

Principles of Philosophy of the Future

Ludwig Feuerbach

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Written: 1843;

Source: *The Fiery Brook*;

Translated: Translated by Zawar Hanfi, 1972;

Transcribed: Andy Blunden;

HTML Markup: Andy Blunden;

Converted to E-Book Format by: Anonymous.

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"The secret of Hegel's dialectic lies ultimately in this alone, that it *negates theology through philosophy in order then to negate*

philosophy through theology. Both the beginning and the end are constituted by theology; philosophy stands in the middle as the negation of the first positedness, but the negation of the negation is again theology. At first everything is overthrown, but then everything is reinstated in its old place, as in Descartes. The Hegelian philosophy is the last grand attempt to restore a lost and defunct Christianity through philosophy, and, of course, as is characteristic of the modern era, by *identifying the negation of Christianity with Christianity itself.*" § 21

Part I: History of Modern Philosophy

§ 1

The task of the modern era was the realisation and humanisation of God – the transformation and dissolution of theology into anthropology.

§ 2 Protestantism

The *religious* or *practical* form of this humanisation was Protestantism. The God who is man, that is to say the human God, Christ, this and only this is the God of Protestantism. Unlike Catholicism, Protestantism is no longer concerned with what God is in himself, but only with what he is for man; hence, it knows no speculative or contemplative tendency like Catholicism. It has ceased to be *theology* – it is essentially *Christology*; that is, *religious anthropology*.

§ 3

However, Protestantism negated God-in-himself or God as God – for only God-in-himself is, strictly speaking, God – *only in practice*; theoretically, it left him intact. He *exists*; however, not for man; that is, the *religious* man. He is a transcendent being or a being that will one day become an object *for man* up there in heaven. But that which is *other-worldly* to religion, is *this-worldly* to philosophy; what does not constitute an object for the former, does so precisely for the latter.

§ 4

The *rational* or *theoretical* assimilation and dissolution of the God who is other-worldly to religion, and hence *not given to it as an object*, is the speculative philosophy.

§ 5

The essence of speculative philosophy is nothing other than the *rationalised, realised, actualised essence of God*. The speculative philosophy is the *true, consistent, rational* theology.

§ 6 Theism

Taken as an *intelligible (geistig)* or an *abstract being*, that is, regarded *neither* as human nor as sensuous, but rather as one that is an *object for and accessible only to reason or intelligence*, God qua God is *nothing but the essence of reason* itself. But, *basing themselves rather on imagination, ordinary theology and Theism regard him as an independent being existing separately from reason*. Under these circumstances, it is an inner, a sacred *necessity* that the essence of reason as distinguished from reason itself be at last *identified* with it and the divine being thus be apprehended, realised, as the *essence of reason*. It is on this necessity that *the great historical significance of speculative philosophy* rests. The proof of the proposition that the divine essence is the essence of reason or intelligence lies in the fact that the *determinations or qualities of God*, in so far as they are *rational or intelligible* and not determinations of sensuousness or imagination, are, in fact, *qualities of reason*.

"God is the infinite being or the being without any limitations whatsoever." But what cannot be a limit or boundary on God can also not be a limit or boundary on reason. If, for example, God is elevated above all limitations of sensuousness, so, too, is reason. He who cannot conceive of any entity except as sensuous, that is, he whose reason is limited by sensuousness, can only have a

God who is limited by sensuousness. Reason, which conceives God as an infinite being, conceives, in point of fact, *its own* infinity in God. What is divine to reason is also truly *rational* to it, or in other words, it is a being that perfectly corresponds to and satisfies it. That, however, in which a being finds satisfaction, is nothing but the being *in which it encounters itself as its own object*. He who finds satisfaction in a philosopher is himself of a philosophical nature. That he is of this nature is precisely what he and others encounter in this satisfaction. Reason “does not, however, pause at the finite, sensuous things; it finds satisfaction in the infinite being alone” – that is to say, the essence of reason is disclosed to us primarily in the infinite being.

“God is the necessary being.” But his necessity rests on the ground that he is a *rational, intelligent* being. The ground for what the world or matter is does not lie in the world or matter itself, for it is completely indifferent to whether it is or is not, or to why it is so and not otherwise. [It is quite obvious that here, as in all sections where the problem is to deal with, and present the development, of historical phenomena, I do not speak and argue from my point of view, but rather let each phenomenon speak for itself. This applies to my treatment of theism here.] Hence, it must necessarily presuppose another being as its cause, a being that is *intelligent and self-conscious* and acts according to reasons and goals. For if this being were to be conceived of as lacking intelligence, the question as to its own ground must arise again. The primary and the highest being rests, therefore, on the presupposition that the *intellect* alone is the being that is *primary, highest, necessary, and true*. Just as the truth and reality of metaphysical or onto-theological determinations depend on their reducibility to psychological or rather anthropological determinations, so the necessity of the divine being in the old metaphysics or onto-theology has meaning, truth, and reality only in the psychological or anthropological characterisation of God as an intelligent being. The necessary being is one that it is necessary to think of, that must be affirmed absolutely and

which it is simply impossible to deny or annul, but only to the extent to which it is a *thinking being itself*. Thus, it is its own necessity and reality which reason *demonstrates* in the necessary being.

"God is unconditional, general – 'God is not this or that particular thing' – immutable, eternal, or timeless being." But absoluteness, immutability, eternality, and generality are, according to the judgment of metaphysical theology itself, also qualities of the truths or laws of reason, and hence the qualities of reason itself; for what else are these immutable, general, absolute, and universally valid truths of reason if not expressions of the essence of reason itself?

"God is the independent, autonomous being not requiring any other being in order to exist, hence subsisting entirely by and through itself." But even this abstract, metaphysical characterisation has meaning and reality only as a definition of the essence of intelligence and, as such, it states only that God is a thinking and intelligent being or, vice versa, that the thinking being is the divine being; for only a *sensuous* being will need some other being outside itself in order to exist. I need air to breathe, water to drink, light to be able to see, plants and animals to eat, but nothing – not directly at any rate – in order to think. I cannot conceive of a breathing being without air, nor of a seeing being without light, but I can conceive of a thinking being as existing in complete isolation. A breathing being is *necessarily* referred to a being outside itself, that is to say, it has the *essential* object, through which it is what it is, *outside itself*, but the thinking being is *referred only to itself*, is its own object, carries its essence within itself and is what it is only through itself.

§ 7 Subject & Object

That which is *object in theism* is subject in *speculative philosophy*. That which is only the conceived and *imagined* essence of reason

in theism, is the *thinking* essence of reason itself in speculative philosophy.

The theist represents to himself God as a *personal* being *existing outside reason* and man; as a subject, he thinks God as an object. He conceives God as a being, i.e., as an *intelligible, non-sensuous* being with regard to his idea of it, but as a *sensuous* being with respect to its actual *existence* or its *truth*; for the *essential characteristic* of an objective existence; i.e., of an existence outside thought or perception, is *sensuousness*. He distinguishes God from himself in the same sense in which he distinguishes the sensuous objects and beings from himself as existing outside himself; in short, he thinks God from the *standpoint of sensuousness*. In contrast to this, the speculative theologian or philosopher thinks of God from the *standpoint* of thought, that is why the distracting idea of a sensuous being does not interpose itself between him and God; and, thus unhindered, he identifies the objective, conceived being with the *subjective*, thinking being.

The inner necessity by which God is turned from an *object* of man into his *subject, into his thinking ego*, can be demonstrated more specifically in the following way: God is an object of man and of man alone and not of the animal. However, *what* a being is can be known only through its *object*; the object to which a being is necessarily related is nothing but its own *manifest* being. Thus, the object of the herbivorous animals is the plant; it is, however, precisely through their object that these are distinguished from other animals, the carnivorous ones. Similarly, the object of the eye is light and not sound or smell, it is through this object that the eye reveals its essence to us. It therefore comes down to the same thing whether someone cannot see or has no eyes. That is also why we name things in life with respect to their objects. The eye is the "light organ." He who cultivates land is a land cultivator (peasant); someone else, the object of whose activity is hunting, is a hunter; he who catches fish is a fisher, and so forth. Now, if God is an object of

man – and he is indeed that necessarily and essentially – the essence of this object expresses nothing but man's own essence. imagine to yourself that a thinking being on some planet, or even on a comet, happened to glance at a few paragraphs of Christian dogmatics dealing with the being of God. What would this being infer from these paragraphs? Perhaps the existence of a God in the sense of Christian dogmatics? No, its inference would be that the earth, too, is inhabited by thinking beings; in their definitions of God, it would discover only the definitions of their own essence. For example, in the definition "God is spirit," it would only see the proof and expression of their own spirit; in short, it would infer the essence and the qualities of the subject from those of the object. And with complete justification, because in the case of *this particular* object the distinction between what the object is in itself and what it is for man dissolves itself. This distinction is valid only in the case of an object which is given in immediate sense perception and which, precisely for that reason, is also given to other beings besides man. Light is there not only for man; it also affects animals, plants, and inorganic substances; it is a being of a general nature. In order to know what light is, we therefore observe not only the impressions and effects it makes upon ourselves, but also upon beings different from us. Hence, in this context, the distinction between the object *in itself* and the object *for us*, that is, between the object in reality and the object in our thought and imagination is necessary and objectively founded. God, however, is an object *only* for man. Animals and stars praise God *only in a human sense*. It belongs therefore to the essence of God himself that he is not an object of any other being except man, that he is a specifically human object, that he is a secret of man. But, if God is an object *only* for man, what does his essence disclose to us? Nothing but the essence of man. He whose object is the highest being is himself the highest being. The more man is the object of animals, the higher they must rank, and the closer must their approximation be to man. An animal whose object was man qua man, that is, man in his specific human

nature, would itself be a man and no longer simply an animal. Only equal beings are equal objects for one another; that is, beings as they are *in themselves*. Now, it is true that theism, too, knows the identity of the divine and the human essence, but this identity forms its object only as *sensuous* identity, only as *similarity or affinity*, because, even if it grounds the essence of God in the spirit, it conceives God as a sensuous being existing outside man. Affinity expresses the same thing as identity; but concurrently connected with it is the sensuous idea that the related beings are two independents; that is, sensuous, beings existing apart from each other.

§ 8 Theology & Philosophy

Ordinary theology turns the *standpoint of man* into the *standpoint of God*; by contrast, the *speculative* theology turns the *standpoint of God* into the *standpoint of man*, or rather into that of the *thinker*.

For ordinary theology, God is an object just like any other sensuous object; but, at the same time, he is also a subject for it, and, indeed, just like the human subject. God creates things that are apart from *himself*, he is referred back to himself in a reflexive self-relationship and is related to other things existing apart from him; he both loves and contemplates himself simultaneously with other beings. In short, man makes his thoughts, even his feelings, the thoughts and feelings of God; his own essence and standpoint are made the essence and standpoint of God. Speculative theology, however, reverses this.

In ordinary theology, God is thus a *contradiction with himself*, for he is supposed to be a non-human, a *super-human* being, and yet with respect to all his determinations, he is in truth only a human being. In speculative theology or philosophy on the other hand, God is in *contradiction to man*; he is supposed to be the essence of man – at any rate of reason – but he is in truth a non-

human, a super-human, that is, an abstract being. In ordinary theology, the super-human God is only an edifying phrase, a mere idea, a toy of fantasy; in speculative philosophy, on the other hand, he is truth, bitter seriousness. The acute contradiction experienced by speculative philosophy arose from the fact that it turned God, who in theism is merely a being of fantasy, an indefinite, nebulous and remote being, into a definite and encounterable being, thus destroying the illusory magic which a distant being has in the blue haze of the imagination. No wonder then that the theists have been vexed by the circumstance that although Hegel's *Logic* understands itself as the presentation of God in his eternal, world-antecedent essence, it nevertheless deals – for example, in the doctrine of magnitude – with extensive and intensive quantity, fractions, powers, proportions, etc. How, they exclaimed in horror, can this God be our God? And yet, what else is this God if not the God of theism who has been drawn out of the fog of the imagination and brought into the light of the determining thought; the God of theism who has created and ordered everything according to measure, number and weight taken, so to speak, by his word? If God has ordered and created everything according to number and measure; that is, if measure and number, before they assumed reality in things existing apart from God, were contained in the intelligence and, hence, in the essence of God – and there is no difference between God's intelligence and his essence – does not, then, mathematics, too, belong to the mysteries of theology? But of course there is a world of difference between what something appears to be in the imagination and what it is in truth and reality. No wonder then that the one and the same thing appears as two completely different things to those who rely only on appearance.

The essential qualities or predicates of the Divine Being are the essential qualities or predicates of speculative philosophy.

§ 10 Speculative Philosophy

God is pure spirit, pure essence, pure activity – *actus purus* – without passions, without predicates imposed from outside, without sensuousness, without matter. The speculative philosophy is this *pure spirit, this pure activity realised as an act of thought – the absolute being as absolute thought.*

Just as once the abstraction from all that is sensuous and material was the necessary condition of theology, so it was also the necessary condition of speculative philosophy, the only difference being that the abstraction of theology was itself a sensuous abstraction (or ascetics) because its object, although arrived at through abstraction, was nevertheless conceived as a sensuous being, whereas the abstraction of speculative philosophy is only spiritual and ideated, having only a scientific or theoretical, but no practical, meaning. The beginning of Cartesian philosophy – namely, the abstraction from sensuousness and matter – is also the beginning of modern speculative philosophy. But Descartes and Leibniz regarded this abstraction only as a subjective condition for cognising the non-material being of God; they conceived the non-materiality of God as an *objective quality independent* of abstraction and thought. Theirs was still the standpoint of theism, that is to say, they considered the non-material being as the *object* and not as the *subject*, i.e., the *active principle*, the real essence of philosophy itself. It is of course true that God, in both Descartes and Leibniz is the principle of philosophy, but only as an *object distinguished* from thought and hence a principle only in a general sense and only imagination, but not in reality and truth. God is only the *first* and the *general* cause of matter, movement, and activity; the particular movements and activities, the definite and concrete

material things are, however, considered and cognised independently of God. Leibniz and Descartes are idealists only in a general sense, but when it comes to particular things they are materialists. God is the only consistent, perfect, and true idealist because he alone perceives things in complete freedom from darkness or, in the sense of Leibniz's philosophy, without the mediation of the senses and the imagination; he is pure intellect, that is, pure in the sense of being separated from all sensuousness and materiality; for him, material things are therefore pure creatures of the intellect, pure thoughts; for him, matter does not exist at all because its possibility is anchored only in dark, that is, sensuous, perceptions. And yet man, according to Leibniz, carries within himself a good portion of idealism, for how else would it be possible for him to conceive a non-material being without possessing a non-material faculty and, consequently, non-material perceptions? In addition to the senses and the imagination, man possesses intellect and the intellect is precisely a non-material, a *pure* being because it thinks; the human intellect, however, is not *quite* as pure as the divine intellect or the Divine Being because it lacks pure infinity and extension. Man, or rather this man Leibniz, is therefore only a *partial*, a *semi-idealist*, whereas *God* alone is a *complete idealist*, "*the Perfect Philosopher*" as Wolff expressly calls him. This means that God is the idea underlying the absolute idealism of the later speculative philosophy, but only in its completed form and only as unfolded in all its details. For what after all is the intellect and what, in general, the essence of God? Nothing other than the intellect and nothing other than the essence of man, though severed from the determinations that, at a given time, constitute the limitations of man, no matter whether real or imaginary. He whose intellect is not at odds with his senses, he who does not take the senses to be a limitation, also does not take the intellect without the senses to be the highest, the true intellect. What else is the idea of a thing if not its essence having been purged of the limitations and obscurations to which it is subject on account of its coexistence with other things in reality? Thus, according to

Leibniz, the limitation of the human intellect arises out of the fact that it is burdened with materialism, that is to say, with dark perceptions; and these dark perceptions spring only from the circumstance that the being of man is interrelated with other beings, that it finds itself in the context of the world. This relatedness, however, does not apply to the essence of the intellect; rather, it is in contradiction to it, because the intellect *in itself*; that is, according to its idea, is something non-material or something which is *for itself* – an isolated being. And this idea, this intellect, purged of all materialistic perceptions is precisely the divine intellect. But what was just *an idea* with Leibniz became *truth and reality* in later philosophy. *The absolute idealism* is nothing but the *realised divine intellect* of Leibnizian theism, nothing but pure intellect which has been systematically unfolded, which strips all things of their sensuousness turning them into pure entities of intellect and thought, and which, unhampered by anything alien, is occupied with itself alone as the essence of all essences.

§ 11

God is a thinking being; but the objects that he thinks and encompasses in himself are, like his own intellect, *not distinguished from his being*, so that in thinking other things he thinks only himself and thus persists in an *uninterrupted unity with himself*. But this *unity of the thinking and the thought* is precisely the *secret of speculative philosophy*.

Thus, for example, in the *Logic* of Hegel the objects of thought are not distinguished from the essence of thought. Here thought exists in an uninterrupted unity with itself; the objects of thought are only the determinations of thought itself, that is, they have nothing in themselves that would resist their complete dissolution in thought. But that which is the essence of *Logic* is also the essence of God. God is a spiritual and an abstract being;

but he is at the same time both the essence of all beings and that which encompasses all beings so as to form a unity with his abstract essence. But what are these beings that are identical with an abstract and spiritual being? They are themselves abstract *beings* – *thoughts*. As things are in God, so they are not outside God; they are just as distinguished from the real things as the things constituting the object of *Logic* are from those given as the objects real perception. To what, therefore, is the distinction between the divine and the metaphysical thought reducible? Only to the one imaginary distinction – that between imaginary and *real* thought.

§ 12

The difference between *God's knowledge* or *thought*, which *precedes* and *creates* all things as their *archetype*, and *man's knowledge*, which *follows* things *as their copy*, is nothing but the difference between *a priori*, or speculative, and *a posteriori*, or *empirical knowledge*.

Although theism looks upon God as a thinking or spiritual being, it regards him at the same time as a *sensuous being*. Hence, it directly links *sensuous and material* effects with the thought and will of God – effects that are in contradiction to the essence of thought and will, expressing nothing more than the power of nature. Such a *material* effect – hence merely an expression of sensuous power – is above all the creation or bringing forth of the real material world. Speculative theology, on the other hand, transforms this sensuous activity which contradicts the essence of thought into a logical or theoretical activity; the material creation of the object into a speculative creation out of the Notion. In theism, the world is a temporal product of God – the world exists for several million years, but God's existence antedates this; in speculative theology, on the other hand, the world or nature comes *after* God only according to rank or

significance; the accident presupposes the substance, and nature presupposes logic according to the notion and not according to sensuous existence and, hence, not according to time.

Theism, however, attributes to God not only speculative but also *sensuous* and *empirical* knowledge understood in its highest perfection. But just as God's pre-worldly and object-antecedent knowledge has found its realisation, truth, and reality in the *a priori* knowledge of speculative philosophy, so too has the *sensuous knowledge* of God found its realisation, truth, and reality in the empirical sciences of the modern era. The most perfect and, hence, divine, sensuous knowledge is therefore nothing but the most sensuous of all knowledge, the knowledge of the tiniest minutiae and of the most inconspicuous details – “God is omniscient,” says St. Thomas Aquinas, “because he knows even the most particular things” – the knowledge that does not just indiscriminately put the hair on the human head together into a tuft, but counts and knows each one of it, hair for hair. But this divine knowledge, which is only a matter of imagination and fantasy in theology, became the *rational* and real knowledge of the natural sciences produced through the telescope and microscope. Natural science has counted the stars in the sky, the ova in the spawn of fish and butterflies, and the dots on the wings of the insects in order to distinguish one from the other; alone in the caterpillar of the willow moth, it has anatomically demonstrated the existence of 288 muscles in the head, 1,647 in the body, and 2,186 in the stomach and intestines. What more can one ask? We have here a clear example of the truth that man's idea of God is the idea of the human individual of his own species, that God as the totality of all realities and perfections is nothing other than the totality of the qualities of the species compendiously put together in him for the benefit of the limited individual, but actually dispersed among men and realising themselves in the course of world history. In terms of its quantitative scope, the field of the natural sciences is too vast for

any single individual to traverse. Who will be able to count the stars in the sky and at the same time the muscles and nerves in the body of the caterpillar? Lyonet lost his sight over the anatomy of the willow caterpillar. Who is able to observe simultaneously both the differences of height and depth on the moon and at the same time observe the differences of the innumerable ammonites and terebrates? But what one man cannot accomplish and does not know, can be accomplished and known by all men collectively. Thus, the divine knowledge that knows each particular thing simultaneously has its reality in the knowledge of the species.

What is true of the Divine Omniscience is true also of the Divine Omnipresence which has equally realised itself in man. While one man heeds what is going on on the moon or Uranus, someone else observes Venus, or the entrails of the caterpillar, or some other place never penetrated by the human eye under the erstwhile reign of an omniscient and omnipresent God. Indeed, while man observes this star from the standpoint of Europe, he also observes it simultaneously from the standpoint of America. What is absolutely impossible for *one* man alone to achieve is possible for two. But God is present in all places at one and the same time and knows everything simultaneously and completely. Of course. But it must be noted that this omniscience and omnipresence exists only in the imagination and fantasy, and we must not lose sight of the important distinction between the merely imagined and the real things we have already mentioned several times. In the imagination, to be sure, one can survey the 4,059 muscles of a caterpillar in one glance, but in reality, where they exist apart from one another, they can be viewed only one at a time. Thus, the limited individual can also conceive in his imagination the whole extent of human knowledge as limited, but if he really wanted to make it his own, he would never reach the point where it ends. Take just one science – say history – as an example, and try in thought to “dissolve” world history into the history of the individual

countries, these into the history of individual provinces, these again into the chronicles of towns, and the chronicles, finally, into family histories and biographies. Would it ever be possible for one single man to arrive at the point where he could exclaim: "Here, at this point, I stand at the end of the historical knowledge of mankind!" In the same way, our life span – both the past as well as the possible future – appears to us in the imagination as extraordinarily short, no matter how long we extend it; and we feel compelled to make good this evanescent brevity by an infinite and unending life after death. But how long in reality does a day, or just an hour, last! Whence this difference? From the following: Time in the imagination is *empty* time, that is, a nothing between the beginning and the termination of our reckoning of it; the real life span is, however, fulfilled time where mountains of difficulties of all kinds lie midway between the now and the then.

§ 13 God & Man

The beginning of speculative philosophy, in so far as it is a beginning without any presuppositions whatsoever, is nothing else than the beginning without presuppositions, or the aseity of the Divine Being. Theology distinguishes between active and reposing qualities of God. Philosophy, however, transforms even the qualities of repose into active ones; the whole being of God into activity – human activity. This is also true of what was mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph. Philosophy presupposes nothing; this can only mean that it *abstracts* from all that is immediately or sensuously given, or from all objects distinguished from thought. In short, it abstracts from all wherefrom it is possible to abstract without ceasing to think, and it makes this act of abstraction from all objects its own beginning. However, what else is the absolute being if not the being for which nothing is to be presupposed and to which no object other than itself is either given or necessary? What else is

it if not the being that has been subtracted from all objects – from all things distinct and distinguishable from it – and, therefore, becomes an object for man precisely through abstracting from these things? Wherefrom God is free, therefrom you must also free yourself if you want to reach God; and you make yourself really free when you present yourself with the idea of God. In consequence, if you think God without presupposing any other being or object, you yourself think without presupposing any external object; the quality that you attribute to God is a quality of your own thought. However, what is *activity* in man is *being* in God or that which is imagined as such. What, hence, is the Fichtean Ego which says, “I simply am because I am,” and what is the pure and presuppositionless thought of Hegel if not the Divine Being of the old theology and metaphysics which has been transformed into the *actual*, *active*, and *thinking* being of man?

§ 14 Pantheism

Speculative philosophy as the realisation of God is the *positing* of God, and *at the same time his cancellation or negation; theism and at the same time atheism*: for God – in the sense of theology – is God only as long as he is taken to be a being distinguished from and independent of the being of man as well as of nature. The theism that as the positing of God is simultaneously his negation or, conversely, as the negation of God equally his affirmation, is *pantheism*. Theological theism – that is, theism properly speaking – is nothing other than *imaginary* pantheism which itself is nothing other than real and true theism.

What separates theism from pantheism is only the imaginary representation of God as a personal being. All the determinations of God – and these must be predicated of him, otherwise he would be nothing and not at all the object of the imagination – are determinations of reality, either of nature or of

man or those common to both, and hence *pantheistic* determinations; for that which does not distinguish God from the being of nature or of man is pantheism. God is distinguished from the world, from the totality of nature and mankind, only with respect to his personality or existence, but not with respect to his determinations or to his essence; that is, he is only *imagined to be* but is *in truth not a different being*. Theism is the contradiction of appearance and essence, imagination and truth, whereas pantheism is the unity of both – pantheism is the *naked* truth of theism. All the conceptions of theism, if taken seriously, carried out, and realised, must necessarily lead to pantheism. Pantheism is *consistent* theism. Theism holds God to be the cause, indeed, to be the living, personal cause, to be the creator of the world; God has brought forth the world by his will. But the will alone does not suffice. If the will is there, the intellect must also be there; *what* one wills is a matter of the intellect. There can be no object without the intellect. The things that God created existed therefore *in* God prior to their creation; that is, existed in him as the objects of his intellect, or as intellectual entities. As theology has it, the intellect of God is the comprehensive unity of all things and essences. Whence could they have sprung if not out of nothing? And what difference does it make whether you think of this nothingness in your imagination as independent or transpose it into God? But God contains everything or is everything *in an ideational way*; that is, in the way of the imagination. This ideational pantheism, however, leads necessarily to the real or concrete; for it is not far from the intellect of God to his being and from his being to his reality. How should it be possible to separate the intellect from the being, and the being from the reality or existence of God? If things are in the intellect of God, how could they be outside of his being? If they result from his intellect, why not then also from his being? And if in God his being is directly identical with his reality, if the existence of God cannot be divorced from the concept of God, how then could the conception of the object and the real object be separated in God's conception of things?

How, therefore, could the difference that constitutes only the nature of the finite and non-divine intellect, namely, the difference between the object as given in the imagination and as existing apart from it, occur in God? But once we have no objects whatsoever left *outside the intellect of God*, we soon will have nothing whatsoever left *outside his being* and finally nothing *outside his existence*. All objects *are* in God and, indeed, actually and in truth, not only in the imagination; for where they exist only in the imagination of God as well as of man, that is, where they are in God only in an ideal, or rather imaginary way, they exist at the same time outside the imagination, outside God. But given that we have no objects and no world outside God, we would also no longer have God outside the world; that is, God taken not only as an ideal or as imagined, but also as a real being. In *one* word, we thus have Spinozism or pantheism. Theism conceives God only as a purely non-material being. But to determine God as non-material is nothing different from determining matter as a nonentity, as a monstrosity, for only God is the measure of what is real; only God is Being, truth, and essence; only that which is true of God and in God, that alone *is*, what is negated of God, that also does not exist. To derive matter from God means, therefore, nothing but to want to establish its being through its non-being; for to derive means to establish something by indicating its ground. God made matter. But how, why, and out of what? Theism does not provide an answer to these questions. Matter for theism is a purely *inexplicable* existence; this means that it is the *limit, the end* of theology on which it founders in life as well as in thought. How can I then extract out of theology itself its negation and end without discarding it? How can I expect any explanatory principle or information from theology when its wisdom falters? How can I extract the affirmation of matter from a negation of matter and world which constitutes the essence of theology? How can I, despite the God of theology, produce the proposition "*matter exists*" out of the proposition "*matter does not exist*?" How else but through mere fiction? Material objects can be derived from

God only if *God himself is determined as a material being*. Only thus can God become the *real* cause of the world and not merely be an imagined and fictitious cause. He who is not ashamed to make shoes, should also not be ashamed to be and be called a cobbler. Hans Sachs was indeed both a cobbler and a poet. But the shoes were the work of his hands whereas the poems were that of his head. As the effect, so the cause. But matter is *not* God; it is rather the finite, the non-divine, that is, that which negates God – the unconditional adherents and worshipers of matter are atheists. Hence, pantheism unites atheism with theism, the *negation* of God with God; *God is a material* or, in Spinoza's language, an *extended* being.

§ 15 Materialism

Pantheism is *theological atheism or theological materialism*; it is *the negation of theology* while itself confined to the *standpoint of theology*, for it turns matter, the negation of God, into a predicate or an *attribute of the Divine Being*. But he who turns matter into an attribute of God, declares matter to be a *divine being*. The realisation of God must in principle *presuppose godliness*, that is, *the truth and essentiality of the real*. *The deification of the real, of that which exists* materially – materialism, empiricism, realism, and humanism – or the *negation* of theology, is the *essence* of the modern era. Pantheism is therefore nothing more than *the essence of the modern era* elevated into the *divine essence*, into a *religio-philosophical principle*.

Empiricism or realism – meaning thereby the so-called sciences of the real, but in particular the natural science – negates theology, albeit not theoretically but only practically, namely, *through the actual deed* in so far as the realist makes the negation of God, or at least that which is *not* God, into the *essential* business of his life and the *essential* object of his activity. However, he who devotes his mind and heart exclusively to that

which is material and sensuous *actually* denies the trans-sensuous its reality; for only that which constitutes an object of the real and concrete activity is real, at least for man. "What I don't know doesn't affect me." To say that it is not possible to know anything of the supersensuous is only an excuse. One ceases to know anything about God and divine things only when one does not *want* to know anything about them. How much did one know about God, about the devils or angels as long as these supersensuous beings were still objects of a *real* faith? To be *interested* in something is to have the *talent* for it. The medieval mystics and scholastics had no talent and aptitude for natural science only because they had no interest in nature. Where the sense for something is not lacking, there also the senses and organs do not lack. If the heart is open to something, the mind will not be closed to it. Thus, the reason why mankind in the modern era lost the organs for the supersensuous world and its secrets is because it also lost the sense for them together with the belief in them; because its essential tendency was anti-Christian and anti-theological; that is, anthropological, cosmic, realistic, and materialistic. [In the context of the present work, the differences between materialism, empiricism, realism, and humanism are, of course, irrelevant.] Spinoza hit the nail on the head with his paradoxical proposition: God is an extended, that is, material being. He found, at least for his time, the true philosophical expression for the materialistic tendency of the modern era; he legitimated and sanctioned it: God himself is a materialist. Spinoza's philosophy was religion; he himself was an amazing man. Unlike so many others, Spinoza's materialism did not stand in contradiction to the notion of a non-material and anti-materialistic God who also quite consistently imposes on man the duty to give himself up only to *anti-materialistic, heavenly tendencies and concerns*, for God is nothing other than the archetypal and ideal image of man; *what* God is and *how* he is, is what man *ought* to be or *wants* to be, or at least hopes to be in the future. But only where theory does not belie practice, and

practice theory, is there character, truth, and religion. Spinoza is the Moses of modern free-thinkers and materialists.

§ 16 The basis of Materialism

Pantheism is the negation of theoretical, and empiricism the negation of practical, theology. Pantheism negates the principle, whereas empiricism negates the consequences of theology.

Pantheism makes God into a present, real, and material being; empiricism – to which rationalism also belongs – makes God into an absent, remote, unreal, and negative being. Empiricism does not deny God existence, but denies him all positive determinations, because their content is supposed to be only finite and empirical; the infinite cannot, therefore, be an object for man. But the more determinations I deny to a being, the more do I cut it off from myself, and the less power and influence do I concede to it over me, the freer do I make myself of it. The more qualities I possess, the more I am for others, and the greater is the extent of my influence and effects. And the *more one is*, the more one is *known* to others. Hence, each negation of an attribute of God is a partial atheism, a sphere of godlessness. To the extent to which I take away an attribute of God, to the same extent do I take away his being. If, for example, sympathy and mercy are not attributes of God, then I am alone with myself in my suffering; God *is not there* as my comforter. If God is the negation of all that is finite, then, in consequence, the finite is the negation of God. Only if God thinks of me – so concludes the religious man – have I reason and cause to think of him; only in his being-for-me lies the ground of my being-for-him. In truth, therefore, the theological being is no longer anything to empiricism, at least nothing real; but empiricism does not transpose this non-being into the object, but only *into itself*, into its *knowledge*. It does not deny God being, a being that is a dead or indifferent being, but it denies him the being which

proves itself *as being*; namely, as effective and tangible being that cuts into life. It affirms God, but *negates all the consequences* which *necessarily* follow from this affirmation. It rejects and abandons theology, although not out of theoretical grounds, but out of *aversion and disinclination* for the objects of theology; that is, out of a vague feeling for its unreality. Theology is nothing, thinks the empiricist; but he adds to this, "*for me*," that is, his judgment is a subjective, a *pathological* one; for he does not have the freedom, nor the desire and the calling, to drag the objects of theology before the forum of reason. This is the calling of philosophy. The concern of modern philosophy was therefore none other than to elevate *the pathological judgment of empiricism – theology is nothing – to a theoretical and objective* judgment, to transform the indirect, unconscious, and negative negation of theology into a direct, positive, and conscious negation. How ridiculous it is, therefore, to want to suppress the "atheism" of philosophy without at the same time suppressing the atheism of empiricism! How ridiculous it is to persecute the theoretical negation of Christianity and to ignore the actual refutations of Christianity with which the modern era is replete! How ridiculous it is to hold that with the *awareness* of the symptom of evil, the cause of evil is also eliminated! How ridiculous indeed! And yet, how rich is history in such mockeries! They repeat themselves in all critical periods. And no wonder! We are always accommodating to whatever has happened in the past and acknowledge the necessity of all the changes and revolutions that have occurred, but we resist with all the means at our disposal to take the same attitude to the *present* situation. Out of shortsightedness and complacency, we except the present from the rule.

§ 17 Idealism

The elevation of matter into a divine being is directly and at the same time the elevation of *reason* into a *divine being*. What the

theist negates of God by means of the imagination and out of his *emotional need* and his yearning for unlimited bliss, the pantheist affirms of God out of *his rational need*. Matter is an essential object for reason. If there was no matter, reason would have no *stimulus and no material* for thought and, hence, no content. One *cannot give up* matter without *giving up reason*; one *cannot acknowledge matter without acknowledging reason*. Materialists are rationalists. But pantheism affirms reason as a divine being only *indirectly*; namely, only by turning God from a being mediated through the imagination – and this is what he is in theism as a personal being – into an object of reason, or a rational being. The direct apotheosis of reason is *idealism*. Pantheism *necessarily* leads to idealism. Idealism is related to pantheism in the same way as pantheism is related to theism.

As the object, so the subject. According to Descartes, the being of physical things, the body or *substance*, is the object of reason alone and not of the senses. But precisely because of this, the being of the perceiving subject, that is, of man, is not the senses, but reason. It is only to being that being is given as object. For Plato, the objects of opinion are only transient things; but for that matter opinion itself is transient and changing knowledge – mere opinion. The being of music is the highest being to the musician and, consequently, the sense of hearing, the highest organ; he would sooner lose his eyes than his ears. The natural scientist, on the contrary, would sooner part with his ears than with his eyes because his objective being is light. To elevate sound to godliness is to deify the ear. Hence, if I, like the pantheist, say the deity or, what amounts to the same thing, the absolute being or absolute truth *is an object for and of reason alone*, then I declare God to be a rational thing or a rational being, and in so doing I indirectly express only the absolute truth and reality of reason. Hence, it is necessary for reason to turn *to itself* with a view to *reverse this inverted* self-recognition, to declare itself directly to be the absolute truth and to become, without the intervention of any intermediary object, its own

object as the absolute truth. The pantheist says the same thing as the idealist, except that the former expresses objectively and realistically what the latter expresses only subjectively or idealistically. The pantheist has *his idealism in the object*. Nothing exists apart from substance, apart from God, and all things are only determinations of God. The idealist has his *pantheism* in the *ego*. Nothing exists apart from the ego, and all things are what they are only as objects of the ego. But all the same, idealism is the truth of pantheism; for God or substance is only the object of reason, of the ego, or of the thinking being. If I believe in and conceive of no God at all, then I have no God. He *exists for me only through me*, and only "through reason does he exist" for reason. The *a priori*, or "the *initial* being is therefore not the being that is *thought*," but the *thinking being; not the object, but the subject*. With the same necessity with which natural science turned from the light back to the eye, philosophy turned from the objects of thought back to the thinking ego. What is light – as the shining and illuminating being, as the object of optics – without the eye? Nothing. And thus far goes natural science. But what – asks philosophy further – is the eye without consciousness? Equally nothing: It is identical whether I see *without consciousness* or I *do not* see. Only the consciousness of seeing is the reality of seeing or actual seeing. But why do you believe that something exists apart from you? Because you see, hear and feel something. This something is therefore a *real* something, a *real object*, only in so far as it is *an object of consciousness*, and hence, consciousness is the absolute reality or actuality – the measure of all existence. All that exists, exists only in so far as it exists for consciousness, that is, in so far as it is *conscious*; for only consciousness is *being*. Thus does the essence of theology realise itself in idealism; namely, the essence of God in the ego and in consciousness. Nothing can exist, and nothing can be thought of, without God; this means, in the context of idealism, that all that exists, be it an actual or a possible object exists only as the object of consciousness. To be is to be an object; that is, being presupposes consciousness. Things, the

world in general, are the work and the product of God as an absolute being. *This absolute being* is, however, an ego, a *conscious and thinking* being, which means that the world is, as Descartes admirably puts it from the standpoint of theism, an *Ens rationis divinae*, a thought-thing, a phantom of God. But in theism and theology, this thought-thing itself is again only a vague idea. If we therefore realise this idea, if we, so to say, translate into practice what in theism is only theory, then we have the world as a product of the ego (Fichte) or – at least as it appears to us and as we perceive it – as a work or product of our perception and understanding (Kant). “Nature is derived from the laws of the possibility of experience in general. . . . The understanding does not obtain its laws (*a priori*) from nature, but rather prescribes them to it.” The Kantian idealism, in which things conform to the intellect and not the intellect to things, is therefore nothing other than the realisation of the theological conception of the divine intellect which is not determined by things, but, on the contrary, determines them. How absurd it is, therefore, to acknowledge idealism in heaven – that is, the idealism of the imagination, as a divine truth – but reject the idealism on earth – that is, the idealism of reason – as a human error! Should you deny idealism, then you must also deny God! God alone is the originator of idealism. If you do not like the consequences, then you also should not like the principle! Idealism is nothing but *rational* or rationalised theism. But the Kantian idealism is still a limited idealism – idealism situated on *the standpoint of empiricism*. According to what has been discussed above, God is for empiricism only a being in the imagination, or in theory – in the ordinary, bad sense – but not in practice and truth; a thing in itself, but no longer a thing for empiricism, for as far as empiricism is concerned, only real and empirical things are things for it. Since matter is the only material for its thinking, it is left without any *material to construct* God. God exists, but he is for us a *tabula rasa*, an empty being, a mere thought. God, as we imagine and think of him, is our own ego, our own reason, and our own being; but *this* God is only an

appearance of us and for us, and not God in himself. Kant is the embodiment of an idealism that is still shackled by theism. It often happens that in actual practice we have long ago freed ourselves from a particular thing, a doctrine, or an idea, but we are far from being free from it in the mind. It has ceased to have any truth for *our actual being* – perhaps it never had – but it still continues to be a theoretical truth; that is, a limit on our mind. The mind is always the last to become free, because it takes things more thoroughly. Theoretical freedom is, at least in many things, the last freedom. How many are republicans in their heart and in their attitude, but in their minds cannot reach beyond monarchy; their republican heart founders on the objections and difficulties raised by the intellect. This is also the case with Kant's theism. Kant has realised and at the same time negated theology within the sphere of morality, and the divine being within the sphere of the will. For Kant, the will is the true, original, absolute, and self-initiating being. In other words, Kant actually bestows on the will what are the predicates of the divinity; the only significance his theism can have, therefore, is that of a theoretical limit. Fichte is a Kant who has been liberated from the limit of theism – the “Messiah of speculative reason.” Fichte's is the Kantian idealism, *but an idealism nonetheless*. Only from the standpoint of empiricism can, according to Fichte, there be a God distinguished from and existing apart from us. But in truth, from the standpoint of idealism the thing in itself, God – for God is, properly speaking, the thing in itself – is only the ego *in itself*, that is, the ego that is distinct from the individual and empirical ego. Outside the ego, there is no God: “Our religion is reason.” But the Fichtean idealism is only the negation and realisation of abstract and formal theism, of monotheism, and not of religious, material, content-replete theism, not of trinitarianism, whose realisation is the “*absolute*,” or Hegelian idealism. Or in other words, Fichte has realised the God of pantheism only *in so far as* he is a *thinking* being, but not in so far as he is an extended and material being. Fichte embodies theistic, whereas Hegel embodies pantheistic, idealism.

§ 18 Modern Philosophy

Modern philosophy has realised and superseded the Divine Being which is severed and distinguished from sensuousness, the world, and man, but *only in thought, only in reason*, and indeed in a reason that is *equally severed and distinguished from sensuousness, the world, and man*. That is to say, modern philosophy has proved only *the divinity of the intellect*, it recognised only the abstract *intellect* as the *divine and absolute being*. Descartes' definition of himself as mind – “my being consists solely of the fact that I think” – is modern philosophy's definition of itself. The will in both the Kantian and the Fichtean idealism is itself a *pure being of the intellect*, and sense perception, which Schelling, in opposition to Fichte, connected with the intellect, is mere fantasy; it is not the truth and hence does not come into consideration.

Modern philosophy proceeded from theology; it is itself nothing else but theology dissolved and transformed into philosophy. The abstract and transcendent being of God could therefore be realised and superseded *only in an abstract and transcendent way*. In order to transform God into reason. reason itself had to assume the quality of an abstract, divine being. The senses, says Descartes, do not yield true reality, nor being, nor certainty; only the intellect separated from all sensuousness delivers the truth. Where does this dichotomy between the intellect and the senses come from? It comes only from theology. God is not a sensuous being; rather, he is the negation of all sensuous determinations and is known only through abstraction from the senses. But he is God; that is, the *truest, the most real, the most certain* being. Whence should the truth enter into the senses, the born atheists? God is the being in which existence cannot be separated from essence and concept; God is the being that cannot be thought of in any other way except as existing. Descartes transforms this objective being into a subjective one and the ontological proof into a psychological one; he

transforms the proposition, "because God is thinkable, therefore he exists," into the proposition, "I think, therefore I am." Just as in God, being cannot be separated from being thought, so in me – as I am essentially mind – being cannot be separated from thought; and just as this inseparability is constitutive of the essence in the former, so also is it in the latter. A being – no matter whether in itself or for me – that *exists only to the extent that it is thought of*, and only to the extent that it forms the object of abstraction from all sensuousness, necessarily realises and subjectifies itself in a being that *exists only to the extent that it thinks* and whose essence is abstract thought.

Part II: Critique of Hegel

§ 19

The culmination of modern philosophy is the *Hegelian* philosophy. The *historical necessity and justification* of the new philosophy must therefore be derived mainly from a *critique of Hegel's*.

§ 20 Philosophy & Theology

According to its historical point of departure, the new philosophy has *the same* task and position in relation to *the hitherto existing philosophy as the latter* had in relation to theology. The new philosophy is the *realisation* of the Hegelian philosophy or of all preceding philosophy, but a realisation which is simultaneously the *negation*, and indeed the negation *without contradiction* of this philosophy.

§ 21

The *contradiction* of the modern philosophy, especially of pantheism, consists of the fact that it is the *negation of theology from the standpoint of theology* or the negation of theology which itself is *again theology*; this contradiction *especially characterises the Hegelian philosophy*.

For modern philosophy, and hence also for Hegel, the non-material being or being as a pure object of the intellect, as a pure being of the intellect, is the only true and Absolute Being, that is, God. Even matter, which Spinoza turns into an attribute of the divine substance, is a metaphysical thing, a pure being of the

intellect, for the essential determination of matter as distinguished from the intellect and the activity of thinking – that it is a passive being – is taken away from it. But Hegel differs from earlier philosophy by the fact that he determines the relationship of the material sensuous being to the non-material being differently. The earlier philosophers and theologians held the true divine being to be detached and liberated from nature; that is, from sensuousness or matter. They situated the toil of abstraction and self-liberation from the sensuous *in themselves* in order to arrive at that which in *itself is free* from the sensuous. To this condition of *being free*, they ascribed the blissfulness of the divine, and to this self-liberation, the virtue of the human essence. Hegel, on the other hand, turned this subjective activity into the *self-activity* of the Divine Being. Even God must subject himself to this toil, and must, like pagan heroes, win his divinity through virtue. Only in this way does the freedom of the Absolute from matter, which is, besides, only a precondition and a conception, become reality and truth. This self-liberation from matter, however, can be posited in God only if matter, too, is posited in him. But how can it be posited in him? Only in this way that he himself posits it. But in God there is only God. Hence, the only way to do this is that he posits *himself* as matter, as non-God; that is, as his otherness. In this way, matter is not an antithesis of the ego and the spirit, preceding them, as it were, in an incomprehensible way; it is the *self-alienation* of the Spirit. Thus, matter itself acquires spirit and intellect; it is taken over into the absolute essence as a moment in its life, formation, and development. But then, matter is again posited as an *untrue* being resembling nothingness in so far as only the being that restores itself out of this alienation, that is, that sheds matter and sensuousness off from itself, is pronounced to be the perfect being in its true form. The natural, material, and sensuous – and indeed, the sensuous, not in the vulgar and moral, but in the metaphysical sense – are therefore even here *something to be negated*, like nature which in theology has been poisoned by the original sin. Indeed, the sensuous is

incorporated into reason, the ego, and the spirit, but it is something irrational, a note of discord within reason; it is *the non-ego* in the *ego*, that is, that which *negates* it. For example in Schelling nature in God is the non-divine in God; it is in God and yet outside him; the same is true of the body in the philosophy of Descartes which, although connected with me, that is, with the spirit, is nevertheless external, and does not belong to me, that is, to my essence; it is of no consequence, therefore, whether it is or is not connected with me. Matter will remain *in contradiction* to what is presupposed by philosophy as the true being.

Matter is indeed posited in God, that is, posited as God, and to posit matter as God is as much as saying, "There is no God," or as much as abolishing theology and recognising the truth of materialism. But the fact remains that the truth of theology is at the same time taken for granted. Atheism, the negation of theology, is therefore negated again; this means that theology is restored through philosophy. God is *God* only through the fact that he overcomes and negates matter; that is, the negation of God. And according to Hegel, it is only the negation of the negation that constitutes the true positing. And so in the end, we are back to whence we had started – in the lap of Christian theology. Thus, already in the most central principle of Hegel's philosophy we come across the principle and conclusion of his philosophy of religion to the effect that philosophy, far from abolishing the dogmas of theology, only restores and mediates them through the negation of rationalism. The secret of Hegel's dialectic lies ultimately in this alone, that it ***negates theology through philosophy in order then to negate philosophy through theology***. Both the beginning and the end are constituted by theology; philosophy stands in the middle as the negation of the first positedness, but the negation of the negation is again theology. At first everything is overthrown, but then everything is reinstated in its old place, as in Descartes. The Hegelian philosophy is the last grand attempt to restore a lost and defunct

Christianity through philosophy, and, of course, as is characteristic of the modern era, by *identifying the negation* of Christianity with *Christianity itself*. The much-extolled speculative identity of spirit and matter, of the infinite and the finite, of the divine and the human is nothing more than the wretched contradiction of the modern era having reached its zenith in metaphysics. It is the identity of belief and unbelief, theology and philosophy, religion and atheism, Christianity and paganism. This contradiction escapes the eye and is obfuscated in Hegel only through the fact that the negation of God, or atheism, is turned by him into an objective determination of God; God is determined as a *process*, and atheism as a moment within this process. But a belief that has been reconstructed out of unbelief is as little true belief – because it is always afflicted with its antithesis – as the God who has been reconstructed out of his negation is a true God; he is rather a self-contradictory, an atheistic God.

§ 22 Kant, Fichte & Hegel

Just as the Divine Being is nothing other than the being of man freed from the limits of nature, so is the essence of *absolute idealism* nothing other than *the essence of subjective idealism freed from the limits, and, indeed, rational limits of subjectivity*, that is, from *sensuousness or objectivity* as such. The Hegelian philosophy can therefore be *directly* derived from the Kantian and Fichtean idealism.

Kant says: “If we regard, as is reasonable, the objects of the senses as *mere phenomena*, then we thereby concede at the same time that underlying them there is a *thing in itself*, even if we do not know its nature excepting its phenomenal form; that is, the way our senses are effected by this unknown something. Hence, by virtue of the fact that it is susceptible to the phenomena, the intellect concedes at the same time the

existence of *the things in themselves*, and to that extent we can say that the idea of such entities which underlie the phenomena, that is, the idea of *pure intellectual entities*, is not only permissible but also *inevitable*." The objects of the senses, of experience, are for the intellect, therefore, *mere phenomena and not the truth*, they do not satisfy the intellect, or in other words, they *do not correspond to its essence*. Consequently, the intellect is not at all limited in its essence by sensuousness; otherwise, it would take the sensuous things not to be phenomena but the naked truth. What does not satisfy me, also does not limit and restrict me. Yet the beings of the intellect should not be real objects for the intellect! The Kantian philosophy is the contradiction of *subject and object, essence and existence, thinking and being*. In it, essence falls into the sphere of the intellect and existence into that of the senses. *Existence without essence is mere appearance* – these are sensuous things; *essence without existence is mere thought* – these are entities of the intellect and noumena; they are thought of but they lack existence – at least for us – and objectivity; they are things in themselves, the *true* things; only they are not *real* things, and consequently not objects for the intellect, that is, they can neither be determined nor known by the intellect. But what a contradiction to separate the truth from reality and reality from the truth! If we therefore eliminate this contradiction, we have the philosophy of identity in which the *objects of the intellect*, that is, the *objects that are true because they are thought* are also the real objects, in which the essence and constitution of the *objects* of the intellect correspond to the essence and constitution of the intellect or of the subject, and where the subject is no longer limited and conditioned by something existing apart from it and contradicting its essence. But the subject which has nothing more outside itself and consequently no more limits within itself, is no longer a "finite" subject – no longer the ego to which an object is counterposed; it is the Absolute Being whose theological or popular expression is the word "God." Although it is the same subject and the same ego as in subjective idealism, it is nevertheless *without limits* –

the ego which therefore no longer seems to be an ego, that is, a subjective being, and for that reason is no longer *called ego*.

§ 23 Objective Thought

The Hegelian philosophy is *inverted*, that is, *theological*, idealism, just as the *Spinozist* philosophy is *theological materialism*. It posited the *essence* of the ego *outside* the ego, that is, in separation from it, and it objectified the ego as substance, as God. But in so doing, it expressed – *indirectly* and in a *reverse order* – *the divinity of the ego*, thus making it, as Spinoza makes matter, into an attribute or form of the divine substance, meaning that *man's consciousness of God* is God's own self-consciousness. That means that the being belongs to God and knowing to man. But the being of God, according to Hegel, is actually nothing other than the being of thought, or thought *abstracted from the ego, that is, the thinker*. The Hegelian philosophy has turned thought, that is, the *subjective* being – this, however, conceived without subject, that is, conceived as a being *different* from it – into the *Divine and Absolute Being*.

The secret of "absolute" philosophy is therefore the secret of theology. Just as theology turns the determinations of man into those of God in that it robs these determinations of the specificity through which they are what they are, so, too, does the absolute philosophy. "To think rationally is to be expected of anybody; in order to think of reason as *absolute*, that is, in order to arrive at the standpoint which I demand, it is necessary to *abstract* from thought. For him, who makes this *abstraction*, reason immediately ceases to be something *subjective*, as it is taken to be by most people; indeed, it itself can no longer be thought of as *something objective*, because something objective or something conceived is possible *only in opposition* to something that thinks, a *complete abstraction* from that which is the case here; thus, through this *abstraction*, reason becomes

the true *in-itself* which is situated just at the point where there is no difference between the subjective and the objective." Thus Schelling. But the same applies to Hegel as well, the essence of whose *Logic* is thought denuded of its determinateness through which it is thought or the activity of subjectivity. The third part of the *Logic* is, and it is even expressly called, the *Subjective Logic*, and yet the forms of subjectivity which constitute its object *are not supposed to be subjective*. The concept, the judgment, the conclusion, indeed even the individual forms of conclusion and judgment such as the problematic or assertive judgment, are not our concepts, judgments, and conclusions; no, they are objective forms existing absolutely and in and for themselves. This is how Absolute Philosophy externalises and alienates from man his own being and his own activity! Hence, the violence and torture that it inflicts on our mind. We are required not to think as our own that which is our own; we are called upon to abstract from the determinateness through which something is what it is, that is, we are supposed to think of it *without sense* and take it in the *non-sense* of the absolute. *Non-sense* is the highest essence of theology – of ordinary as well as of speculative theology.

Hegel's disapprobative remark about the philosophy of Fichte to the effect that everyone believes to have the ego in himself, that everyone is reminded of himself and yet does not find the ego in himself is true of speculative philosophy in general. It takes almost everything in a sense in which it is no longer recognisable to anyone. And the source of this evil is, of course, theology. The Divine and Absolute Being must distinguish itself from finite, that is, real being. But we have no determinations for the Absolute except the determinations of real things, be they natural or human things. How do these determinations become the determinations of the absolute? Only in a way in which they are taken not in their real sense, but in another, that is, a completely opposite, sense. Everything that exists within the finite, exists also in the Absolute; but the way it exists within the finite is *completely different* from the way it exists in the Absolute,

where altogether different laws operate than those among us; what is pure non-sense with us is reason and wisdom there. Hence, the boundless arbitrariness of speculation when it uses the name of a thing, without at the same time recognising the concept which is linked with it. Speculation excuses this arbitrariness by claiming that the names it chooses from the language to serve as its own concepts are only remotely similar to them because "ordinary consciousness" connects them with its own ideas; thus, it shifts the blame to the language. But the fault lies in the matter, in the *principle* of speculation itself. The contradiction that exists between the idea and the concept of speculation, between its name and its subject-matter, is nothing other than the old theological contradiction between the determinations of the divine and the human being; when applied to man, these determinations are taken in a proper and real sense, but when applied to God, they are taken only in a symbolical or analogical sense. Of course, philosophy need not bother about the ideas which vulgar usage or misuse associates with a name; but it must bind itself to the determined nature of things whose signs names are.

§ 24 Being & Thought

The identity of thinking and being which is the *central point* in the *philosophy of identity* is nothing other than a *necessary consequence and unfolding* of the *concept of God* as the being whose concept or essence contains existence. Speculative philosophy has only *generalised and* made into an attribute of thought or of the *concept in general* what theology made into an *exclusive attribute of the concept of God*. The identity of thinking and being is therefore only an expression for the *divinity of reason* – the expression thereof that thought or *reason* is the absolute being or the *comprehensive unity of all truth* and reality, that there is *no antithesis* of reason, that rather reason is everything just as, in strict theology, God is everything; that is, all

that essentially and truly is. But a being that is *not distinguished* from thought, that is, a being that is only a *predicate* or determination of reason, or only a *conceived and abstract* being, is, in truth, no being at all. The identity of thinking and being expresses, therefore, only the *identity of thought with itself*. This means that absolute thought is *unable to cleave itself from itself, that it cannot step out of itself to be able to reach being*. Being remains something of the Beyond. Absolute philosophy has, to be sure, turned *the other world of theology into the world of here and now* for us, but for that matter it has turned the *this-sidedness of the real world* into an over-beyond.

The thought of speculative or absolute philosophy determines being distinct *from itself* as the activity of mediation, *as that which is immediate, as that which is unmediated*. For thought – at least for the thought which we are discussing – being is nothing more than this.

Thought posits being as counterposed to itself, but still *within itself*; it thereby immediately and without difficulty eliminates the opposition between being and itself; for being, as the antithesis of thought *within thought*, is nothing itself but thought. If being is nothing more than that which is unmediated, if unmediatedness alone constitutes its distinction from thought, how easy it is then to demonstrate that the determination of unmediatedness, namely, being, belongs to thought as well! If the essence of being is constituted by what is merely a *determination of thought*, how should being be distinguished from thought?

§ 25

The proof that something is has no other meaning than that it is *not just something thought*. This proof *cannot*, however, be derived *from thought itself*. Should *being* accrue to an object of thought, it must accrue to thought itself.

Kant's example of the difference between a hundred dollars in the imagination and a hundred dollars in reality, which he employs for the purpose of designating the difference between thought and being – Hegel derides it – while dwelling on his critique of the ontological proof, is essentially quite correct. For the dollars of the imagination I have only in my *head*, whereas the dollars of reality I have in my *hand*; the former exist only *for me*, but the latter also *for others*, they can be felt and seen. Only that which exists at the same time for me and others, whereon I and others agree, which is not merely mine, but is also *common to all*, really exists.

In thought as such I find myself in identity with myself; and I am absolute master; nothing here contradicts me; here I am judge and litigant at the same time, and consequently, here there is no critical difference between the object and my thoughts about it. But if it is a question exclusively of the *being* of an object, then I cannot look only to myself for advice, but rather must hear witnesses *other than myself*. These witnesses that are distinguished from me as a thinking being are the senses. Being is something in which not only I but also others, and above all *the object itself*, participate. Being means being *a subject*, being for itself. And indeed, it is far from being the same thing whether I am a subject or only an object, whether I am a being for myself or only a being for another being; that is, only a thought. Where I am a mere object of imagination and hence no longer myself, where I am like a man after death, there I have to take everything lying down; there anyone can turn a portrait of mine into a true caricature without my being able to protest against it. But if I still exist, then I can put a spoke in his wheel, then I can make him feel and prove to him that between what I am in his idea of me and what I am in reality; that is, that there is a world of difference between what I am as an object for him and what I am as a subject. In thought, I am an absolute subject; I let everything exist only as my object or predicate; that is, as object or predicate of myself as a thinking being. I am intolerant. In

relation to the activity of my senses, I am, on the other hand, a liberal; I let the object be what I myself am – a subject, a *real* and *self-activating* being. Only sense and only sense perception give me something as *subject*.

§ 26 Being & Abstraction

A being that only thinks and *thinks abstractly*, has no idea at all of what being, existence, and reality are. *Thought is bounded by being*, being qua being is not an object of philosophy, at least not of abstract and absolute philosophy. *Speculative philosophy* itself expresses this indirectly in so far as it *equates being with non-being*, that is, *nothing*. But nothing *cannot be an object of thought*.

Being *in the sense in which it is an object of speculative thought* is that which is purely and simply unmediated, that is, undetermined; in other words, there is *nothing to distinguish and nothing to think of in being*. In its own estimation, however, speculative thought is the measure of all reality; it declares as something only that wherein it finds itself active and which provides it with its material. Consequently, being in and for itself is nothing for abstract thought because it is nothing in relation to thought; that is nothing for thought. It is *devoid of thought*. Precisely because of this, being, as drawn by speculative philosophy into its sphere and vindicated as a concept, is a pure spectre that stands in absolute contradiction to real being and to what man understands by being. For what man understands by being – aptly and according to reason – is *existence, being-for-itself, reality, actuality, and objectivity*. All these determinations or names express one and the same thing, but from different points of view. Being in thought, being *without objectivity, without reality, without being for itself*, is of course nothing; in terms of this *nothing*, however, I only express the nothingness of my own *abstraction*.

§ 27 Being & Essence

Being in Hegel's *Logic* is the *being of the old metaphysics* which is predicated of all things *without distinction* because of its underlying assumption that *all things* agree in that they are. But this *undifferentiated being* is only an *abstract idea* or an *idea without reality*. Being is as *differentiated as things themselves*.

For example, a metaphysical theory from the school of Wolff maintains that God, world, man, table, book, and so forth agree with one another in that they are. And Christian Thomasius says: "Being is everywhere the same; only essence is as manifold as things." This being which is everywhere the same, this undifferentiated and contentless being, is also the being of Hegel's *Logic*. Hegel himself observes that the polemic against the identity of being and nothing arises only out of the fact that a definite content is subsumed under being. But precisely the consciousness of being is always and necessarily linked with *definite* contents. If I abstract from the *content* of being and indeed from all content – for whatever is, is a content of being – then naturally I am left with nothing more than the idea of nothing. And hence, when Hegel reproaches vulgar consciousness for subsuming under being something that does not belong to being, that is, to being as the object of *Logic*, then it is rather he himself who must be reproached for subsuming a groundless abstraction under what man's consciousness justifiably and in keeping with the dictates of reason understands by being. Being is *not a general concept that can be separated from things. It is one with that which is*. It is thinkable only as mediated, that is, only through the predicates which constitute the essence of a thing. Being is wherein essence posits itself. ***That which is my essence is my being.*** The being of the fish is its being in water, and from this being you cannot separate its essence. Language already identifies being and essence. Only in human life does it happen, but even here only in abnormal and unfortunate cases, that being is separated from

essence; only here does it happen that a man's essence is not where his being is, but also that because of this separation a man is not truly with his soul where he really is with his body. *You are only where your heart is.* But all beings, excepting cases contrary to nature, are glad to be where and what they are; this means that their essence is not separated from their being and their being is not separated from their essence. Consequently, you cannot postulate being as simply self-identical, distinct from essence that varies. The notion of *being resulting from a removal of all essential qualities* from things is only *your notion* of being – a fabricated, invented being, a being *without the essence* of Being.

§ 28 Words & Life

The *Hegelian philosophy* has remained unable to overcome the contradiction of thought and being. The Being with which the *Phenomenology* begins stands no less than the Being with which the *Logic* begins in the most direct contradiction to real being.

This contradiction manifests itself in the *Phenomenology* in the form of the "this" and the "general"; for the particular belongs to being, but the general to thought. Now, in the *Phenomenology*, one kind of "this" flows into another kind of "this" in a way indistinguishable for thought. But what an enormous difference there is between a "this" that is the object of abstract thought and a "this" that is the object of reality! *This* wife, for example, is *my* wife, and *this* house is *my* house, although every one speaks, as I do, of his house and his wife, as this house and this wife. The indifference and indistinguishability of the logical "this" is here interrupted and annulled by our sense for the right. Were we to accept the logical "this" in natural law, we would immediately arrive at a community of goods and wives where there is no difference between this one and that one and where every man possesses every woman; we would then come upon a situation

where all right has been abolished, for right is grounded only on the reality of the distinction between this and that.

We have before us in the beginning of the *Phenomenology* nothing but the contradiction between the word, which is general, and the object, which is always particular. And the thought, which depends only on the word, will remain unable to overcome this contradiction. But being that is *spoken or thought* is just as far from being real being as the word is from being the object. Were one to reply that being in Hegel is treated not from the practical, as here, but from the theoretical standpoint, then it must be reciprocated that the practical standpoint is precisely what is needed here. *The question of being is indeed a practical question* it is a question in which our being participates – a question of life and death. And if we stick to our being when it comes to law, then we will also not want the *Logic* to take it away from us. Even the *Logic* must recognise our being, unless it would rather persist in its contradiction with real being. Besides, the practical standpoint – the standpoint of eating and drinking – is adopted even by the *Phenomenology* in refuting the truth of sensuous, that is, particular, being. But here, too, I owe my existence by no means to the verbal or the logical bread – to the bread in itself – but always only to *this* bread, the "*non-verbal*." Being, grounded as it is altogether on such non-verbalities, is therefore itself something non-verbal. Indeed, it is that which cannot be verbalised. Where words cease, life begins and being reveals its secret. If, therefore, non-verbality is the same as irrationality, then all existence is irrational because it is always and forever only *this* existence. But irrational it is not. Existence has meaning and reason in itself, without being verbalised.

§ 29 Abstract & Concrete

Thought that "*seeks to reach beyond its other*" – and the "other of thought" is being – is *thought that oversteps its natural*

boundaries. This reaching beyond its other on the part of thought means that it *claims for itself that which does not properly belong to thought but to being*. That which belongs to *being is particularity and individuality*, whereas that which belongs to *thought is generality*. Thought thus lays claim to particularity; it makes the negation of generality, that is, *particularity*, which is the essential form of sensuousness, *into a moment of thought*. In this way, "abstract" thought or abstract concept, which has being *outside itself*, becomes a "concrete" concept.

But how does it come about that man encroaches upon that which is the property of being? Through theology. In God, being is immediately connected with essence or the concept; particularity, or the form of existence, with generality. The "concrete concept" is *God transformed into concept*. But how does man arrive from "abstract" to "concrete" or absolute thought; how from philosophy to theology? The answer to this question has already been provided by history in the transition from ancient pagan philosophy to the so-called *neo-Platonic* philosophy; for neo-Platonic philosophy differs from ancient philosophy only in that the former is theology, whereas the latter is philosophy. Ancient philosophy had reason, the "idea" for its constitutive principle; but "the idea was not posited by Plato and Aristotle as the all-containing." Ancient philosophy left something existing outside thought – a residue, as it were, that could not be dissolved in thought. The image of this being existing outside thought is *matter* – the substratum of reality. Reason came up against its own *limit* in matter. Ancient philosophy still moved within the distinction between thought and being; for it, thought, mind, or the idea was not yet the *all-encompassing*; that is, the *only, exclusive, and absolute reality*. The ancient philosophers were men whose *wisdom* still had reference to *the world*; they were physiologists, politicians, zoologists; they were, in short, *anthropologists*, not theologians, or at least only partly theologians. Precisely for that reason, of course, they could not but be partial; that is, limited and defective

anthropologists. To the neo-Platonists, on the other hand, matter or the real material world in general is no longer binding and real. Fatherland, family, worldly ties, and goods in general, which the ancient Peripatetic philosophy still regarded as belonging to man's happiness – all this is nothing for the neo-Platonic sage. To him, death is even better than corporeal life; he holds the body as not belonging to his essence; he translocates blissfulness exclusively in the soul while he detaches himself completely from all corporeal, in short, external things. But where man has nothing left outside himself, there he seeks and finds *everything within himself*. There he puts the imaginary and intelligible world in place of the real world so that the former contains everything that is there in the latter, but only in an *abstract and imagined* way. Even matter is to be found in the immaterial world of the neo-Platonists, but only as something ideated, conceived, and imaginary. And where man has no longer a being that is given outside himself, there he sets up a being in his *thought*, which, although *an ideated entity*, has nevertheless the *qualities of a real entity, which as a non-sensuous entity is at the same time a sensuous being*, and which as a *theoretical* object is at the same time a *practical* object. This being is *God* – the highest good of the neo-Platonists. Only in *being* does man feel satisfied. He therefore overcomes the lack of a real being by substituting an ideated being for it, that is, he now ascribes the essence of the relinquished or lost reality to his conceptions and thoughts; his conception is *no longer* a conception, but the *object* itself; the image is *no longer* an image but the thing itself; reality is now idea and thought. Precisely because he no longer relates himself as a subject to a real world as his object, *his conceptions* become for him *objects, beings, spirits, and gods*. The more abstract he is, and the more negative his attitude is toward the real and the sensuous, the more *sensuous* he is *in his abstractions*. God, the One, the highest object and being arrived at by abstracting from all plurality and diversity, that is, from all sensuousness, is known by contact and direct presence (*parousia*). Indeed, what is the highest, the One,

is known equally through *non-cognition* and *ignorance* like that which is the lowest – matter. This means that being that is only ideated and abstract, that is, only non-sensuous and *super-sensuous*, is at the same time a *sensuous* and really existing being.

Just as by decorporealising himself or by negating the *body* – *the rational limit* of subjectivity – man lapses into a fantastic and transcendent practice, surrounding himself with *corporealised* appearances of spirits and gods; that is, *practically* eliminating the distinction between imagination and sense perception. So also does the *difference between thought and being, subjective and objective, sensuous and non-sensuous, theoretically* disappear when *matter* has no *reality* for him and is *consequently not a boundary* limiting the thinking reason; that is, when reason – the intellectual being, or *the essence of subjectivity in general* – is *in its boundlessness the sole and absolute being* for him. Thought negates everything, but only in order to posit everything in itself. It *no longer has a boundary in anything that exists outside itself*, but precisely thereby it itself steps *out of its immanent and natural limits*. In this way reason, the idea, becomes *concrete*; this means that *what should flow from sense perception is made the property of thought and what is the function and concern of the senses, of sensibility and of life, becomes the function and concern of thought*. This is how the *concrete* is turned into a *predicate* of thought, and being into a mere *determination of thought*; for the proposition "*the concept is concrete*" is *identical with the proposition "being is a determination of thought."* What is imagination and fantasy with the neo-Platonists, Hegel has merely transformed into the concept, or in other words, rationalised. Hegel is not the "German or Christian Aristotle"; he is the German *Proclus*. "*Absolute philosophy*" is the *reborn Alexandrian philosophy*. According to Hegel's explicit characterisation, it is not the Aristotelian nor the ancient pagan philosophy in general, but that of the Alexandrian school that is absolute (although still resting on abstraction from concrete self-

consciousness) and Christian philosophy (albeit mixed with pagan ingredients).

It should be further remarked that neo-Platonic theology shows particularly clearly that an object corresponds to its subject and vice versa; that consequently the object of theology is nothing other than the objectified essence of the subject; that is, of man. To the neo-Platonists, God at his highest is the simple, the one, the simple indeterminable and uniform; he is not a being, but rather above being, for being is still something determined due to the fact that it is being; he is not a concept, nor is he intellect, but rather without and above the intellect, for the intellect, too, is something determined by virtue of being intellect; and where there is intellect, there is also distinction and dichotomisation into the thinker and the thought, an activity that cannot take place in that which is absolutely simple. But that which is objectively the highest being for the neo-Platonist, is also subjectively the highest being for him; that which he posits as being in the object, in God, he posits in himself as activity and striving. Having ceased to be distinction, having ceased to be intellect and self, is and means being God. But what God *is*, is precisely what the neo-Platonist strives to *become*; the goal of his activity is to cease "being self, intellect, and reason." Ecstasy or rapture is the highest psychological state that, according to the neo-Platonist, man can achieve. This state, objectified as being, is the Divine Being. Thus, God results from man, but conversely, man does not result from God, at least not originally. This is also shown particularly clearly in the neo-Platonists' characterisation of God as the being who does not stand in need of anything – the blissful being. For in what else has this being without pain and without needs its ground and origin if not in the pain and needs of man? The idea and feeling of blissfulness disappear with the affliction of need and pain. Only contrasted to wretchedness does blissfulness have any reality.

Only in the misery of man lies the birthplace of God. Only from man does God derive all his determinations; God *is* what man *desires* to be; namely, his own essence and goal imagined as an actual being. Herein, too, lies the distinguishing factor separating the neo-Platonists from the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the Sceptics. Existence without passion, bliss, independence from need, freedom, and autonomy were also the goals of these philosophers, but only as virtues of man; this means that these goals were based on the *truth of the concrete and real man*. Freedom and bliss were supposed to belong to this subject as its predicates. Hence, with the neo-Platonists – although they still regarded pagan virtues as true – these predicates became subject; that is, human adjectives were turned into something substantial, into an actually existing being – hence the distinction between the neo-Platonist and Christian theology which transferred man's bliss, perfection, or likeness to God into the beyond. Precisely through this, real man became a mere abstraction lacking flesh and blood, an allegorical figure of the divine being. Plotinus, at least on the evidence of his biographers, was ashamed to have a body.

§ 30 Abstract Realist

The understanding that only the *concrete* concept, that is, *the* concept that contains within itself the nature of the real, is the *true* concept, expresses the recognition of the *truth* of that which is concrete and real. But because from very outset the concept, that is, *the essence of thought, is also presupposed as the absolute and as the only true essence*, the real can be recognized only indirectly — only the necessary and essential adjective of the concept. Hegel is a *realist*, but a *purely idealistic* realist, or rather an abstract realist; namely, a realist abstracting from all reality. He *negates* thought — that is, abstract thought — but he does so *while remaining within abstractive thought* with the result that his negation of abstraction still remains abstraction. Only “that

which is" is the object of philosophy according to Hegel; however, this "is" is again only something *abstract*, only something *conceived*. Hegel is a thinker who *surpasses* himself in thought. His aim is to capture the thing itself, but only in the *thought* of the thing; he wants to be *outside* of thought, but still remaining *within thought* — hence the difficulty in grasping the *concrete* concept.

Part III: Principles of the New Philosophy

§ 31

The recognition of the *light of reality* within the *darkness of abstraction* is a *contradiction* – both the affirmation and the negation of the real at one and the same time. The *new philosophy*, which thinks the *concrete* not in an abstract but a concrete way, which acknowledges the real *in its reality* – that is, in a way corresponding to the being of the real as true, which elevates it into the *principle* and *object* of philosophy – is consequently the *truth* of the Hegelian philosophy, indeed of *modern philosophy as a whole*.

To look at it more closely, the historical necessity, or the genesis of the new philosophy from the old, results as follows. According to Hegel, the concrete concept, the idea, exists at first only in an abstract way, only in the element of thought – the rationalised God of theology *before the creation of the world*. But the manner in which God expresses, manifests, and realises himself, the manner in which he becomes worldly, is the same as that in which the idea realises itself: Hegel's philosophy is the history of theology transformed into a logical process. But if the realisation of the idea takes us into the realm of realism, if the *truth* of the idea is that it *really* is, that it *exists*, then we have indeed raised *existence* into the *criterion of truth*: *True* is what *really* exists. The only question then is: What really exists? is it alone that which is thought? That which is the object of thought and intellect? But we shall never in this way get beyond the idea *in abstracts*. The Platonic idea, too, is the object of thought; the heavenly hereafter, too, is an inner object – the object of belief and imagination. If the reality of thought is reality *as thought*, it is

itself only thought, and we are forever imprisoned in the *identity of thought with itself*, in idealism – an idealism that differs from subjective idealism only in so far as it encompasses the whole of reality, subsuming it under the predicates of thought. Hence, should the reality of thought be a matter of *real seriousness* to us, something other than thought must accrue to it: It must, as *realised thought*, be other than what it is as *unrealised, pure thought* – the object not only of thought, but also of non-thought. That thought realises itself means simply that it *negates* itself, ceases to be mere thought. Now what is this non-thought, this something different from thought? It is the sensuous. That thought realises itself means, accordingly, that it makes itself the *object of the senses*. Thus, the reality of the Idea is *sensuousness*, but reality is also the *truth* of the Idea – hence sensuousness is the truth of the Idea. But in this way we have at the same time made sensuousness the predicate, and the Idea or thought, the subject. The only question is, why does the Idea take on sensuousness? Why does it *cease* to be *true* when it is *not real or sensuous*? Is not its truth thus made dependent on sensuousness? Are not significance and value thus being conceded to the sensuous as such; that is, apart from its being the reality of the Idea? If taken by itself, sensuousness is nothing, why is it needed by the Idea? If value and content are bestowed upon sensuousness by the Idea, sensuousness is pure luxury and trumpery – only an illusion which thought practices upon itself. But it is not so. The demand that the Idea realise itself, that it assume sensuousness arises from the fact that sensuous reality is *unconsciously held to be the truth which is both prior to and independent of thought*. Thought proves its truth by taking recourse to sensuousness; how could this be possible if sensuousness was not *unconsciously* held to be the truth? But since one *consciously* proceeds from the truth of thought, the truth of sensuousness is acknowledged only in retrospect whereby sensuousness is reduced merely to an attribute of the Idea. But this is a contradiction; for sensuousness is an attribute and yet it lends truth to thought; that is, it is both essential and

inessential, both substance and accident. The only way out of this contradiction is to regard sensuous reality as *its own subject*; to give it an absolutely independent, divine, and primary significance, not one derived from the Idea.

§ 32

Taken in its reality or regarded as *real*, the real is the object of the senses – the *sensuous*. Truth, reality, and sensuousness are one and the same thing. Only a sensuous being is a *true and real* being. Only through the senses is an object given *in the true sense*, not through thought *for itself*. The object given by and identical with ideation is merely thought.

An object, i.e., a real object, is given to me only if a being is given to me in a way that it affects me, only if my own activity – when I proceed from the standpoint of thought – experiences the activity of another being as a *limit* or boundary to itself. The concept of the object is originally nothing else but the concept of another I – everything appears to man in childhood as a freely and arbitrarily acting being – which means that in principle the concept of the *object* is mediated through the, concept of You, the *objective ego*. To use the language of Fichte, an object or an alter ego is given not to the ego, but to the non-ego in me; for only where I am transformed from an ego into a You – that is, where I am passive – does the idea of an activity *existing outside myself*, the idea of objectivity, really originate. But it is only through the senses that the ego is also non-ego.

A question characteristic of earlier abstract philosophy is the following: How can different independent entities or substances act upon one another, for example, the body upon the soul or ego? in so far as this question was an abstraction from sensuousness, in so far as the supposedly interacting substances were abstract entities, purely intellectual creatures, philosophy was unable to resolve it. The mystery of their interaction can be

solved only by sensuousness. Only sensuous beings act upon one another.

I am I – for myself – and at the same time You – for others. But I am You only in so far as I am a sensuous being. But the abstract intellect isolates being-for-self as substance, ego, or God; it can, therefore, only arbitrarily connect being-for-others with being-for-self, for the necessity for this connection is sensuousness alone. But then it is precisely sensuousness from which the abstract intellect abstracts. What I think in isolation from sensuousness is what I think without and outside all connections. Hence the question: How can I think the unconnected to be at the same time connected?

§ 33

The new philosophy looks upon being – being as given to us not only as thinking, but also as really existing being – *as the object of being, as its own object*. Being as the object of being – and *this* alone is truly, and deserves the name of, being – is sensuous being; that is, the being involved in sense perception, feeling, and love. Or in other words, being is a *secret* underlying sense perception, feeling, and love.

Only in feeling and love has the demonstrative *this* – this person, this thing, that is, the particular – absolute value; only then is the *finite infinite*. In this and this alone does the infinite depth, divinity, and truth of love consist. In love alone resides the truth and reality of the God who counts the hairs on your head. The Christian God himself is only an abstraction from human love and an image of it. And since the demonstrative *this* owes its absolute value to love alone, it is only in love – not in abstract thought – that the secret of being is revealed. Love is passion, and passion alone is the distinctive mark of existence. Only that which is an object of passion, exists – whether as reality or possibility. Abstract thought, which is devoid of feeling and

passion, abolishes *the distinction between being and non-being*; non-existent for thought, this distinction is a reality for love. To love is nothing else than to become aware of this distinction. It is a matter of complete indifference to someone who loves nothing whether something exists or not, and be that what it may. But just as being as distinguished from non-being is given to me through love or feeling in general, so is everything else that is other than me given to me through love. Pain is a loud protest against identifying the subjective with the objective. The pain of love means that what is in the mind is not given in reality, or in other words, the subjective is here the objective, the concept itself the object. But this is precisely what ought not to be, what is a contradiction, an untruth, a misfortune – hence, the desire for that true state of affairs in which the subjective and the objective are not identical. Even physical pain clearly expresses this distinction. The pain of hunger means that there is nothing objective inside the stomach, that the stomach is, so to speak, its own object, that its empty walls grind against each other instead of grinding some content. Human feelings have, therefore, no empirical or anthropological significance in the sense of the old transcendental philosophy; they have, rather, an ontological and metaphysical significance: Feelings, everyday feelings, contain the deepest and highest truths. Thus, for example, love is the true *ontological* demonstration of the existence of objects apart from our head: There is no other proof of being except love or feeling in general. Only that whose *being brings you joy* and whose *not-being*, pain has existence. The difference between subject and object, being and non-being is as *happy* a difference as it is *painful*.

§ 34

The new philosophy bases itself on the *truth of love*, on the *truth of feeling*. In love, in feeling in general, *every human being confesses to, the truth of the new philosophy*. As far as its basis is

concerned, the new philosophy is nothing but *the essence of feeling raised to consciousness* – it only *affirms in the form and through the medium of reason what every man – every real man – admits in his heart*. It is the heart made aware of itself as reason. The heart demands *real and sensuous objects, real and sensuous beings*.

§ 35

The old philosophy maintained that that which *could not be thought of* also did not exist; the new philosophy maintains that that which is not loved or *cannot be loved does not exist*. But that which cannot be loved can also not be adored. That which is the *object of religion can* alone be the object of philosophy.

Love is not only objectively but also subjectively the criterion of being, the criterion of truth and reality. *Where there is no love there is also no truth*. And only he who *loves something* is also something – to *be nothing* and to *love nothing* is one and the same thing. The more one is, the more one loves, and vice versa.

§ 36

The old philosophy had its point of departure in the proposition: I am an abstract, a merely thinking being to which the body does not belong. The new philosophy proceeds from the principle: I am a real and sensuous *being*. *Indeed, the whole of my body is my ego, my being itself*. The old philosopher, therefore, thought in a *constant contradiction to and conflict with the senses* in order to avoid sensuous conceptions, or in order not to pollute abstract concepts. In contrast, the new philosopher thinks *in peace and harmony with the senses*. The old philosophy conceded the truth of sensuousness *only in a concealed way*, only in terms of the *concept, only unconsciously and unwillingly*, only because it had to. This is borne out even by its concept of God as the being who

encompasses all other beings within himself, for he was held to be distinct from a merely conceived being; that is, he was held to be existing outside the mind, outside thought – a really objective, sensuous being. In contrast, the new philosophy *joyfully and consciously* recognises the truth of sensuousness: It is a *sensuous* philosophy with an *open heart*.

§ 37

The philosophy of the modern era was in search of something *immediately certain*. Hence, it rejected the *baseless* thought of the Scholastics and grounded philosophy on *self-consciousness*. That is, it posited the *thinking* being, the ego, the self-conscious mind in place of the merely conceived being or in place of God, the highest and ultimate being of all Scholastic philosophy; for a being who thinks is infinitely closer to a thinking being, infinitely more actual and certain than a being who is only conceived. Doubtful is the existence of God, doubtful is in fact anything I could think of; but indubitable is that I am, I who think and doubt. Yet this self-consciousness in modern philosophy is again something that is only conceived, only mediated through abstraction, and hence something that can be doubted. *Indubitable and immediately certain* is only that which is *the object of the senses, of perception and feeling*.

§ 38

True and divine is only that which *requires no proof*, that which is *certain immediately through itself*, that which *speaks immediately for itself* and carries the affirmation of its being within itself; in short, that which is *purely and simply* unquestionable, indubitable, and as clear as the *sun*. But only the sensuous is as clear as the sun. When sensuousness begins all doubts and quarrels cease. The secret of *immediate* knowledge is *sensuousness*.

All is mediated, says the Hegelian philosophy. But something is *true* only when it is no longer mediated; that is when it is immediate. Thus, new historical epochs originate only when something, having so far existed in the mediated form of conception, becomes the object of immediate and sensuous certainty; that is, only when something – erstwhile only thought – becomes a *truth*. To make out of mediation a divine necessity or an essential quality of truth is mere scholasticism. The necessity of mediation is only a *limited* one; it is necessary only where a *wrong presupposition* is involved; where a different truth or doctrine, contradicting an established one which is still held to be valid and respected, arises. A truth that *mediates itself* is a truth that still has its opposite clinging to it. The opposite is taken as the starting point, but is later on discarded. Now, if it is all along something to be discarded or negated, why should I then proceed from it rather than from its negation? Let us illustrate this by an example. God as God is an abstract being; he particularises, determines, or realises himself in the world and in man. This is what makes him concrete and hereby is his abstract being negated. But why should I not proceed directly from the concrete? Why, after all, should that which owes its truth and certainty only to itself not stand higher than that whose certainty depends on the nothingness of its opposite? Who would, therefore, give mediation the status of necessity or make a principle of truth out of it? Only he who is still imprisoned in that which is to be negated; only he who is still *in conflict and strife with himself*. Only he who has *not yet fully made up his mind* – in short, only he who regards truth as a matter of talent, of a particular, albeit outstanding faculty, but not of genius, not of the whole man. Genius is immediate sensuous knowledge. Talent is merely head, but genius is flesh and blood. That which is only an object of thought for talent is an object of the senses for genius.

The old absolute philosophy drove away the senses into the region of appearance and finitude; and yet contradicting itself, it determined the *absolute, the divine* as an *object of art*. But an object of art is – in a mediated form in the spoken, in an unmediated form in the plastic arts – an object of vision, hearing, and feeling. Not only is the finite and phenomenal being, but also the divine, the true being, an object of the senses – the *senses are the organs of the absolute*. Art "presents the truth by means of the sensuous" – Properly understood and expressed, this means that *art presents the truth of the sensuous*.

§ 40

What applies to art, applies to *religion*. The essence of the Christian religion is not ideation but *sensuous perception* – the form and organ of the *highest and divine being*. But if sensuous perception is taken to be the *organ of the Divine and True Being*, the Divine Being is expressed and acknowledged as a sensuous being, just as the sensuous is expressed and acknowledged as the *Divine Being*; for *subject and object correspond to each other*.

"And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw its glory." Only for later generations is the object of the Christian religion an object of conception and fantasy; but this goes together with a restoration of the original sensuous perception. In Heaven, Christ or God is the object of *immediate sensuous perception*; there he turns from an *object of conception and thought* – that is, from a *spiritual being* which he is for us here – into a *sensuous, feelable, visible being*. And – remembering that the goal corresponds to the origin – this is, therefore, the essence of Christianity. Speculative philosophy has, therefore, grasped and presented art and religion not in the true light, not in the light of reality, but only in the twilight of reflection in so far as in keeping with its principle – abstraction from sensuousness – it dissolved sensuousness into the formal determinateness of

art and religion: Art is God in the formal determinateness of sensuous perception, whereas religion is God in that of conception. But that which appears to reflection as a mere form is in truth essence. Where God appears and is worshiped in the fire, there it is that fire is in actual truth worshiped as God. God *in* the fire is nothing else than the being of fire which is so striking to men because of its effects and qualities; *God in man* is nothing else than *the being of man*. And, similarly, that which art represents in the form of sensuousness is nothing else than *the very essence of sensuousness that is inseparable from this form*.

§ 41

It is not only "external" things that are objects of the senses. *Man, too, is given to himself only through the senses; only as a sensuous object is he an object for himself. The identity of subject and object – in self-consciousness only an abstract thought – has the character of truth and reality only in man's sensuous perception of man.*

We feel not only stones and wood, not only flesh and bones, but also feelings when we press the hands or lips of a feeling being; we perceive through our ears not only the murmur of water and the rustle of leaves, but also the soulful voice of love and wisdom; we see not only mirror-like surfaces and spectres of colour, but we also gaze into the gaze of man. Hence, not only that which is external, but also that which is internal, not only flesh, but also spirit, not only things, but also the *ego* is an object of the senses. All is therefore capable of being perceived through the senses, even if only in a mediated and not immediate way, even if not with the help of crude and vulgar senses, but only through those that are cultivated; even if not with the eyes of the anatomist and the chemist, but only with those of the philosopher. Empiricism is therefore perfectly justified in regarding ideas as originating from the senses; but what it

forgets is that the most essential sensuous object for man is *man himself*; that only in man's glimpse of man does the spark of consciousness and intellect spring. And this goes to show that idealism is right in so far as it sees the origin of ideas in man; but it is wrong in so far as it derives these ideas from man understood as an isolated being, as mere soul existing for himself; in one word, it is wrong when it derives the ideas from an ego that is not given in the context of its togetherness with a perceptibly given You. Ideas spring only from conversation and communication. Not alone but only within a dual relationship does one have concepts and reason in general. It takes two human beings to give birth to a man, to physical as well as spiritual man; the togetherness of man with man is the first principle and the criterion of truth and universality. Even the certitude of those things that exist outside me is given to me through the certitude of the existence of other men besides myself. That which is seen by me alone is open to question, but that which is seen also by another person is certain.

§ 42

The distinction between essence and appearance, cause and effect, substance and accident, necessity and contingency, speculative and empirical does not mean that there are two different realms or worlds – the supersensuous world which is essence, and the sensuous world which is appearance; rather, *this distinction is internal to sensuousness itself*. Let us take an example from the natural sciences. In Linnaeus's system of plants the first groups are determined according to the number of filaments. But in the eleventh group where twelve to twenty stamens occur – and more so in the group of twenty stamens and polystamens – the numerical determinations become irrelevant; counting is of no use any more. Here in one and the same area we have therefore, before us the difference between definite and indefinite, necessary and indifferent, rational and

irrational multiplicity. This means that we *need not go beyond sensuousness* to arrive, in the sense of the *Absolute Philosophy*, at the *limit of the merely sensuous and empirical*; all we have to do is *not separate the intellect from the senses* in order to find the supersensuous – spirit and reason – within *the sensuous*.

§ 43

The sensuous is not the immediate in the sense of speculative philosophy; i.e., in the sense in which it is the *profane, the readily obvious, the thoughtless, the self-evident*. According to speculative philosophy the immediate sensuous perception comes *later* than conception and fantasy. Man's *first* conception is itself only a conception based on imagination and fantasy. The task of philosophy and science consists, therefore, *not in turning away from sensuous* – i.e., *real* things – but in *turning towards them* – not in transforming *objects into thoughts* and ideas, but in making visible – i.e., objective – what is invisible to common eyes.

In the beginning men see things *as they appear to them*, not as they are. What they see in things is not they themselves, but their own ideas about them; they transpose their own being into things, and do not distinguish between an object and the idea of it. To the subjective and uncultivated man, imagined reality is *closer* than actually perceived reality, for in perceiving it he is compelled to move out of himself, but in imagining it he *remains inside himself*. And just as it is with imagination, so it is with thought. Initially and for far longer, men occupy themselves with heavenly, with divine things rather than with earthly things; that is, initially and for far longer they occupy themselves with things *translated into thoughts* rather than with *things in the original*, with things in their *own innate* language. Only in the modern era has mankind – as once in Greece after a foregoing era of the oriental dream-world – found its way back to a *sensuous*, i.e.,

unadulterated and objective perception of the sensuous or the real. But with this, it has also found its way *back to itself*, for a man who occupies himself only with creatures of the imagination and abstract thought is himself only an abstract or fantastic, not a *real*, not a truly human being. The reality of man depends on the reality of his objects. If you *have* nothing, you *are* nothing.

§ 44

Space and time are not mere forms of appearance: They are essential conditions, rational forms, and laws of being as well as of thought. "Here-being" is the being that comes first, the being that is the first to be determined. Here I am – that is the first sign of a real and living being. The index finger shows the way from nothingness to being. Saying here is the first boundary, the first demarcation. I am here, you are there; in between there is a distance separating us; this is what makes it possible for both of us to exist without jeopardising each other; there is enough room. The sun is not where Mercury is, and Mercury is not where Venus is; the eye is not where the ear is, and so on. Where there is no space, there is also no place for any system. The first determination of reason upon which every other determination rests is to situate things. Although space immediately presupposes its differentiation into places, the organising work of nature begins with a distribution of locations. Only in space does reason orient itself. The first question asked by awakening consciousness, the first question of practical wisdom is: Where am I? The first virtue that we inculcate in the child, the raw material of man, is that of being limited by space and time, and the first difference that we teach it is the difference of place, the difference between what is proper and what is improper. What the distinction of place means is indifferent to the unfinished man; like the fool, he does everything at all places without distinction. Fools, therefore, achieve reason when they recover

the sense for time and place. To put different things in different places, to allot different places to things that differ in quality – that is the condition for all economy including even that of the mind. Not to put in the text what belongs to the footnotes, not to put at the beginning what is to be put at the end, in short, spatial differentiation and limitation belong also to the wisdom of the writer.

It is true that we are speaking here of a definite kind of place; but even so the question is nothing else than that of the determination of place. And I cannot separate place from space were I to grasp space in its *reality*. The concept of space arises in me when I ask: Where? This question as to where is universal and applies to every place without distinction; and yet it is particular. As the positing of the particular "where" is simultaneously a positing of the universal "where," so the universality of space is posited with the particularity of place. But precisely for that reason the general concept of space can be a real and concrete concept only if it includes the particularity of place. Hegel attributes to space – as to nature in general – a *negative* determination. Nevertheless, "here-being" is positive. I am *not there because I am here* – *this* not – being-there is therefore only a consequence of the positive and emphatic here-being. The separation of here from there is by no means a limit in itself; only your imagination regards it as such. That they are separate is something that *ought to be* the case, something that does not contradict but corresponds to reason. But this separation is a negative determination in Hegel because it is a separation of that which *ought not to be* separate – because the logical concept, understood as absolute self-identity, is what Hegel regards as the truth; space is to him the *negation* of the Idea, of reason, and hence the only means by which reason can be put back into the Idea is to *negate* it (the Idea). But far from being the negation of reason, space is the first sphere of reason, for it is space that makes room for the idea, for reason. Where there are no spatial distinctions, there are also no logical

distinctions. Or vice versa – should we depart, like Hegel, from Logic to space – where there is no distinction, there is no space. Distinctions in thought arise out of the activity of distinguishing; whatever arises out of the activity of distinguishing is spatially set apart. Spatial distinctions are, therefore, the *truth* of logical distinctions. But only that which exists separately can also be thought as forming a sequence. Real thought is thought in time and space. Even the negation of time and space (duration) must fall *within* time and space themselves. Only in order to *gain time and space*, do we wish to save them.

§ 45

Things in thought should not be different from what they are in reality. What is separate in reality should not be identical in thought. To exclude thinking or ideas – the intellectual world of the neo-Platonists – from *the laws of reality* is the *privilege of theological capriciousness*. The *laws of reality* are also the *laws of thought*.

§ 46

The immediate unity of opposite determinations is possible and valid only in abstraction. In reality, contradictory statements are always linked by means of an intermediary concept. This intermediary concept is the *object* to which those statements refer; it is their *subject*.

Nothing is therefore easier than to demonstrate the unity of opposite predicates; all one needs is to abstract from the object underlying the predicates or from the subject of these predicates. Once the object has thus vanished, the boundary between the opposites also vanishes; having no ground to stand on and nothing to hold on to, they immediately collapse and lose themselves in indistinction. If, for example, I regard being only

as such, that is, if I abstract from every determination whatsoever, being will be the same for me as nothing. Determinateness is indeed the only difference or boundary between being and nothing. If I disregard *that which* is, what then is this mere "is" about? But what applies to *this* particular case of opposites and their identity applies to all other opposites in speculative philosophy.

§ 47

The only means by which *opposite or contradictory determinations are united* in one and the same being in a way corresponding to reality is in *time*.

This is true at least in the case of living beings. Only here, for example in man, does the contradiction appear that I am now filled and swayed by this determination – this particular feeling, this particular intention – and now by another, opposite determination. Only where one idea ousts another, where one feeling drives the other out, where nothing is finally settled, where no lasting determination emerges, where the soul continually alternates between opposite states – there alone does the soul find itself in the hellish pain of contradiction. Were I to unite contradictory determinations within myself, the result would be their mutual neutralisation and loss of character, not unlike the opposite elements of a chemical process which lose their difference in a neutral product. But the pain of contradiction consists precisely in the fact that I passionately am and want to be at the present moment what I equally emphatically am not and do not want to be in the following, in the fact that positing and negating follow each other, both opposing each other and *each*, with the exclusion of the *other*, affecting me with all its determinateness and sharpness.

§ 48

The *real* can be presented in thought not as a *whole* but only *in parts*. This distinction is normal; it lies in the nature of thought whose essence is generality as distinct from reality whose essence is individuality. That in spite of this distinction no *formal contradiction* may arise between *thought and reality* can be achieved only if thought does not proceed in a straight line or within its self-identity, but is interrupted by sensuous perception. Only that thought which is *determined and rectified by sensuous perception* is real *objective* thought – the thought of *objective truth*.

The most important thing to realise is that absolute thought, that is, thought which is isolated and cut off from sensuousness, *cannot get beyond formal identity* – the *identity of thought with itself*; for although thought or concept is determined as the unity of opposite determinations, the fact remains that these determinations are themselves only abstractions, thought-determinations – hence, always repetitions of the self-identity of thought, only *multipla* of identity as the absolutely true point of departure. The Other as counterposed to the Idea, but posited by the Idea itself, is not truly and in reality distinguished from it, not allowed to exist outside the Idea, or if it is, then only *pro forma*, only in appearance to demonstrate the liberality of the idea; for the *Other* of the Idea is *itself Idea* with the only difference that it does not yet have the form of the idea, that it is not yet posited and realised as such. Thought *confined to itself* is thus unable to arrive at anything positively distinct from and opposed to itself; for that very reason it also has no other criterion of truth except that something does not contradict the Idea or thought – only a formal, subjective criterion that is not in a position to decide whether the truth of thought is also the truth of reality. All criterion which alone can decide this question is *sensuous perception*. One should always hear the opponent. And sensuous perception is precisely the *antagonist of thought*. Sensuous perception takes things in a *broad* sense, but thought takes them in the *narrowest* sense; perception leaves things in

their *unlimited freedom*, but thought imposes on them *laws* that are only too often *despotic*; perception introduces clarity into the head, but without *determining or deciding* anything; thought performs a determining function, but it also often makes the mind narrow; perception in itself has no *principles* and thought in itself has no *life*; the rule is the *way of thought* and exception to the rule is *that of perception*. Hence, just as true perception is perception determined by thought, so true thought is the thought that has been enlarged and opened up by perception so as to correspond to the essence of reality. The thought that is identical, and exists in an uninterrupted continuity, with itself, lets the world circle, in contradiction to reality, around itself as its center; but the thought that is *interrupted* through the observation as to the irregularity of this movement, or through the anomaly of perception, transforms this circular movement into an *elliptical* one in accordance with the truth. The *circle* is the symbol, the coat of arms of *speculative* philosophy, of the thought that has *only itself* to support itself. The Hegelian philosophy, too, as we know, is a circle of circles, although in relation to the planets it declares – and led to this by empirical evidence – the circular course to be "the course of a *defectively regular* movement"; in contrast to the circle, the *ellipse* is the symbol, the coat of arms of *sensuous* philosophy, of thought that is based on *perception*.

§ 49

Only those determinations are productive of *real* knowledge which *determine the object by the object itself*, that is, *by its own individual* determinations but *not* those that are *general*, as for example the logico-metaphysical determinations that, being applicable to *all objects without distinction*, *determine no object*.

Hegel was therefore quite justified in transforming the logico-metaphysical determinations from determinations of objects

into independent determinations – namely, into the determinations of the Concept – quite justified in turning them from predicates – this is what they were in the old metaphysics – into subjects, thus attributing to metaphysics or logic the significance of a self-sufficient divine knowledge. But it is a contradiction when these logico-metaphysical shadows are made, in the concrete sciences in exactly the same way as in the old metaphysics, into the determinations of real things – something that is naturally possible only in so far as either the concrete determinations – that is, those that are appropriate because of their derivation from the object – are connected with the logico-metaphysical determinations, or the object is reduced to wholly *abstract* determinations in which it is *no longer recognisable*.

§ 50

The real in its reality and totality, the object of the new philosophy, is the object also of a real and total being. The new philosophy therefore regards as its epistemological principle, as its subject, not the ego, not the absolute – i.e., abstract spirit, in short, not reason for itself alone – but the real and the whole being of man. Man alone is the reality, the subject of reason. It is man who thinks, not the ego, not reason. The new philosophy does not depend on the divinity; i.e., the truth of reason for itself alone. Rather, it depends on the divinity, i.e., the truth of the whole man. Or, to put it more appropriately, the new philosophy is certainly based on reason as well, but on a reason whose being is the same as the being of man; that is, it is based not on an empty, colourless, nameless reason, but on a reason that is of the very blood of man. If the motto of the old philosophy was: “The rational alone is the true and real,” the motto of the new philosophy is: “The human alone is the true and real,” for the human alone is the rational; man is the measure of reason.

The *unity of thought and being* has meaning and truth only if *man* is comprehended as the *basis and subject* of this unity. Only a *real being cognises real things*; only where thought is not its own subject but the *predicate* of a *real being* is it *not separated* from being. The unity of thought and being is therefore not formal, meaning that *being as a determination* does not belong to *thought* in and for itself; rather, this unity depends on the *object, the content* of thought.

From this arises the following categorical imperative: Desire not to be a philosopher if being a philosopher means being different to man; do not be anything more than a *thinking man*; think not as a thinker, that is, not as one confined to a faculty which is *isolated* in so far as it is *torn away* from the totality of the real being of man; think as a *living, real being*, in which capacity you are exposed to the vivifying and refreshing waves of the ocean of the world; think as one who exists, as one who is *in the world* and is part of the world, not as one in the vacuum of abstraction, not as a solitary monad, not as an absolute monarch, not as an unconcerned, extra-worldly God; only then can you be sure that being and thought are united in all your thinking. How should thought as the activity of a real being not grasp real things and entities? Only when thought is cut off from man and confined to itself do embarrassing, fruitless, and, from the standpoint of an isolated thought, unresolvable questions arise: How does thought reach being, reach the object? For *confined to itself*, that is, posited *outside* man, thought is outside all ties and connections with the world. You elevate yourself to an object only in so far as you lower yourself so as to be an object for others. You think only because your *thoughts* themselves can be thought, and they are true only if they pass the test of objectivity, that is, when someone else, to whom they are given as objects, acknowledges them as such. You see because you are yourself a visible being, you feel because you are yourself a feelable being.

Only to an open mind does the world stand open, and the *openings of the mind* are only the senses. But the thought that exists in isolation, that is *enclosed in itself*, is detached from the senses, cut off from man, is outside man – that thought is *absolute subject* which cannot or ought not to be an object for others. But precisely for that reason, and despite all efforts, it is *forever unable to cross over to the object*, to being; it is like a head separated from the body, which must remain unable to seize hold of an object because it lacks the means, the organs to do so.

§ 52

The new philosophy is the *complete and absolute dissolution of theology into anthropology*, a dissolution in *which all contradictions have been overcome*; for the new philosophy is the dissolution of theology not only in reason – this was effected by the old philosophy – but also in the *heart*. In short, in the *whole and real* being of man. In this regard, it is only the *necessary outcome* of the old philosophy; for that which was once dissolved in reason must dissolve itself in *life*, in the *heart*, in the *blood* of man; but as a *new and independent* truth, the new philosophy is also the truth of the old philosophy, for only *a truth that has become flesh and blood is the truth*. The old philosophy *necessarily* relapsed into theology, for that which is sublated only *in reason*, only in the concept, still has an *antithesis* in the *heart*. The new philosophy, on the other hand, *cannot suffer such a relapse* because there is nothing to relapse into; that which is dead in both body and soul cannot return even as a ghost.

§ 53

It is by no means only through thinking that man is distinguished from the animal. Rather, his *whole being* constitutes his distinction from the animal. It is true that he who

does not think is not a man; but this is so not because thinking is the cause, but only because it is a *necessary consequence and quality* of man's being.

Hence, here too we need not go beyond the realm of sensuousness in order to recognise man as a being superior to animals. Man is not a particular being like the animal; rather, he is a *universal* being; he is therefore not a limited and unfree but an unlimited and free being, for universality, being without limit, and freedom are inseparable. And this freedom is not the property of just one *special* faculty, say, the will, nor does this universality reside in a special faculty of thinking called reason; this freedom, this universality applies to the *whole* being of man. The senses of the animal are certainly keener than those of man, but they are so only in relation to certain things that are necessarily linked with the needs of the animal; and they are keener precisely because of the determination that they are limited by being exclusively directed towards some definite objects. Man does not possess the sense of smell of a hunting dog or a raven, but because his sense of smell encompasses all kinds of smell, it is free and also indifferent to particular smells. But where a sense is elevated above the limits of particularity and above being tied down to needs, it is elevated to an *independent*, to a *theoretical* significance and dignity – universal sense is *intellect*, and universal sensuousness is *intellectuality*. Even the lowest senses – smell and taste – are elevated in man to intellectual and scientific activities. The smell and taste of things are objects of natural science. Indeed, even the *stomach* of man, no matter how contemptuously we look down upon it, is something human and not animal because it is universal; that is, not limited to certain kinds of food. That is why man is free from that ferocious voracity with which the animal hurls itself on its prey. Leave a man his head, but give him the stomach of a lion or a horse, and he will certainly cease to be a man. A limited stomach is compatible only with a limited, that is, animal sense. Man's moral and rational relationship to his stomach consists

therefore in his according it a human and not a beastly treatment. He who thinks that what is important to mankind is stomach, and that stomach is something animal, also authorises man to be bestial in his eating.

§ 54

The new philosophy makes *man, together with nature* as the basis of man, the *exclusive, universal, and highest* object of philosophy; it makes *anthropology*, together with *physiology*, the universal science.

§ 55

Art, religion, philosophy, and science are only expressions or manifestations of the *true being of man*. A man is truly and perfectly man only when he possesses an *aesthetic or artistic, religious or moral, philosophical or scientific* sense. And only he who *excludes from himself* nothing that is *essentially human* is, strictly speaking, man. *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto* – this sentence, taken in its *universal and highest meaning*, is the *motto* of the *new philosophy*.

§ 56

The philosophy of Absolute Identity has completely mislocated the standpoint of truth. The *natural standpoint* of man, the standpoint of the *distinction between "I" and "You,"* between *subject and object* is the *true*, the absolute standpoint and, hence, also the *standpoint of philosophy*.

§ 57

The *true unity of head and heart* does not consist in wiping out or covering up their difference, but rather in the recognition that *the essential object of the heart* is also *the essential object of the head*, or in the identity of the *object*. The new philosophy, which makes the essential and highest object of the heart – man – also the essential and highest object of the intellect, lays the foundation of a rational unity of head and heart, of thought and life.

§ 58

Truth does not exist in thought, nor in cognition confined to itself. *Truth is only the totality of man's life and being.*

§ 59

The single man *in isolation* possesses in himself the *essence* of man neither as a *moral* nor as a *thinking* being. *The essence* of man is contained only in the community, in the *unity of man with man* – a unity, however, that rests on the *reality* of the *distinction* between “I” and “You”.

§ 60

Solitude means being *finite and limited*, *community* means being *free and infinite*. For *himself* alone, man is just man (in the ordinary sense); but *man with man* – the unity of “I” and “You” – that is *God*.

§ 61

The absolute philosopher said, or at least thought of himself – naturally as a *thinker* and not as a man – “*vérité c'est moi*,” in a way analogous to the absolute monarch claiming, “*L'État c'est*

moi," or the absolute God claiming, "*L'être c'est moi.*" The human philosopher, on the other hand, says: Even in thought, even as a philosopher, *I am a man in togetherness with men.*

§ 62

The *true* dialectic is not a *monologue of the solitary thinker with himself.* It is a *dialogue between "I" and "You".*

§ 63

The *Trinity* was the *highest mystery*, the central point of the *absolute philosophy and religion.* But the secret of the Trinity, as demonstrated historically and philosophically in the *Essence of Christianity*, is the secret of *communal and social life* – the secret of the *necessity* of a "*You*" for an "*I*". It is the truth that *no being whatsoever*, be it man or God and be it called "*spirit*" or "*I*", can be a *true, Perfect, and absolute being in isolation*, that the *truth and perfection* are only the *union and unity* of beings that are similar in essence. Hence, the highest and ultimate principle of philosophy is *the unity of man with man.* All essential relationships – the principles of various sciences – are only *different kinds and modes of this unity.*

§ 64

The old philosophy possesses a *double truth*; first, its *own* truth – philosophy – which is not concerned with man, and second, the truth *for man* – *religion.* The new philosophy as the philosophy of man, on the other hand, is also essentially the *philosophy for man*; it has, without in the least compromising the dignity and autonomy of theory – indeed it is in perfect harmony with it – essentially a *practical* tendency, and is practical in the highest sense. The new philosophy takes the place of religion; it has within itself the *essence* of religion; in truth, it is *itself religion.*

§ 65

All attempts undertaken so far to reform philosophy are not very different from the old philosophy to the extent that they are *species* belonging to the same *genus*. The most indispensable condition for a really new – i.e., independent – philosophy corresponding to the need of mankind and of the future is, however, that it distinguish itself *in essence* from the old philosophy.
