear. For in forming the thing, his own

¹⁶ darin *für es selbst*, nicht das *Für-sich-sein*.

¹⁷ Selbstgefühl. This could also be rendered as "self-awareness," or even "self-assurance."

¹⁸ sie *bildet*.

negativity, or his being-for-itself, only as a result becomes an object to himself in that he sublates the opposed existing *form*. However, this objective *negative* is precisely the alien essence before which he trembled, but now he destroys this alien negative and posits *himself* as such a negative within the element of continuance. He thereby becomes *for himself* an *existing-being-for-itself*. Being-for-itself in the master is to the servant *an other*, or it is only *for him*. In fear, being-for-itself is *in its own self*. In culturally formative activity,¹⁹ being-for-itself becomes for him *his own* being-for-itself, and he attains the consciousness that he himself is in and for himself. As a result, the form, by being *posited as external*, becomes to him not something other than himself, for his pure being-for-itself is that very form, which to him therein becomes the truth. Therefore, through this retrieval, he comes to acquire through himself a *mind of his own*, and he does this precisely in the work in which there had seemed to be only some *outsider's mind*. – For this reflection, the two moments of fear and service, as well as the moments of culturally formative activity are both necessary, and both are necessary in a universal way. Without the discipline of service and obedience, fear is mired in formality and does not diffuse itself over the conscious actuality of existence. Without culturally formative activity, fear remains inward and mute, and consciousness will not become for it [consciousness] itself.²⁰ If consciousness engages in formative activity without that first, absolute fear, then it has a mind of its own which is only vanity, for its form, or its negativity, is not negativity *in itself*, and his formative activity thus cannot to himself give him the consciousness of himself as consciousness of the essence. If he has not been tried and tested by absolute fear but only by a few anxieties, then the negative essence will have remained an externality to himself, and his substance will not have been infected all the way through by it. While not each and every one of the ways in which his natural consciousness was brought to fulfillment was shaken to the core, he is still attached *in himself* to determinate being. His having a mind of his own is then only *stubbornness*, a freedom that remains bogged down within the bounds of servility. To the servile consciousness, pure form can as little become the essence as can the pure form – when it is taken as extending itself beyond the singular individual – be a universal culturally formative activity, an absolute concept. Rather, the form is a skill which, while it has dominance over some things, has dominance over neither the universal power nor the entire objective essence.

¹⁹ in dem Bilden. ²⁰ wird nicht für es selbst.